

(I WILL ALWAYS BE)
THE ONE I NEVER WAS

OR:

NEURODEVIANCE

Written by
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TITLE: THE VERY NEAR FUTURE.

JED (V.O.)
Whatever is acting through me now
is outside the realm of the senses.

INT. DINGY MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

A man (JED) sits naked on a bed. He is young (early 30s), attractive, and very contained, almost robotic in his movements, but gracefully so.

On the walls of the room there are pictures of big-breasted women from magazines. An incongruous picture of Michael Biehn from *The Terminator*. The walls are cracked and the paint is peeling. A sink in the corner. Tap dripping. A naked light bulb hangs from the ceiling, buzzing. Jed looks up at the sound.

From above (light bulb POV) we see that next to him on the bed, also naked, is what looks like a dead woman. It is actually a weird sort of replica of a human being. Its eyes are wide and the face contorted as if in terror.

The man sits without moving for a time then picks up his socks and puts them on.

CREDITS, ETC.

Jed gets up and goes over to the window, where his clothes are neatly piled onto a chair. As he is dressing, he notices a fly buzzing against the glass of the window. As he is buttoning his shirt, a button falls off the cuff. It rolls along the floorboards and is sucked into a hole in the floor, as if drawn into another dimension. He goes over, leans down and fingers the hole, curiously. From under the floor, the sound of pipes hissing, grinding.

He notices a snow dome lying on its side under the bed. He reaches and pulls it out, turns it upright. It is a Halloween snow dome, a skeleton in a top hat, riding a horse. He places it upright on a second chair, by the door, and finishes dressing.

He covers the weird doll-corpse with a sheet and leaves the room, closing the door behind him. We stay in the room for several more seconds.

TITLE: THE FACTS OF LIFE

INT. POLICE STATION (PSYCHOLOGICAL FORENSICS UNIT) - NIGHT

Jed stands facing camera with a second man, waiting for an elevator. His hair is short. He is handcuffed to detective GABRIEL LINK, an older man with a worn face and weary expression. Behind them a man mops the floor. Sound of swishing. Link burps, looks pained and touches his stomach. Jed eyes him. Link gets out some digestive tablets. The elevator doors open. Inside the elevator a grotesque-looking woman with a hunchback, wearing a whorish dress, is blowing her nose with a paper napkin. The hunchback lunges at them, dropping the napkin. Link steps back, pulling Jed with him, and automatically reaches for his gun. The hunchback keeps moving and Link realizes that he is not under attack: it is her disability that causes the lunging motion. The hunchback glares at Link as she passes, Link mumbles an apology.

Jed watches in fascination as the hunchback lunges past the man mopping the floor. Link pulls him into the elevator. As he enters he kicks the paper napkin on the floor, and it flies into the corner of the elevator. Jed notices the napkin as he enters.

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

The elevator has mirrors on the walls. Jed stares at an infinity of images of himself. Link pushes a button for going down, pops a tablet in his mouth. He takes out his cell phone and dials. Jed looks down at the paper napkin. It is soiled and full of mucus. His attention is captured by the sight, so that he becomes oblivious of everything else.

The elevator stops and the doors open. Link pulls on the cuffs and Jed becomes aware once more of his surroundings.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

They enter a reception area that seems mostly abandoned. Jed takes in the sights and sounds as if he is overwhelmed by all the sensory data.

On a counter is a half-eaten baloney sandwich with a toothpick stuck through it, resting on the same kind of paper napkin as the hunchback threw away. The SOUND of a typewriter clacking away. Someone shouting on a telephone. A soda machine hums loudly.

On a chair in a corner near the soda machine, a thin man with white face and receding black hair sits staring out at nothing. He has an empty candy wrapper which he is rustling between his fingers. Jed's attention is drawn to the sound. The man does not seem to see them.

Link leads Jed down a corridor. They pass several open doors, Jed glances in as they pass: guy typing, table full of discarded meal items. A young, muscular cop with a crewcut passes them, wearing a shoulder holster. Jed eyes him as he passes. He notices discrepancies about the cop's appearance, such as his back pocket turned inside out, left trouser leg inside his sock.

They reach a large room with an alcove that looks onto an interrogation room, visible from outside via a one-way glass. A woman in her forties sits in the viewing area. EVELYN PALMER, forensic psychologist. She is on a cell phone with a water bottle in her free hand. On the wall behind her a diagram of the human body. Underneath is a Halloween trinket, a skeleton in a top hat, its head on a spring, wobbling.

Palmer acknowledges Link with a nod and then looks at Jed. Jed is studying the skeleton.

PALMER
(into phone)
Listen - can I call you back? OK.
Bye.

Palmer takes a swig of her water and looks at Link and Jed.

INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

In the center of the room is a plain metal table, a metal chair on one side and a desk (swivel) chair on the other. Next to it is a digital camera mounted on a tripod. Link gestures to the metal chair. Jed looks at it then back at Link.

LINK
Have a seat.

Jed sits down very deliberately and begins to look around the room. There is another table, on wheels, at one of the walls. On it are various items: a pack of cards, a telephone directory, well-worn, an unopened lollipop, some sort of dental clamp(?), an open can of soda and an unopened one, a pack of cigarettes and a lighter. In the opposite corner there is a metal trash can. On the floor beside it are two crunched paper napkins.

Link takes off his jacket and rolls up his shirt sleeves. He is wearing a gun in a holster strapped to his shoulder. He sits down, looks at Jed. Jed stares back without visible emotion. Above their heads a light bulb buzzes electrically. Around it a fly buzzes, organically. Link farts. Jed looks at him curiously. He notices a mustard stain on Link's shirt.

LINK (CONT'D)

'Scuse me.

JED

(sniffs the air)

You eat a lot of meat. And you aren't sleeping. Uncertainty makes you nervous.

LINK

How-

(he cuts himself off)

JED

How do I know you can't sleep at night? You are an open book.

They stare at each other for a moment.

LINK

Let's go back to the beginning.

JED

The beginning of what?

LINK

Tell me what you did to those women.

JED

I didn't do anything to them.

LINK

So why are they are all dead?

JED

We are all dead. Some people don't know it yet.

LINK

(makes an expletive)

Are you going to start that Dr. Manhattan crap again?

JED
You wanted to go back to the beginning. How far back are you willing to go?

LINK
(slams fist down)
You're talking in circles!!

He coughs and belches from the exertion.

JED
You shouldn't get excited.

LINK
(sighs)
Why do I always get the weird ones?

JED
(helpfully)
Maybe if you start asking the right questions.

LINK
OK Donnie Darko: what's the right question?

JED
There is only one question, and every other question takes you back to that first question, if you let it. The question: what am I?

LINK
I know what I am. I just don't know what *you* are.

JED
If you really knew what you are, you would know what I am. Because we're the same thing.

(Link scowls)
What are the odds that we are here now? If you were to do a random search for a single, eighty-year period on an infinite data base, what are the chances you would find it?

Link is silent for several moments. He picks his nose unconsciously and rolls the booger. Jed watches his movements closely.

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Outside the interrogation room, looking through the one-way glass, Palmer watches the scene.

CUT MOMENTARILY TO AN ODD COMPUTER-FILTERED IMAGE OF THE SCENE, FILLED WITH DATA, AS IF BEING MONITORED BY SATELLITE.

JED

The odds are zero. It is not possible.

LINK

And yet here we are.

JED

Are we though? You want to know what happened to those women. I am telling you that nothing happened, because those women were not women.

LINK

What were they - replicants?

JED

If you like.

LINK

This is going nowhere.

JED

There's nowhere to get to.

INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Link mutters something to himself. He rubs his neck and rolls his shoulders, grunts.

JED

Back problems?

LINK

Yeah.

JED

You want to know what happened? Reality happened.

LINK

What reality?!

JED
The Universe is empty. It has
always been empty. How can you fill
infinity? What are you going to
fill it with? With thoughts?

LINK
Is that going to be your defense?

JED
I keep an open garden.

LINK
What?

JED
With no need of de-fencing.

LINK
(angry)
Why did those women die?!

JED
They were indicated.

LINK
What?

JED
They were indicated.

LINK
Indicated?

JED
Indicated. Yes. Their doors were
marked.

LINK
(Expletive)
Huh? What doors?

JED
The doors to their prison-houses. I
set them free.

LINK
(shouts)
Free from what?

JED
From the delusion of occupation.

LINK
How many people have you freed from
delusion?

JED
So far? Eight.

LINK
They all died?

JED
(thinks)
You would say that they died.

LINK
What would *you* say?

JED
That they were never alive.

There is a long pause while the two men sit in silence. Link
takes out a packet of cigarettes.

LINK
(sardonic)
Mind if I smoke?

JED
It's your life.

Link takes out a cigarette and lights it. He blows out smoke
and looks at Jed, who is still staring unblinkingly at him.

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Outside the interrogation room, Palmer watches through the
glass.

JED
Do you have a wife?

LINK
We're not here to talk about me.

JED
You do. Kids?
(Link moves his eyes
away.)
How many?
(Link stares at him. Jed
shows surprise)
I see! You want to protect them?
(MORE)

JED (CONT'D)

It makes you uncomfortable to hear
me talk about them?

Jed is genuinely curious now, not mocking but searching to
understand Link's hostility towards him.

LINK

Yes.

JED

Do you know why?

LINK

Because you're scum.

JED

(thinks about it)

A filmy layer of extraneous matter
on the surface of your world?
That's not an accurate description.
I am more like a virus. I threaten
to disrupt the order of your
system. Isn't that it?

LINK

Not as long as you're in here you
don't.

INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

JED

It's not that simple.
(sincerely)
Is it?

LINK

Yeah. It's exactly that simple.

JED

(thinks about it)

So do you think that if you do your
job and lock me away, you will
maintain the order of your system,
and keep your world intact for your
children?

LINK

Every little bit helps.
(they stare at each other)

JED

Do you know why it's not working?

LINK

Because there are too many people
like you.

JED

There are no people like me - are
there?

Once again, Jed appears to mean the question sincerely. There is even an edge of hope in his voice. Link lowers his eyes, confused.

JED (CONT'D)

I think you must be confused.

LINK

Enlighten me.

JED

The reason it's not working is
that... you can't protect your
system from chaos without shutting
it down completely. Death is what
you're afraid of but death is what
keeps everything in order. Without
it, life would be complete chaos.
The reason you want to see me as
the bad guy is because you see
death as the bad guy.

(Jed looks around the room
then back at Link)

You are on the wrong side of the de-
fence. All your hard work to
maintain order only stops the
natural order from doing what must
be done.

He seems to be talking to himself now, realizing all this for the first time. Link is glowering.

LINK

Save it for your disciples.

Jed seems to remember that Link is there.

JED

Nothing you can do is going to
change the facts.

LINK

What facts?

JED

The fact that you are going to die.
Your wife is going to die. Your
children are going to die. Your
grandchildren, if you have them,
are going to die. Those are the
facts of life.

LINK

God works in mysterious ways.

JED

Faith doesn't influence fact.

LINK

Faith moves mountains.

JED

Have you seen it happen?

He seems genuinely curious, and when he sees Link's empty
expression his face shows mild disappointment.

JED (CONT'D)

So it's a matter of faith, then?

(Link is silent)

So the fact remains that everyone
you care about will die, and,
whatever your faith says about it,
they will quickly disappear without
a trace.

LINK

The soul is eternal.

JED

(as if to himself)

You don't believe in God, but
you're afraid of Him. You hope your
belief will protect you.

(to Link)

What do you *know*?

LINK

I know plenty.

JED

You're a detective?

LINK

Yep.

JED
Does that mean you have to work
with the facts?

LINK
(forces a smile)
This particular question is outside
my jurisdiction.

JED
How many dead bodies have you seen?

LINK
A few.

JED
And how many eternal souls?

Thirty seconds of silence go by. Link notices his cigarette has burned down almost to his finger. He stubs out the cigarette. The smoke drifts up aimlessly to the ceiling. He runs his fingers absentmindedly through his hair, then looks down at the cluster of hairs in his hand.

He looks up, Jed is staring at him with intense curiosity.

TITLE: RUDE AWAKENING

EXT. CITY - DAY

The city, people and cars and buses busying on.

INT. JUDY & JED'S BEDROOM - DAY

The room is in disarray, books and dirty clothing everywhere, computer, bicycle parts, etc. THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH poster on the wall. Two people lying on a mattress on the floor, asleep, Jed and his girlfriend, JUDY. Jed wakes, opens his eyes, stares at the room for several seconds. His hair is long, indicating this is an *earlier* period. He gets up, in his underwear, and goes to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

He stands over the toilet and urinates. Film magazine by toilet with TWELVE MONKEYS cover story. Jed stares at the yellow liquid in the bowl. He flushes. He stops by the mirror and looks at himself for a moment, then splashes his face with water, looks again. He leaves the bathroom.

INT. JUDY & JED'S BEDROOM - DAY

He picks up half a joint and a lighter and gets back into bed. He lights the joint. Judy stirs and opens her eyes. She looks at Jed and he looks back at her. He offers her the joint. She ignores it.

JUDY
What time is it?

Jed doesn't reply. Judy gets up. Also in her underwear, and Jed watches her walk out the room and into the bathroom.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Small THE TENANT poster on the wall. Jed and Judy sit at the kitchen table with coffee. Pancakes are frying on the stove. Jed farts loudly.

JED
I need to take a shit.

JUDY
Don't let me stop you.

JED
It's not time yet.
(she looks at him
quizzically)
It needs more time in the oven.

JUDY
Lovely simile.

She gets up and flips a pancake.

JED
(grins)
Maybe your magic pancakes will help
nudge it out.

Judy sits down again.

JUDY
You ever wonder what we're doing?

JED
Could you be more specific?

JUDY
With our lives? Where's it all
going?

JED
An eternal question it may be best
not to ask.

JUDY
But somebody has to.

JED
Why?

JUDY
What about the big picture?

Jed just looks at her, then starts flicking through a movie
magazine.

JUDY (CONT'D)
When are you going to get rid of
those bicycle parts?

JED
Whenever I find a use for them.

JUDY
(returning to pancakes)
This place is driving me crazy. I
can't hear myself think with all of
this clutter.

She tosses a pancake onto a plate in front of Jed, sits down
with her pancake. They both start to eat.

JED
Thinking is overrated.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JUDY & JED'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jed is back in bed with his laptop and Judy is making a vague
attempt to tidy up. She holds up some hard-to-identify
article of clothing.

JUDY
Is this yours?
(he grunts)
What is it?

JED
I'm not entirely sure.

She stops and looks at him.

JUDY
You know, sometimes it's like
you're not even here.

JED
It's possible I'm not.

JUDY
That's deep.

JED
(looking at her now)
Maybe none of us are. What makes
you so sure you exist?

JUDY
Don't start with that again. Where
did those pancakes go? Into thin
air?

He looks at her as if contemplating the question. She tosses
the strange article back on the floor and continues tidying.

JED
We spend all day thinking about
ourselves. We think that there must
be someone thinking our thoughts.
But maybe there's only the *thought*
that we are thinking.

JUDY
(clearly not listening)
Uh-huh.

JED
Maybe there isn't a thinker at all.
Just thought.

JUDY
It makes me wonder what you're
doing at college.

JED
There's no point in questioning
things unless you are willing to go
all the way. "I think therefore I
am" is accepted as self-evident.
But if we stopped thinking, would
we cease to exist?

JUDY

Is it a guy thing, asking
meaningless questions? I think it
must be.

JED

I can stop drinking, stop talking,
I can even stop breathing. But I
can't stop thinking. So why do we
assume we are doing the thinking?
If we were doing it, we should be
able to stop doing it. What does
that tell you?

JUDY

That you smoke too much weed? God -
can we just throw all this shit
out, you think?

Jed looks at her a moment. A cat comes into the room and
makes a meow sound. Judy talks to the cat, asks it if it's
hungry. Jed seems to be having a realization.

JED

Uh-oh.

JUDY

What?

JED

(he gets up)

You see: the body makes all the
important decisions!

He runs to the toilet.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Jed sits on the toilet with a copy of Steven Norquist's *The
Haunted Universe*. He reads a line, such as: "Consciousness is
not Aware of the universe, consciousness is aware as the
universe. There is no observer. There are no persons in
existence experiencing the universe. There is only the
experience of the universe being there with no experiencer."
He hears the words in his head as he reads them. The words
overlap and echo in his awareness. The words dance before his
eyes like visible forms. He stares at the roll of toilet
paper next to him and seems to sink into the fabric of it.

His bowels move loudly and he lets out a sigh.

He experiences himself as the turd sliding into the toilet
bowl and submerging. The ultimate truth dawns.

The image of "Jed" shatters into many fragments, floating around in space. The words continue to echo in space, their order scrambled, as if time itself has come undone.

INT. KITCHEN FROM JED'S CHILDHOOD - DAY

Jed as a baby, seen from his POV. A huge glowing woman (his mother) looks down at him and makes unintelligible sounds. Jed-baby smiles and gurgles with pride. She begins to unbutton her blouse to breast-feed him.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Jed stares at infinity. His mouth hangs open. The tap drips. Time passes. He does not move.

Some DISSOLVES later, there is a knock on the door.

JUDY (V.O.)
Did you fall in?

Jed stares at the door as if unable to identify the sound.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Jed emerges from the bathroom. Judy is cleaning in the kitchen, comes out to look at him.

JUDY (V.O.)
He looks like a zombie
jesus judy why do i always end up with weirdos
and he never does the dishes still
he is pretty good in bed what's he
doing he's just standing there like
some sort of crazy person fuck i
really should be studying why do i
always get obsessed with the men i
sleep with?

Jed stares at her.

JUDY
Are you all right?
(again her thoughts are
audible to him, V.O.)
(MORE)

JUDY (CONT'D)

hes probably pissed off that i
threw his underwear away well fuck
it what the fuck do i care so much
what he thinks he lives in his own
world anyway i need to get more
toilet paper jed will never
remember sometimes it's like being
a mother not that that's likely to
happen any time soon why do i
always end up with guys who dont
want kids?

JED

I'm fine.

He looks around as if he has found himself on a different planet.

JUDY

Yeah? Are you sure? You don't look
all right.

He turns to her and stares right through her.

JED

I think I just got enlightened.

JUDY (V.O.)

Jesus here we go again why can't i
ever wind up with normal guys
course the way he's staring
sometimes i think he's from another
planet i guess i shouldnt assume
anything who knows maybe he really
is enlightened?

(out loud:)

Did that happen while you were
having a poo then?

JED

Yes.

JUDY

Awesome.

JED

I think I will go for a walk.

JUDY

Why are you talking like that?

JED

Like what?

JUDY
Like Mr. Spock on ecstasy.

He stares at her with wide eyes and a beatific, babylike smile.

JUDY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Jesus he just looks creepy maybe he had a brain hemorrhage or something stranger things have happened

JED
Stranger things have happened.

JUDY
What?

JED
I can hear your thoughts.

JUDY
Lucky you.

Jed looks around him as if seeing invisible forms floating over his head.

JED
I think I will go for a walk now.

JUDY
You said that already.

JED
(in awe and wonder)
This has all happened before. All of it. This is like a replay. An echo - in eternity.

JUDY
Uh-huh. Like in *Gladiator*?
(V.O)
He must have smoked some more weed in there is he holding out on me damn i knew i should have put some aside for myself that's what he does so why shouldn't i? I really ought to quit anyway but it's hard when you live with a pothead

The sound of her thoughts fades away as Jed walks towards the door. He is wearing nothing but boxer shorts.

JUDY (CONT'D)
Um. Don't you want to get dressed?

Jed stops. He turns. He looks at Judy and then down at himself.

JED
Oh. Yes. I was dressed for this.

JUDY
I'm not sure it's such a good idea going out. You're starting to freak me out.

JED
But I went out last time.

JUDY
Huh?

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

He goes into the bedroom and begins to look at his clothes like they are strange exotic animals. Judy follows. Jed chooses a sock and slowly places it on his foot. He then looks up at Judy.

JED
I won't ask you to come because you say no.

JUDY
What?

JED
(to himself, realizing)
Some things we can do differently but others are fixed.

JUDY
(false cheerful, as if talking to a lunatic)
I'm going to check my email now.
(V.O)
Maybe when you get back to planet earth we might actually embark on a human relationship

JED
Planet Earth...

EXT. CITY - DAY

Jed walks down the street, gazing at everything like a visitor from another planet.

He notices every detail, hears every sound, observes tiny nuances occurring between people, and "hears" a seemingly endless hubbub of thoughts. People's moods also are visible to him as colors and forms, pictures playing over their heads like waking dreams. Much of it is slightly monstrous. In the end he get overwhelmed and takes refuge on a park bench. He stares without moving.

JED

This is going to take getting used to.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Jed is sitting at a table with the same frozen expression, with Judy and three other people, friends of Judy. They are talking about some social or ethical question, murder, capital punishment, whatever. Jed is not participating, but is gazing at nothing with a blank look on his face. On a TV behind him, a scene from THE DEAD ZONE is playing. One of Judy's friends leans towards her and speaks into her ear.

FRIEND

What's with your boyfriend, Judy?
Is he on LSD?

JUDY

(scowls)
He got enlightened while taking a dump.

FRIEND

No shit.

She looks at Jed, who looks like he is made of wax.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Judy is in bed, waiting for Jed. Jed is sitting in front of the cat, staring intently. The cat is staring back.

JUDY

Are you coming to bed or are you going to stare at my cat all night?

Jed seems not to hear her. He continues to gaze at the cat. They appear to be communing telepathically. Judy makes a loud sigh and turns over to sleep.

The cat lets out a meow. Jed smiles.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Jed is making an elaborate smoothie with oats, nuts, berries, banana, apple, and avocado. Judy comes in wearing a large T-shirt, hair mussed, looking sleepy.

JED
Good morning!

She grunts and turns on the kettle, starts making an instant coffee. When it's done she sits at the table.

JUDY
We need to talk.

JED
OK. Just one second.

He finishes the smoothie by turning on the blender for thirty seconds, then pours it.

JED (CONT'D)
You want some smoothie?

JUDY
No thanks.

He sits down opposite her with his smoothie.

JUDY (CONT'D)
Listen. About the new you. I think it's great you think you're enlightened, and maybe you are. But, um, it's not really working out - for me, I mean, for us.

JED
Not working out how?

JUDY
Well, let's just start with the obvious. You haven't had sex with me or even touched me since whatever it was happened. You don't smoke pot anymore. All my friends think you're crazy and that I'm insane for going out with you. You don't eat my pancakes. What happened to the guy I was dating? I mean really, what *happened* to you?

JED
I woke up.

JUDY
So you keep saying. So what were
you doing before then?

JED
Dreaming.

JUDY
So the time we had before now, that
was just a dream?

JED
Yes.

JUDY
So then I'm still dreaming, and
you're awake?

JED
Um. It's complicated.

JUDY
Is that why you don't want to have
sex with me?

JED
Judy. I'm not making decisions
anymore. I never was. I just
thought I was.

JUDY
OK. So who's deciding not to have
sex with me?

JED
Nobody. I mean, my body is, but
it's not really a decision. It's
just - what is.

JUDY
And you're OK with that?

JED
What's not to be OK about?
(she makes a face)
Everything is exactly as it's
supposed to be.

JUDY
So, what if I said we need to break
up?

JED
Then I suppose we'd break up.

JUDY
And you'd be OK with that?

JED
Yes.

JUDY
And I'm supposed to be OK with that?

JED
Not if you don't want to be. It's up to you.

JUDY
Arrgh! You're fucking impossible, you know that? So basically what you are saying is that you want to break up?

JED
Not at all.

JUDY
But you don't mind if we do?

JED
Why would I mind? I mean, there's nothing-

JUDY
(angry)
Help me out there then - since you're enlightened and I'm not... Explain to me why I would want to be with someone who doesn't give a shit if they're with me or not?

JED
(thinks about it)
Why does it matter what I think? If you want us to be together, then we will. If you don't, then-

JUDY
(losing patience)
But what do you want?

JED
Nothing. I mean, there's nothing to want...

JUDY
(gets up)
OK. Fuck this. I'm breaking up with
you. What do you say about that?

JED
OK.

JUDY
OK?

JED
Yes. I mean, good.

JUDY
GOOD???

JED
It's good if it's what you want to
do. I support you in your decision.

JUDY
Jesus! You're not enlightened,
you're INSANE.
(Jed smiles)
This conversation is over.

JED
Yes I know.

JUDY
What?

JED
It always ends this way.

JUDY
What?

JED
With you pretending to be upset,
and pretending not to remember.

JUDY
PRETENDING??

JED
That all of this hasn't happened
already.

JUDY
What hasn't?

JED
You leaving me because you wanted
me to tell you to stay.

JUDY
*I'm leaving you because I want you
to act like a fucking human
being!!!*

JED
Yes, that too.

JUDY
Good Christ almighty!

JED
I'm sorry. I am trying.

JUDY
This is how you *try* to act like a
human being?

JED
Um. Yes.

JUDY
If you have to *try*, you might as
well forget about it.

JED
(thinks)
You're right.

He gets up.

JUDY
Where are you going?

JED
I'm leaving?

JUDY
You're leaving?

JED
(stops, unsure)
We both agree that I should move
out and you should stay. In a
minute, I mean.

JUDY
So you're moving out?

JED

(looks confused)

No, I think you should move out, don't you? After all, this is my apartment.

JUDY

What?

JED

I'm sorry. I thought we could skip the second argument but apparently we can't. I'm still new at this.

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Camera tracks away from the building and Judy's voice becomes gradually unintelligible and finally inaudible.

JUDY (V.O.)

*ARE YOU TRYING TO DRIVE ME INSANE?
Is that what's going on here? You don't have the balls to leave me so you set this whole thing up so that I end up stark staring bonkers and then you can blame the whole thing on me... Let me tell you i'm not the psycho here, you're the psycho!*

(TITLE: "TWO YEARS LATER")

INT. HIGH-RISE APARTMENT, BEDROOM - DAY

The scene is secured. Several police are gathered on the scene, which has been secured as a possible crime scene.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

A plain clothes cop, ULMAN, wearing gloves, is looking around. Link is in the bedroom, also wearing gloves. It's a large room, very high class, with blown-up photos of real-life executions on the wall.

Lying on a large bed, surrounded by silk sheets, is what looks like a naked woman. Link ignores it however and looks around the rest of the room. He finds a small USB type device and activates it. An image appears as a hologram.

He flicks through the images. They are sex images of people in weird costumes, seem like they may not be entirely human, hard to make out exactly what the photos depict except that it is sexual and deviant. He goes to the wardrobe, opens it. Inside are many costumes hanging on coat-hangers: alien, furry animals, Star Trek, nun's habit, etc. He sees two eyes staring at him and his body jerks, he takes a step back and reaches for his gun.

At that moment a small dog runs in barking. Link looks at it, looks back, pushes costumes aside to reveal the eyes, which appear living, to be part of a human skin suit.

Ulman follows the dog in.

LINK

Where'd the dog come from?

ULMAN

It was in a closet, in the kitchen.

The dog has run over to the bed and is barking wildly at the woman's body. Link goes over to the bed and we see that the body is another weird doll-like thing.

LINK

Is it real?

ULMAN

I can check.

Link kneels down and looks at the doll-woman's face. ULMAN stands behind him. The dog goes on barking.

LINK

Have you ever seen anything like this?

ULMAN

Which - the dog or the woman?

LINK

You ever seen an expression like that before?

ULMAN

I'm autistic. I don't read expressions very well.

LINK

It's not exactly subtle. Can you shut that dog up?

Ulman bends down and picks the dog up as Link takes out a pair of computerized goggles (like Google glasses). Ulman feels under the dogs neck and finds a switch, flicks it and the dog suddenly shuts off. It is a mechanized toy.

Link places the goggles on and looks through them. They are designed to pick up evidence otherwise invisible, such as semens stains, saliva, skin traces, etc.

In a POV shot through the goggles we see the room as a virtual scene. On the bed the body looks like any other object (no heat or signs of inner movement). Link notices something in the doll's right hand, a small metallic object.

He takes out a pen and uses it to pus the object out of the doll's closed hand. It looks like a small circuit board (microchip) attached to an ear-hook, i.e., a piece of techno-jewelry.

ULMAN
What you got?

LINK
Spypod.

ULMAN
Video or audio?

LINK
Looks like both.

ULMAN
So is this a crime scene or isn't it?

LINK
Until you know different, always assume foul play.

He pockets the "spypod."

TITLE: TROUBLE & DESIRE

EXT. FERRY - DAY

Jed with long hair on the deck of the ferry, crossing over.

EXT. CITY - DAY

Jed arrives in the city at dawn, carrying an old style suitcase. He keeps walking, into a very seedy, run-down area. He notices a motel. He stops, and is about to walk on when the door opens and a very fat man in a suit comes out. Jed steps over and grabs the door, walks inside.

INT. MOTEL - DAY

He mounts some stairs and reaches reception area.

INT. MOTEL FOYER - DAY

A diseased looking fat woman is sat behind the counter, behind bars. She has dyed red hair and large earrings, is picking her nose and watching her computer (THE HIDDEN, sci-fi movie with Kyle MacLachlan), a half-eaten burger in front of her. There is the sound of sawing and hammering coming from somewhere. A very large (human size) stuffed animal sits in the foyer, looking like it is decomposing. There are surveillance cameras mounted in the corners.

A half naked woman hurries past. Jed watches her disappear into a bathroom.

Jed goes over to the counter. The woman does not look up. Jed sees several signs on the wall behind her: NO GUNS, KNIVES, OR WEAPONS (maybe images), NO SOLICITING, TENANTS TO VACATE BY 10 AM OR BE CHARGED ANOTHER NIGHT. On the surface in front of her various items: Tarot cards, nail varnish, medieval figurines (or *Star Wars*?), sodoku puzzles. Behind her a photo of her with a fat man who looks like her brother, both smooching at the camera. Above that a photo of a small (child?) coffin surrounded by flowers. jed looks at the woman and hears her "thoughts".

FAT LADY (V.O.)

25... 31 ... 17 ... Crossbeams,
cross-hairs, crossroads, double
cross, double-time, reverse vectors
enabling variable outcomes, task
command, control F, sweep,
algorithm, fortran, delimit,
define, coerce, 1482 over 12.4...

(she looks up)

Yes?

JED

I'd like a room please.

FAT LADY

Credit ID.

Jed slides his microchip-ID under the metal grid. The woman passes him a large electronic "swab."

FAT LADY (CONT'D)

Saliva sample.

Jed puts the swab in his mouth and the woman opens another screen on the computer (without closing the movie screen), data comes up on Jed, including picture. The fat lady nods, taps a key. Jed hands back the device. The fat lady throws it away in a bin full of discarded electro-swabs.

She hands him a key-card.

FAT LADY (CONT'D)

Next floor, end of the corridor,
last room on your right.

JED

Thank you.

The woman is already watching the movie again. Jed takes the card, picks up his suitcase, and heads for the stairs.

INT. MOTEL CORRIDOR - DAY

It is improbably long. Outside many of the doors are strange items, brown paper bags, empty medicine bottles, a stuffed animal. He reaches the end of the corridor, on his right is a small set of stairs, leading to his room. He unlocks the door and enters.

INT. JED'S MOTEL ROOM - DAY

The room is dirty and dilapidated, with a terrace and a bathroom. On the wall is a picture of an owl. On another, a reprint of "The Rape of Lucretia" (as seen in *Psycho*). He puts his case down and looks around the room. He goes into the bathroom.

INT. JED'S BATHROOM - DAY

He pulls aside the shower curtain. There is a used bar of soap lying in the tub, with thick black hairs stuck to it. He takes a piece of toilet paper and uses it to pick up the soap, drops it and the paper into the toilet bowl. He goes over to the sink. A spider sits motionless.

He opens the medicine cabinet - a bottle of pills, a nail file, some digestive tablets, and a scrunched up piece of toilet paper. He takes the toilet paper and opens it up. Inside is a tooth, with blood on one end. He stares at the tooth for a while, then wraps it up in the paper again and drops it into the toilet. He flushes and watches the objects disappear.

INT. JED'S MOTEL ROOM - DAY

He moves the bed from being right outside the bathroom to the opposite wall. He notices a discarded sock in the corner where the bed was. Next to it is a hole in the skirting. He kneels down and looks into the hole. As we move into the hole, we hear the sound of a baby crying, and then of someone panting, as if having sex. A man's voice.

MAN

Yeah, now suck its thing.

Jed closes his eyes. He experiences himself as somewhere else. A candle flickers. A woman's voice sounds like it is begging. There is a sudden roar of sound, like vocal rage or something colliding with something.

He opens his eyes and quickly shoves the sock into the hole, blocking the sound.

EXT. JED'S TERRACE - DAY

Jed stands on the terrace looking down at the street. The woman who was half naked in the foyer comes out the front door and hurries across the street.

EXT. SLUM - DAY

Jed walks down the street. He stops to check his pockets, pulls out a couple of bills, then puts them back. He looks over and sees a dwarf in a business suit coming out of a cafe. The dwarf nods at him as he walks past. Jed sees a sign on the cafe door: "dishwasher wanted." He looks back and see the dwarf being lifted up by a buxom woman in make up, who kisses the dwarf on the mouth. Jed looks at the name of the establishment, and then enters.

INT. GREASY CAFE - DAY

The cafe is mostly empty, except for two older guys at a corner table, who seem to be conducting some clandestine business, and a mother with her daughter on the other side of the room. The daughter is about eight, and has a strange ghoulish stuffed toy (Cthulu?). A thin waitress is clearing up a table. She picks up some notes.

WAITRESS

Little guy, big tipper.
(she looks at Jed)
Take a seat, honey.

JED

I am here about the job.

WAITRESS

(shouts)
SAL!!

A heavy guy with dark complexion in the kitchen looks over and sees Jed. Jed is looking at the child, who is hiding behind her Cthulu doll, making eyes at Jed. The girl's mother is talking on a cell phone.

Jed walks over to the counter. Another waitress is at the till. She is wearing a glass dome on her head, chewing gum. She has a name tag: JUDY. She doesn't look up at Jed. The sound of her chewing seems intensified by the glass dome. Jed notices one of the older guys pass something to the other man, under the table. The first guy stares at Jed, who looks away. Jed sees an old man standing outside the cafe, behind the woman and child's table, visible through the glass. He is holding his hand out towards the glass, as if begging, staring at Jed. The child giggles and hides behind her stuffed doll. The sequence seems slowed down and dreamlike. There is the loud SOUND of fat frying, drawing Jed's attention to the chip pan.

SAL

You here about the job?

Jed turns his head slowly, like he is underwater.

SAL (CONT'D)

You're the dishwasher?

JED

What?

SAL

You deaf? You had experience washing dishes before?

JED
 (looking around)
 Yes. This is where I always work.

SAL
 Say what?

JED
 This is the job I end up with.

SAL
 OK, good. You can start right now
 then.

He gestures towards an enormous pile of dirty dishes. Jed looks over at the waitress in the glass dome. She is staring at him now, still chewing gum.

The woman with child gets up and pulls her child away impatiently. The child is still staring at jed.

MOTHER
 Come on!

The two men also get up to leave. Jed looks over to where the bum was but he is gone.

EXT. GREASY CAFE - NIGHT

He comes out at the end of his shift. He sees whores and junkies. He goes over and sits on the sidewalk with a diseased looking junky. After a minute, the junky becomes suspicious and gets up to leave.

INT. JED'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jed sits on his bed, writing in a notebook.

JED (V.O.)
 The feeling of constant *deja vu*.
 Continuous not knowing. When the
 map goes, the territory changes.
 Each moment ends before it begins.
 A worm-hole of thought. Decisions
 can only be acted on immediately,
 because action precedes decision.
 Nothing beyond the present moment
 exists, and then is gone. Like it,
 was it, always that? The I is to
 realize this, and submit.

EXT. SLUM - NIGHT

A series of shots of Jed wandering the wasteland a la Travis Bickle in TAXI DRIVER.

JED (V.O.)

The I looks for indications and then follows them. If no indication comes, the I does nothing. But the indications always come.

INT. JED'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jed lying on bed, with a small digital recorder on the table.

JED

These words have more existence than the I. Words destroy each other to feel like they exist. Only they don't. A word without a sentence is just a sound.

He gets up and walks to the terrace, recorder still recording. He watches the city below for half a minute.

JED (CONT'D)

The effect of the I is there, but the I is not. The more the I participates in the illusion of suffering, the closer it gets to remembering what it was like - to exist.

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

Jed walks past a bar, drunken students spilling out. Jed stops and stares at them. One notices him

DRUNK 1

What you looking at faggot??

DRUNK 2

I think he likes you.

DRUNK 1

You a fag, faggot?

JED

Just curious.

DRUNK 2

Hey faggot! Suck my dick.

JED
I can't do that.

DRUNK 2
(shouts)
What's the matter, something wrong
with me?!

The first drunk comes over close to Jed and breathes into his face.

DRUNK 1
Fuck you faggot!

He hauls off and punches Jed. Jed goes down, the two drunks laugh and stagger off.

INT. JED'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jed washes blood off his face. He studies his wounds with the curiosity of a biologist investigating a new life form.

EXT. SLUM - NIGHT

Jed is walking from work, sees some activity down a dark alley and stops to look: a man is getting a blow job from a woman dressed like a prostitute. Jed goes down the alley for a closer look. The guy has his eyes closed. Jed stands next to him, watching. The guy realizes someone is there with a start, and pushes the whore away.

JOHN
Man what the fuck is your problem?

Jed stares at him while the man does up his pants. The whore sits on the floor watching. The man punches Jed in the face.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Fucking pervert. Get out of here!

Jed stands there. The man stares at him a moment and then hurries away. The whore runs after him, yelling for her money.

INT. JED'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jed washes blood off his face. He studies his wounds with the curiosity of a biologist investigating a new life form.

EXT. SLUM - DAY

JED (V.O.)

Someone must bear the burden. The burden to bear what a preference for love, happiness and goodness has exiled, and cast onto the streets and slums, and called "sin." When all that is outside of love is returned to love, both are transformed.

Some cops in full S.W.A.T gear are shaking down junkies and whores. One is standing on a corner, keeping an eye on things. Jed silently approaches, takes out his penis and begins to urinate on the side walk, right by the scene, watching. The cop comes over and hits Jed in the face. Jed staggers to his knees, the cop takes out a tazer and zaps him. The cop puts cuffs on Jed and drags him into a police car.

INT. POLICE CELL - NIGHT

The door slams on Jed inside the cell. There is a toilet in the corner with shit all around it, two bunk beds on each side of the cell. On one bunk, on the top bed, a man huddles in the corner with what looks like the DTs. Below him another man lies with his back to the room, possibly masturbating. A third man is sleeping on the floor, his face in the shit, a fourth man standing near the window. Opposite the cell, in another cell, a strange looking man stands almost motionless, staring at Jed. The only thing that is moving are his hands, which seem to be weaving an invisible thread. Jed returns the man's gaze for a moment, then sits down on the bottom bed of the other bunk and fingers his facial wounds.

The fourth man comes over.

FOURTH MAN

Hey buddy, you got a fag for me?

JED

I don't smoke.

FOURTH MAN

Come on, just one. I'm dying in here. EAT ME, FAGGOT COCKSUCKER!!

(man looks surprised by his own outburst)

Sorry. Got a fag, buddy?

JED
I don't smoke.

FOURTH MAN
Come on, just one. I'm dying in
here.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Jed comes out of the jail. He sees a garbage truck collecting garbage. He walks down the sidewalk and sees a notice for "spiritually enlightened" teacher.

EXT. GREASY CAFE - DAY

He arrives at his work place and enters. We see Jed talking to the boss, who looks angry.

EXT. GREASY CAFE - NIGHT

He comes out at the end of his shift and walks down the street. A whore makes a comment but he keeps walking. He notices a torn flyer on the ground, picks it up, the same one from before, spiritual enlightenment. He hails a cab. The cab stops, he gets in.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

He shows the driver the flyer. They drive for a while and a junky staggers in front of the cab and the cab brakes hard. Jed is thrown forward and hits his head. As he sits up again he watches the junky stagger off past a bar called "The Slow Club" and stop to beg change from some people outside. There's a sign in the window saying "STAND-UP, OPEN MIC". Among the people gathered is a very attractive young woman, ILLIANA.

JED
(to driver)
I want to get out here.

The taxi stops, he pays the driver and gets out. He approaches the bar. As he does so Illiana enters.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

He enters the bar just after Illiana. She doesn't notice him but he notices her. She goes and joins another girl at a table. Jed goes to the bar and orders a non-alcohol drink.

The bar-tender has shaved head and lots of tattos, but looks soft and friendly. There is a mirror on the wall behind the bar, and pictures of famous killers hanging up, including Ted Bundy, Osama Bin Laden, and Jeffrey Dahmer.

Jed looks towards the stage area, a guy standing next to a board with a couple of names on it, MIKE. Illiana goes over to him. Jed gets up and follows her. Illiana is chatting with Mike, who notices as Jed approaches and address him.

MIKE

You wanna sign up?

Illiana turns and looks at Jed. He seems speechless.

ILLIANA (V.O.)

Who's this guy he's got a nice face as well as a cute ass I wonder if he's flabby of course he could be gay he has a kind of soft mouth.

JED

(to Illiana, faltering,
one word at a time)

I ... hadn't ... planned ... on ...
it.

MIKE

OK.

ILLIANA (V.O.)

Jesus is he on drugs he's probably in a band or makes crystal meth for a living either that or he still lives with his parents or all three he smells kind of nice tho

MIKE

(to Jed)

What happened to your face?

JED

I hit it.

ILLIANA

You hit yourself?

JED

(seems dazed)

Kind of...

ILLIANA

Okaay.
 (rolls eyes)
 See you later Mike.

She turns and heads to the bar. Jed looks at Mike.

MIKE

Make up your mind yet, Tyler?

From the bar Illiana watches as Mike nods his head then writes a name on the board, "JON OSTERMAN." Jed returns to the bar as Illiana is leaving with her drink. Jed intercepts her.

JED

I changed my mind.

She looks at him like a total freak but her expression softens at his childlike appearance.

ILLIANA (V.O.)

Give him another chance maybe he's just shy or maybe he's a serial murderer or a rapist wouldn't be the first then again he looks more like he's retarded which would be cool i wonder what sex with a retard would be

JED

(blurts out)
Keep your mind off your father and you'll be fine!

ILLIANA

Huh?

JED

Nothing.

At that moment several cowboy guys playing pool all do a strange line-dance to the song, as if they are part of a movie musical set-piece. Jed watches it curiously. The cowboys resume their game of pool as if nothing has happened.

JED (CONT'D)

Did you see that?

ILLIANA

What?

JED

(looks around)
There's an echo in here that's all.
The furniture isn't quite how it
was last time.

ILLIANA

Not from around here, are you?
(V.O)
OK, he's completely batshit loony
tunes out to lunch right of course
step away from the stud muffin
illiana and don't look back

She backs away and goes back to her friend. Jed watches her then sits on a bar stool. He sips his drink and watches Illiana. She notices him and glances over, then looks back at her friend. Jed gets up and walks towards the toilet. Illiana watches him.

INT. BAR TOILET - NIGHT

As Jed urinates, he notices graffiti on the wall: "This is a flashback. You are already dead."

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The guy from earlier introduces the evening, a comic gets up and does his routine. Jed's turn comes. He walks slowly to the stage. He stands in front of the microphone and looks slowly around the room. There are about twenty people, many of whom are distracted. He notices Illiana watching him.

[NB: THIS MONOLOGUE IS A VERY ROUGH TEMPLATE, NEEDS WORK]

JED

(after long pause he
speaks, faltering)
It doesn't matter what my name is,
um, because names don't mean
anything. I will try to keep to the
facts. I'm enlightened.
(someone hoots)
I got enlightened during a bowel
movement.
(laughter)
After I got enlightened, my
girlfriend broke up with me.
(more laughter)
She said I wasn't the same anymore.
(big laugh)
(MORE)

JED (CONT'D)

After I got enlightened, it was difficult to communicate with people. Communication is based on certain assumptions. The first assumption is that we exist. Enlightenment changes all that.

(laughter)

Once I'd seen through the illusion that I existed, it was hard to keep up appearances.

(he looks around the room)

In Buddhism this is known as the world of desire. But once you're enlightened there's nothing left to desire. When my friends asked how I was doing, I asked them to rephrase the question.

(laughter)

There is no such thing as small talk once you get enlightened. It took me a while to realize that people were not pretending. They really thought they existed! A friend told me his mother was dying of cancer and that he was depressed. I thought he was joking.

(unsure laughter)

I was as if he'd said he was going to commit suicide because his toothpaste brand had changed its logo.

(laughter)

One thing I realized after I got enlightened was why people like movies so much: it's because they're in one. They're even making movies about people trapped inside TV shows. The dream keeps adapting to make sure you stay asleep. Meanwhile your body is rotting and your bones are turning to dust and soon there will be nothing left. Pretty soon, not even the smallest trace will remain that you ever existed. Becoming one with the infinite is the same as being reduced to zero. Looking out at this bar is like watching an old movie. The light of dead stars. Your death already happened, you just forgot to tune in. You died but you weren't there when it happened. This is a rerun. Oh. Sorry. I forgot to make you laugh.

(MORE)

JED (CONT'D)

Oh well. If you knew how true it is, you'd be laughing. I have to go now.

He steps away from the mike. There is scattered and uncertain applause.

Jed sits down at the bar. The bar tender gives him a raised eyebrow. Jed notices twins sitting at the other end of the bar, punks with tattoos. They both stare at Jed and whisper something to each other. Jed notices one of them seems to signal to someone behind him. He looks in the mirror and sees a man in a dark suit with an ear-phone attached to his head, sitting robot-like at a table, looking totally incongruous in the surroundings. He turns his head slowly and subtly to get a better look. The man is speaking into his head-set. At a table in front is Illiana, who thinks Jed is looking at her.

She gets up and goes to the bar, beside Jed. She is visibly drunk now. He notices her and looks over at her. She feels his attention on her and looks over.

ILLIANA

Hey.

JED

Hello.

ILLIANA

That was unexpected.

(V.O)

Hes pretty hot christ i need to piss i hope my breath doesnt stink enlightened? who knows maybe he's am i slurring my words i need to lie down he sure acts goofy

JED

(seems drunk all of a sudden)

Piss stink and slurry words the proof is in the goof!

ILLIANA

(puzzled)

Are you a rapper?

JED

(seems equally bewildered)

Only sometimes.

ILLIANA

I'm Illiana.

She seems to fall into a trance as she says her name. The whole bar seems to go quiet. Everyone stops moving and cocks their heads as if listening for a sound. Jed looks around at the bizarre scene. He hears Illiana's voice and the bar activity abruptly returns to normal. He looks over at her and smiles.

JED
Your mind has gone quiet. There must be some sort of adjustment period.

ILLIANA
(back to her drunken self)
What?

JED
Nothing. Thinking out loud.

ILLIANA
Are you really enlightened?

JED
No.

ILLIANA
(looks disappointed)
Figures.

JED
Yes.

ILLIANA
Huh? Which is it?

JED
Both. Neither.
(looks confused)
This conversation isn't happening the way it's supposed to.

ILLIANA
It went differently in your head, huh? I have that all the time.

Her friend LAURA shows up from the other side of the bar with drinks. She looks at Jed.

LAURA
Hi. Interesting act.

Jed and Illiana exchange a look.

JED

Thank you.
(questioning look)
You were a man last time.

LAURA

Say what??

He gazes at her until she begins to feel uncomfortable. She tries to cover it up with a laugh and waves her cigarette packet.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I'm gonna take a smoke break.

She heads towards the door. Jed and Illiana stare at each other.

ILLIANA

I think you just got here from another planet. Like that movie?

JED

This body was born here, on this planet. What you call Earth.

ILLIANA

See what I mean? Who the hell says "what you call Earth"?

JED

Things haven't been the same for me since--.

ILLIANA

Since you had a bowel movement, yeah I caught your act.

JED

You are looking for stud muffins?

ILLIANA

(smiles)
Whaaat? Where'd you pull that from?

JED

(almost embarrassed)
Something I heard somewhere. I'm not sure why but something about you is interfering with my perceptual faculties.

ILLIANA

Your "perceptual faculties"?

JED

There appears to be more than one time stream colliding - the outcome is indeterminate so the picture is unclear.

ILLIANA

I have no idea what you just said.

JED

Apparently we are at a crossroads.

ILLIANA

That's nice. What are the choices?

JED

Life or death. For you.

ILLIANA

Nothing major then.

JED

Not in the grand scheme of things, no.

ILLIANA

Just one question: What are you talking about?

JED

(confused)

Didn't I already answer that?

ILLIANA

In your head?

JED

It's not a rehearsal. It's a blueprint.

ILLIANA

(looking around for her friend)

Yah.

Jed's eye is caught by a scene from SEVEN playing on the TV: near the end as Brad Pitt is soon to find his wife's head in a box. He watches a moment then looks back at Illiana.

JED

What you think of as the future, I see as the past.

ILLIANA
 (thinks, shakes head)
 That sounds terrible.

JED
 It's not terrible. It's just what
 is.

ILLIANA
 I'd rather not know my future,
 thanks.

JED
 Yes, I know. That's what you said
 last time.

He looks relieved. Illiana looks like she is adjusting to his oddness and even starting to enjoy it. After a moment, Jed looks around and sees a guy and a girl at the bar. The guy shakes his head and makes the "time out" gesture with his fingers. Jed looks at the TV and sees a commercial for "Skypod" ("Keeping tabs on the Jones so the Jones know") with a telephone number flashing at the bottom of the screen.

JED (CONT'D)
 In a moment you're going to give me
 your telephone number, then I am
 going to leave just as your friend
 gets back.

ILLIANA
 (laughs)
 Pretty sure of yourself, huh?

JED
 No. It's not me I'm sure of. Did
 that come out wrong?

ILLIANA
 (smiles)
 Maybe just a little bit.

JED
 Oh.
 (seems to refer to some
 inner script)
 But it's still going to happen.

She smiles and waves to the barman, gestures at the pen he has in his shirt. The bar tender hands her the pen, followed by a beer mat. She writes on it and hands it to him, returns the pen to the barman. Jed smiles at Illiana. He glances up at the TV and sees Brad Pitt having a breakdown.

ILLIANA
 What's the future say now,
 Morpheus?

JED
 You said you don't wish to know.

ILLIANA
 That's right - I did.

She smiles at him knowingly, perhaps seductively. He turns to leave. As he does so he passes Laura coming back in. She gives him a look and joins Illiana.

LAURA
 That guy looks like trouble.

ILLIANA
 (smiles)
 Definitely.

Illiana watches Jed walk away down the street, stop and bend down to look at what looks like a puddle on the sidewalk.

INT. JED'S MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Jed enters the room, takes off coat, takes out beer mat and puts it inside a book, e.g., "Catcher in the Rye." He lies down on the bed and turns on the TV, flips channels and arrives at David Lynch's LOST HIGHWAY (first half hour).

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JED'S MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Now Link stands there. He looks under the bed, flips through a copy of "Catcher in the Rye," looks in the drawers, etc. He finds Jed's recording device. He turns it on. There is nothing but background hiss for several seconds.

JED (V.O.)
 Did you find what you were looking
 for?

Link gives a start and looks around as if expecting to see someone. He picks up the recorder, switches it off, and pockets it.

TITLE: THE CARRIER

[NB: THIS SCENE NEEDS DEVELOPING]

EXT. SLUM - NIGHT

Jed with short hair walks the streets. A girl, mid-20s, with short hair and tattoos, watches him from a distance. She approaches him.

SANDRA
I know what you want.

JED
What?

SANDRA
Come this way.

She takes him by the arm. They walk down a side street to a metal door with a sign over it, an occult-looking image of some sort. She uses a digital device to open the door.

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

They enter into a shadowy corridor, illuminated with candles, paintings on walls, masks, both run down and otherworldly, decadent, like EYES WIDE SHUT in a slum.

She leads him to some stairs going down. At the bottom of the stairs, a door opens and Link comes out. A figure stands in the door way. It is a woman but her face seems like an animal mask of some sort (owl?) - more than a mask, like she has had her features surgically altered.

ISHTAR
Come back soon, sugar.

LINK
I will.

Link passes Jed and Sandra and nods at them

INT. DUNGEON ROOM - NIGHT

They enter a dark, cave-like dwelling. She takes off her jacket. He stands in the doorway a moment then enters, sees a box of condoms on a table.

SANDRA
It's cash only.

Jed takes out some bills, Sandra indicates how much by helping him count it.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
OK, honey, I just need to check you out, so strip.

He looks at her blankly.

JED
You want me to undress?

SANDRA
Honey. It's your time.

He undresses while she puts the money away. She goes over to inspect him.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Ready for action, huh? I'm not even in costume yet.

JED
The body is always ready.

SANDRA
I've seen plenty that ain't.

JED
You get to meet many different types in your work.

SANDRA
You can say that again. OK, you're clean. Now put these on.

She gives him some electronic goggles, similar to those used by Link, but not the same.

JED
What is this?

SANDRA
Just finding your kink, honey.

JED
My chink?

SANDRA
Kink. What gets you off.

JED
Off?

He puts the goggles over his eyes and at once is flooded with a rapid series of images, some sexual, some violent, others more neutral, animals, buildings, food, and so on. On the side of the screen data is noting his retinal response. Meanwhile, Sandra is attaching another device to his genitals. There is a beeping sound from the goggles.

SANDRA

OK, you can take tem off now.

Jed does so, hands them to Sandra, looks down at the contraption on his groin, including a glass dome.

JED

What is this

SANDRA

Your wildest dreams come true.

JED

This is how you give satisfaction to strangers?

SANDRA

Latest technology.
(looking at the data
screen on the goggles)
So this is what you're into huh?

JED

What?

SANDRA

That would be telling. Wouldn't you rather I show you?

She begins to undress. Under her clothes she has what look like scales, like a lizard. He stares with fascination.

She hisses like a snake and puts electronic web-like contraptions onto her hands, her feet, and a similar thong-belt. They are like circuit-boards with glowing lights.

JED

And where is your satisfaction?

Instead of answering she moves her hands rapidly and Jed responds from his groin, lets out a grunt and twitches his body. Under the dome a hologram of Sandra appears, a tiny lap-dancer. Sandra moves her body and the hologram moves in the exact same fashion. Jed's face shows intense sexual pleasure.

JED (CONT'D)

Is this the real you?

SANDRA
 (smiles)
 One of me.

JED
 You are in the business of
 pretending.

SANDRA
 Isn't everyone?
 (she hisses, Jed smiles)
 Just relaxsssssss. You are in good
 handsssssss.

She begins to dance more energetically. Jed observes his own responses with curiosity.

JED
 We're connected? You feel my
 pleasure and respond to it.

SANDRA
 I ansssswer your appetitessss -
 your wildessst desssiresssss.

As she dances Jed allows himself to feel more and more his own pleasure and desire. He stares intensely at Sandra. The technology glows with the intensity of Jed's own energy. Sandra begins to dance faster and faster. Her face shows surprise - she is beginning to feel pleasure also and to lose control of her own body responses.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
 What? Honey - you are a dynamo.
 Slow down - I'm not - oh, oh, oh.

She loses sense of herself and seems to enter into a trance state. Her dancing becomes more and more frenetic and Jed closes his eyes and the hardware begins to glow. Sandra gasping and panting turns into a desperate moaning.

IMAGES rush before Jed's eyes, or Sandra's, or both (they are connected).

Sandra is moving so fast now that she looks like she is having an epileptic attack. Sandra screams in the throes of what could be ecstasy or agony, or both.

Jed orgasms.

Like a machine that has gone into overdrive and suddenly blown a fuse, Sandra abruptly collapses on the floor.

There is sudden, eerie silence.

Jed opens his eyes, The room has changed. It is now an ordinary motel room, seedy and dilapidated. Sandra has been replaced by a weird and lifeless lizard-doll-replica, the eyes open and staring. Jed looks down and sees a more primitive looking contraption on his genitals. The goggles are still there, as are the condoms and Sandra's clothing.

He removes the contraption from his genitals, stands up, and goes over to the doll. The artificial eyes stare up at nothing. He touches the scaly skin to see what it is made of. A scale comes off in his hand, he studies it closely.

He stands up straight and goes to a sink in the corner and washes his hands. He stares at himself in the mirror.

INT. DINGY MOTEL - NIGHT

Jed walks down the corridor, down the stairs and past the reception desk. An old man is staring at the TV and doesn't notice Jed. On the TV is a sci-fi movie about psychics, SCANNERS. (There is this exchange: Cameron Vale: "I'm one of you." Benjamin Pierce: "You're one of me? You're one of me?")

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Det. Link sits at his desk. He looks through photos of several weird replicas of dead women, including Sandra. His door is open. Palmer is outside, by the water cooler talking to an associate, BRINKS. Their conversation is overheard as BACKGROUND NOISE while Links goes through the photos.

PALMER

Early trauma leading to acute dissociation that's triggered more recently, and causing them to enter more deeply into the dissociative state.

BRINKS

Like a sleepwalker, you mean?

PALMER

Dissociation can include feelings of extreme bliss, elevation, out of body experiences. It can even involve a kind of psychism.

BRINKS

ESP?

Link is subtly trying to get Palmer's attention. She notices but ignores him.

PALMER
Not extra-sensory, extra-
consensual.

BRINKS
Right.

PALMER
Trauma can create a second
personality, a super-ego or dreamed
self, allowing the child to escape
an impossible reality. We're all
dissociated to one degree or
another, but it's usually too mild
to lead to a diagnosis.

BRINKS
If we were aware of it, would it
even be fragmentation?
(noticing Link's
gesturing)
Looks like Philip Marlowe wants
you.

PALMER
Yeah, I saw.

BRINKS
He probably wants you to do his psi-
work for him.

PALMER
That'll be the cover story.

BRINKS
Remember - don't feed the fantasy.

PALMER
I'll talk to you later.

She goes over to Link's open door, Brinks wanders away.

PALMER (CONT'D)
What's up?

LINK
Can I get your opinion on
something?

She looks at him dubiously. He looks slightly embarrassed.
They have a history.

LINK (CONT'D)
 If you've got a couple of minutes.
 A fresh pair of eyes might help.

PALMER
 (warily, wrily)
 As long as that's all it is.

Link attempts to cover up his embarrassment by being business-like.

LINK
 This run of deaths, I think there's
 something here.

PALMER
 The sex-techs?

LINK
 (as if correcting her)
 Young women. Not all of them were
 STs.

He shows her the photo of the uptown "body," then a photo of the woman when she was alive/real.

LINK (CONT'D)
 Abigail Hunt. 34. Worked in the
 Energy Conservation Department.

He gets out a map of the city. There are various points circled in red.

LINK (CONT'D)
 Six girls. All dead. Unknown
 causes.

PALMER
 That's it?

LINK
 Then there's this.
 (he opens his computer)
 We found a Spyrod in the hand of
 the _____ Ave victim.

PALMER
 (eyes Link)
 Victim?

LINK
 Casualty.

PALMER
 (looking at screen)
 Spywear?

LINK
 (nods)
 Earring.

On the screen, footage of a nightclub, from POV of the woman, moving through crowd, to bar.

LINK (CONT'D)
 I think this is our guy.

A male figure appears on the screen but his face is unrecognizable, as if he is wearing a mask, only digitalized. It resembles the animal face on the woman Link was visiting in the club/motel.

PALMER
 He's using a scrambler?

LINK
 Advanced kind, evidently.

As they watch the figure's mask-face morphs several times into different faces. The figure's body language and clothing is recognizably Jed, as is his voice when he speak. On computer screen:

ABIGAIL
 You've been watching me.

JED
 We're all being watched.

ABIGAIL
 Do I know you?

JED
 I am a known unknown.

ABIGAIL
 That's cute.

PALMER
 (speaks over Abigail and
 obscures her comment)
 How much of this is there?

JED
 You have to fast-forward to get to
 the good bits.

PALMER

What?

LINK

Mmm-hmm.

He fast-forwards the image.

PALMER

This guy go home with her?

LINK

Yeah. But she turns if off before they get to it. If they do.

PALMER

But if it was in her hand-?

LINK

Maybe she wanted someone to find it? That was my thought.

He stops and plays, now Abigail and Jed are in Abigail's apartment.

JED

What you are seeing is a flash memory on the collective membrane, like the image on the retina after staring at the sun for too long. All life burned out here millions of years ago, only the residual image is still there. If you stare at a movie screen long enough, the images take over your life and you end up repeating the exact same motions. Because you forget each time, you think each moment is new. You think you are making decisions. But the actors on the screen aren't real. They could have died years ago and you would not know it.

PALMER

Interesting seduction technique.

JED

There is no you. Only a somewhat self-aware repeating memory of "you." The real you died long ago.

ABIGAIL
You're looking at me like you want
to eat me out. Is that what you
want? To eat me out?

She laughs drunkenly, there is no response from Jed.

PALMER
(to Link)
So what do you want from me?

The question seems to have a double meaning.

JED
I want to know you from the inside.

Palmer gives a start. It is as if Jed is talking directly to her.

LINK
That keeps happening.

ABIGAIL
(cooly)
You have to find your way in first.

PALMER
What keeps happening?

LINK
Something he says on the recording
appears to be in response to
something in the moment.

PALMER
How would you explain that?

LINK
I can't. Obviously it's impossible.

JED
It only seems that way because you
think you are real. In fact, this
is a movie you are in now. These
words are all scripted.

LINK
See what I mean?

PALMER
Very interesting.

He turns down the volume. Palmer takes a moment to process this incident.

PALMER (CONT'D)

So?

LINK

What?

PALMER

What do you want from me?

LINK

(shrugs, trying to be
casual)

Thought you might have a fresh take
on it. Psychologically.

PALMER

You're trained in PF same as I am,
Link.

LINK

You know me, Palmer. I prefer the
old school.

PALMER

(looks at him dubiously;
Link looks blank)

Isn't the real question how these
girls died?

(looking at notes)

No marks, no struggle, no chemicals
in the body?

LINK

We can't establish how they died.
It's a mystery.

PALMER

Or just a coincidence?

LINK

(testily)

I don't buy "coincidence."

(indicates screen)

And Travis Bickle here's the proof.

They stand in silence. She studies his face.

PALMER

If the coroner said natural causes
how come these cases are even still
open?

He avoids her eyes and starts shuffling the papers back
together.

PALMER (CONT'D)
Link? *Is* there a case?

LINK
Maybe not separately. But anyone
can see-

PALMER
So this is your own private
investigation?
(she looks concerned)

LINK
Forget it, Palmer. If you're not
interested- I didn't ask you in
here to psychoanalyze *me*.

His tone is edgy enough that she backs off. She goes over to
his desk drawer, opens it.

PALMER
(taking out bottle of
whiskey and two glasses)
I need a drink. How about you?

LINK
Sure.

PALMER
(pours two glasses, hands
one to Link)
If these cases are connected, how
are they connected?

She takes a swig of whiskey, link does the same.

LINK
Could be a new street drug?

PALMER
Or maybe an epidemic? Have you
taken this to the CDC?

LINK
Yeah. Nothing they could find.

He takes another drink. Palmer look at the video screen.

PALMER
So you think this guy is your link?

At that moment, the digital "mask: over Jed's face slowly
morphs into what looks a lot like Link's face.

Jed raises his hand in a sort of half-wave, half-salute, and the screen goes suddenly blank.

Palmer and Link look at each other.

INT. TOWN - DAY

Jed sits on a park bench without moving while people pass. The ceaseless activity around him is speeded up, hours pass by in seconds, Jed does not move. No one stops to notice him.

JED (V.O.)

You are not able to experience reality until you drop all conceptual knowledge and cease to identify with a self.

Jed walks down the street in slow motion, around him the scene of people moving is speeded up to a blur.

JED (V.O.)

What your body experiences is not what the mind tells you is happening. Desire, fear, happiness, depression, purpose, meaning, love: these are all values you have created out of concepts. They only have meaning because you identify with them. Your body encounters another body - a beautiful girl or guy - and it experiences hormonal changes. You recognize that change in the mind and call it "desire." But it's not desire until you give it a name. Before that, it's only a chemical change in the body. Then, having named the desire, you identify with it and believe that it defines you in some way. You have to do something about it, or with it. You have become possessed by your "desire." Really, what has possessed you is an idea. The body isn't separate from the chemical processes, and you are not separate from the body. You have added layers of meaning to the experience: "This is desire; this is what I desire; this is what I must do to achieve my desire;

(MORE)

JED (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 this is what will happen if I do not achieve my desire." Layer after layer of meanings, which are really only beliefs. Associations, taken from the past.

Day turns to night. Jed is standing alone, lights swirling, gradually fading until he is completely surrounded by darkness, an isolate figure, becoming smaller and smaller.

JED (V.O.)
 There is only this moment. And because there is only this moment, there is no way to frame it in terms of past or future. And without past or future, there is no possible continuity. It's only the idea of continuity which creates the idea of a self. Continuity of experience. Memory. If there is only the moment, that doesn't leave room for you, because the idea of a self can only exist with reference to the past.

EXT. SLUM PARK - NIGHT

Jed is walking on the street, again figures speeded up behind him, everything is a blur through the park.

JED (V.O.)
 There is no past. The only kind of past that the body knows is trauma. The self is the result of trauma. It's a split or fragmentation of the body's awareness.

A teenage girl passes him, unlike the other people she is moving at the same slowed down speed as he is. He fixes his eyes on her, she doesn't notice him. She is beautiful, can't be more than sixteen. KRISTEL. He stops and watches as she goes and sits on a park bench, takes out an electronic cigarette. He goes over to her.

JED
 Do you mind if I sit down?

KRISTEL
 Do what you want.
 (she lights her smoke)

JED
What's your name?
(she tells him)
How old are you?

KRISTEL
Are you a cop?

JED
No.
(he notices needle marks
on her arm)
Are those from heroine?

KRISTEL
You want me to suck your cock?

JED
There is something different about
you.
(she seems too stoned to
register his words)
I was led here to meet you.

KRISTEL
Oh yeah? Was it Tony told you?

JED
Perhaps we are the same, you and I?

KRISTEL
You sure you're not a cop?

JED
The indications are mixed. I can't
get a clear reading.

KRISTEL
You talk weird.

JED
(studying her)
The elements of your body lack
cohesion. You are already
dispersing. Perhaps that's why we
are on the same time line. It will
only last a moment.

KRISTEL
It's twenty for a suck, forty for a
fuck.

JED
Does heroine help you relax?

KRISTEL
It helps me forget.

JED
Forget what?

KRISTEL
Everything.

JED
What does that leave?

KRISTEL
Nothing. This moment I can deal
with. You want to fuck me or what?

JED
What do *you* want?

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

They enter the room (the same room from the opening shot). The girl sits down and looks around the room. Jed looks around too and then he looks at her.

JED
Do you have any heroine?

KRISTEL
(suspicious)
Why?

JED
I want you to be relaxed. The more
relaxed the better.

KRISTEL
I can be unconscious if you want.
(she looks at him, reads
his blank expression)
Is that how you like it?

He seems unsure. He takes out two twenty-dollar bills and gives them to her.

She takes the money and leaves the room. Jed stands there a moment then begins to undress. He hears the girl saying something, and then the voice of a man. She comes back a moment later. She looks at him, naked except for shorts, smiles and closes the door.

She sits down and fixes up while he watches. Immediately after she puts her kit away, she lies back, half conscious.

From Kristel's point of view, Jed seems huge, strangely aglow, moving slowly. When he speaks he sounds like it's underwater. His words are unintelligible. She begins to hallucinate.

INT. KRISTEL'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - NIGHT

She is a little girl in her bedroom at night. Monstrous shadows appear on the walls. There is the sound of footsteps and a door creaking.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jed sits next to her and begins to caress her body. She moans softly in her stupor. He touches her breasts and she begins to tremble. He mounts her and she begins to wake up. She gasps and then cries out, in pleasure or pain.

KRISTEL

No, please, no, noooo.
(she begins to weep)

KRISTEL'S SENSES ARE FLOODED BY LIGHT.

Jed lies on top of the limp Kristel. She begins to yell ecstatically as she weeps.

KRISTEL (CONT'D)

Oh my God. Take me away. Yes! Yes!

She begins to shake and her eyes bulge. He tries to hold her steady. His eyes are wide and he seems to be experiencing what she is experiencing.

JED

You are safe now.

She dies in his arms.

CAMERA SPINS AROUND THE ROOM AND COMES BACK TO KRISTEL'S FACE, ONLY NOW IT IS THE FACE OF A DOLL.

JED (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

He lies down next to the doll, his eyes are filled with tears, his face is blank.

JED (V.O.)
You are safe now.

EXT. SEA FRONT - DAY

Jed walks along the sand.

JED (V.O.)
The pressure continues to increase.
All other avenues are closed
because of preference. The part
that the whole ignores must
eventually possess the whole. It is
not a question of expressing my
nature, but of expressing the whole
of Nature. It is a devouring force,
and I have become one with that
force. One with the flow of dying.

The waves crash ominously. Crows caw. He sees several picking
at a carcass, a dead dog.

TITLE: ORPHEUS & EURYDICE

INT. JED'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jed with medium hair is lying on his bed, channel surfing. He
imitates various different actors and personalities, as if
trying to get his social persona right. A scene from *The
Terminator*, near the start, when a naked Schwarzenegger
approaches street punks.

TERMINATOR
Your clothes. Give them to me -
now.

JED
Give them to me - now.

INT. JED'S MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Jed is brushing his teeth at the broken sink. On the wall is
a piece of paper with a hand-written list of things to do:
"Brush teeth. Shower. Breakfast. Work." etc. Next to it a
calendar with things marked for certain days of the week or
month. "Change clothes" every five days. "Change sheets" "Do
laundry" once a month. Jed notices that today is laundry day.

He finishes brushing his teeth and begins to gather together dirty clothes. He is looking under the bed when he finds the book "Catcher in the Rye." He picks it up and the beer mat falls out. He picks it up and sees Illiana's name and number.

EXT. JED'S TERRACE - DAY

Jed stands on the terrace looking down at the street below. He has a cell phone to his ear.

INT. BUS - DAY

Illiana is sitting by a window, hears her phone and takes it out. She sees that it is an unknown caller. She touches the phone several times until she has a video feed of Jed, standing on the terrace, seen from above, so only the top of his head is visible.

ILLIANA
(frowns)
Hallo?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. JED'S TERRACE - DAY

Jed standing looking out the window.

JED
This is Jed.

ILLIANA
Who?

JED
Jed. We were supposed to meet today.

ILLIANA
What?

JED
As soon as you agree, I mean.

ILLIANA
Who *is* this?

JED
(looks up)
It's me.

ILLIANA
 (sees Jed looking at her
 via phone, recognition)
 Oh - the comedian?! I forgot all
 about you!

JED
 Didn't we agree to meet today?

ILLIANA
 I haven't heard from you since that
 night.

JED
 Yes. Sorry. I get confused about
 time.

ILLIANA
 So you are always this weird.

JED
 Define weird.

ILLIANA
 I think you could write the book on
 it.

JED
 I'm not a writer.

ILLIANA
 (smiles)
 Never mind...

EXT. PARK OR SEA FRONT - DAY

Jed and Illiana walk in slightly awkward silence across the sand. They reach a dead fish, rotting. Jed stares at it fixedly. He seems able to see the tiny microbes devouring the flesh. Illiana is looking out to sea.

ILLIANA
 Isn't it beautiful?

JED
 (misunderstanding, still
 gazing at fish)
 Yes. Did you know there are more
 bacteria in the human body than
 human cells?

ILLIANA

What?

JED

So perhaps a human being is like a carrier for bacteria.

ILLIANA

You sure know how to charm a girl.

She laughs but he doesn't smile.

JED

Charm is a tool for manipulation.

ILLIANA

This is definitely the strangest date I've ever had.

JED

This is not a date.

ILLIANA

What is it then?

JED

Dating is a form of courtship consisting of social activities done by two people with the aim of each assessing the other's suitability as a partner in an intimate relationship or as a spouse, with the desired end of cohabitation and/or breeding.

She stares at him, then says to herself.

ILLIANA

What the hell am I even doing here?

JED

This is the only possible place for you to be.

He stops and stares at her and she stares back. He takes a step closer. She looks down and then up again.

JED (CONT'D)

It's at this point that we kiss.

ILLIANA

(still angry, also nervous)

What?

JED
We are supposed to engage
romantically.

ILLIANA
Supposed to? You don't want to?

JED
It's irrelevant what I want.

ILLIANA
Jesus!

She turns away but he grabs her. She seems to want to resist while at the same time to be experiencing desire. She is visibly torn in opposing directions. Their lips are almost touching. She is breathing rapidly. He kisses her and she faints. He catches her and lifts her in his arms. He carries her over the sand to a shady spot under a tree. He lays her gently down. After a time, she stirs and her eyes open. She sits up with a jolt. She is disorientated and looks at him like he is a stranger. He smiles and she tries to cover her confusion.

ILLIANA (CONT'D)
What happened?

JED
You fainted.

She looks around like she doesn't know where she is or how she got there. She looks at herself and then at him, with a suspicious look.

INT. BUS - DAY

They sit in silence on the bus, staring forward, like strangers.

SOUND of washing machine transitions us to the next scene.

EXT. LAUNDRETTE - NIGHT

Jed sits inside the laundrette, reading "Catcher in the Rye."

INT. LINK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Clock by bed says 3 am. Link is lying on his back with his eyes wide open. There's a SOUND of a washing machine working somewhere, and shouting from the street. Link's eyes roam around the room aimlessly.

EXT. SEA FRONT - DAY

Jed faces Illiana, who gazes up at him. As he talks, there are SHOTS of people walking, lovers, embracing, children playing, all romantic, Hallmark style images.

JED

When you talk about love, you are talking about the core of human delusion. When you tell someone that you love them, what you are really saying is you want to own them. I will take care of you and treat you right, as long as you return my love and take care of me and give me everything that I need to be happy. If you stop giving me good feelings, then I will kill you! At the very least, I will make you wish you were dead.

INT. LINK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

After a while Link reaches for the remote control and turns on the computer-screen. Late night movie is DONNIE DARKO. He brings up another screen next to the movie, sort of a Google earth program, "SHARENET" - it allows him to see inside Palmer's house. On the screen/CUT TO:

INT. PALMER'S HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Palmer is lying on her bed doing exactly what Link is doing, watching someone else.

It is only subliminally glimpsed: she is watching Jed.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SEA FRONT - DAY

We see Illiana's face, hair blowing in the wind. Seagulls flying overhead, etc.

JED (V.O.)

Love is the core psychosis of human beings. All the evil in the world is done for love. Every last bit of it.

(MORE)

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

There isn't a psychopath, warlord, emperor, president, or child killer in history who wasn't motivated by love or the desire for it. When you love something, it becomes the object of your love and you have to control it to make sure it stays. And since you cannot control anything, not even your own desire, you end up wanting to destroy it. The only kind of love that doesn't lead to murder is love without an object. That is not love. It is something else.

INT. LINK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Link asleep with the remote in his hand while the movie still plays, e.g., the scene about "God's channel." On the other half of the screen, Palmer is now sleeping.

MONTAGE OF SHOTS TO SHOW TIME PASSING.

INT. JED'S MOTEL TERRACE - NIGHT

Jed is sitting on the terrace staring at the streets several stories below. He looks like he could have been there for days. There is the buzzing of a phone. He seems to become slowly aware of his surroundings, then of the sound. He follows the sound into his room and to a drawer, opens it and finds the phone under various clutter, discarded and forgotten. He turns it on.

JED

Hello?

INT. UNDERGROUND CLUB - NIGHT

Illiana is in a quiet part of a very dark and seedy club, smoking an electronic cigarette. She looks over at a bunch of people getting drunk and laughing (her friends). She looks tired and red-eyed. On a big screen behind her, THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH plays.

ILLIANA

It's me.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. JED'S MOTEL TERRACE - NIGHT

Jed sitting at the top of his tower.

JED

Hello.

ILLIANA

How have you been?

JED

My cells continue to regenerate so--

ILLIANA

Never mind.

(pause)

Listen - I'm sorry I reacted the way I did. It was stupid.

JED

It was natural.

ILLIANA

No, it was stupid.

JED

It is natural for you to act stupidly.

ILLIANA

(hardly listening, has a sudden idea)

Listen - do you want to come over tomorrow? I thought you could meet my folks, have some food?

JED

You want me to eat some food?

ILLIANA

And meet my folks. You know, like normal people? Is that insane?

JED

Insanity is a subjective-

ILLIANA

Yeah, but, will you come?

JED

(thinks)

This does not turn out very well.

ILLIANA

There must have been a reason we met, right?

JED

There was a reason.

ILLIANA

I just want to do something ordinary, you know, like ordinary people do?

JED

There is no such thing as an ordinary person.

ILLIANA

How about tomorrow night?

JED

Evidently this is important to you.

ILLIANA

Yes. It is.

Illiana puts away her phone and takes a swig of her drink. A drunk guy next to her makes a pass at her. She pushes him away but limply.

EXT. JED'S MOTEL TERRACE - NIGHT

Jed sits and stares out over the city.

INT. ILLIANA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Jed, Illiana, mother and father sit around a dinner table in a working class house with a foreign feel to it. The living room adjacent to them looks like it doubles for a workshop: there are doll parts lying around and partially finished dolls, harlequin-like, including a ventriloquist's dummy in one corner. Also various tools, scissors, sewing kit, glue, etc.

The mother speaks in broken English, the father appears at first not to speak English at all. On the table steamed turnips and carrots, roast beef, beans, celery, white bread. Red wine in a decanter. They sit eating in silence for a half minute or more.

MOTHER

What do you do for living, Jed?

JED
If by living you mean money, I wash
dishes.

Father looks at Illiana, who translates for him.

MOTHER
That's nice. Did you go to
(says word to Illiana)

ILLIANA
University.

MOTHER
To uniwersity?

JED
Yes. But I - dropped out.

He seems confused by his own sentence. The mother doesn't quite understand so Illiana translates for both her parents. Jed eyes the dolls in the other room. They seem to be staring at him, judging him.

MOTHER
You have plans - for future?

JED
There is no future.

One of the dolls seems to be laughing at him. Illiana looks at Jed and suppresses a smile. The mother looks puzzled and fakes a smile. The father looks disgusted. He grumbles something in his own language. Jed farts without showing any reaction. The mother and daughter exchange a look and the mother smiles nervously. The father cackles.

MOTHER
This is the first time my daughter
has brought a friend home since
(she eyes Illiana)
Since she was very serious about
someone. She must be serious about
you.

She gives Jed a flirtatious look.

JED
She is using me for a specific
purpose.

A glance passes between Illiana and her father. Jed is staring at the wine in the decanter, the color of it seems to suffuse his world utterly.

After an indeterminate period of such immersion, he comes back to an awareness of the scene before him. The two women are staring at him.

JED (CONT'D)
We only just met actually.

MOTHER
(to Illiana)
I thought you said you had known him a year.

JED
We met 295 days ago.

MOTHER
I do not understand.

Illiana stifles a laugh.

ILLIANA
Jed is different from other men.

She throws a defiant look at her father which Jed catches. The father seems indifferent to the scene. He jerks his head at Illiana.

FATHER
(in Native tongue,
subtitled)
Pass the salt.

Illiana takes the salt and pushes it towards him in a passive-aggressive way. He grabs her wrist and squeezes it, then takes the salt from her. As he takes his hand away from her wrist, he lets the fingers linger on her skin, caressing it. Jed watches closely as if in trance.

A sequence shows Jed's subjective experience - as his awareness gets "snatched" by various sounds, shapes, colors, in the room. A dripping tap in the kitchen. The father's chewing. The mother grinding her shoulder making the bones pop. The hiss-buzzing of an electric fire. He becomes temporarily lost in a sensory chaos, in which he can dimly hear the people conversing, overlapping with what seem to be their innermost thoughts.

FATHER (CONT'D)
(to Illiana)
Those clothes make you look like a whore/I will be coming to visit you tonight.

ILLIANA

Dad! This is the 21st century/you pathetic lech why don't you just die?

MOTHER

Is your mother alive, Jed?/you are too good for my daughter, you need a real woman.

JED

(to no one)

Family is a kind of pathology.

The two women look at him expectantly.

JED (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Humans are the only animals who continue familial relations beyond biological necessity.

MOTHER

(disconcerted)

Do you see much of your family, Jed?

JED

I don't have a family.

MOTHER

You are an orphan? That is very sad.

JED

The humans who bred this body are alive but this body has no remaining attachments to them.

MOTHER

(suppressing distaste)

Family is important to everyone. Blood is thicker than water. Isn't that right, Victor?

The father merely grunts.

JED

The most common kind of murder occurs between family members. It is part of the biological program.

Illiana smiles privately to herself. The mother is looking like she is on the verge of panic.

MOTHER

We are more than simply biological - animals!

JED

Technically, the suppression of instincts through violent conditioning means we are less than animals.

MOTHER

(to Illiana)

Your boyfriend is very unusual.

ILLIANA

I told you.

JED

(to Illiana)

Does your mother always try to seduce your boyfriends?

Illiana laughs, slightly out of control, then becomes serious. The mother looks angry.

MOTHER

I look out for my little girl.

The father slams his fist down.

FATHER

More wine!

Illiana stands up and goes over, pours him the wine. He eyes her ass lasciviously, like a jealous monarch. Jed observes this. The mother seems oblivious. Jed watches, a scene appears before his eyes.

INT. ILLIANA'S BEDROOM AS CHILD - NIGHT

A young girl, perhaps eleven, lies in bed, her eyes open in fear. A shadowy figure appears in the door way, stumbles drunkenly over to the bed, breathing heavily. The child Illiana closes her eyes in despair.

INT. ILLIANA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Jed looks at Illiana with compassion in his eyes.

JED

Does your mother know about you and your father?

It is as if the room freezes. Illiana looks terrified, the mother looks like she has gone into a trance, and the father looks furious. They are all frozen. It is as if time has stopped. A previously dripping tap no longer is dripping, a buzzing clock no longer buzzes. Time actually HAS slowed down. Jed surveys the family curiously, as if studying waxwork figures.

He has a series of VISIONS, of the mother and father naked, arranged in grotesque sexual positions, like the dolls they make for a living.

He begins to speak, slowly and deliberately.

JED (CONT'D)
 Sometimes it's difficult for me to
 tell the difference between
 conscious and unconscious behavior.

His words seem to break the spell and there is suddenly a flurry of movement.

MOTHER
 (reaching for bowl)
 Would you like some more turnips,
 Jed?

The father half stands and knocks his wine glass over. Illiana is sprayed with wine and also stands up. The father grabs a knife and points it at Jed. The mother also stands and cries out.

FATHER
 (to Jed)
 YOU ARE UNCLEAN!! STAY AWAY FROM MY
 DAUGHTER!!

Jed is entirely unperturbed. Illiana and the mother seems unsure what to do. Jed looks at each of them in turn.

FATHER (CONT'D)
 You hear me, *diable*?

JED
 (to father)
 Once I have sex with your daughter
 then - the relationship will -
 terminate.

Illiana lets out a gasp and leaves the room. Jed looks around again. The mother starts clearing the table manically. The father takes out a cigarette and lights it.

JED (CONT'D)
May I use your bathroom please?

It is as if he hasn't spoken. The mother continues clearing away plates, goes into the kitchen, passing Jed like he is invisible. The father looks around for his daughter.

FATHER
Illiana! Bring me an ashtray!

EXT. ILLIANA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - TERRACE - NIGHT

Illiana is emptying three pills out of a vial into her hand as she hears the shout. She turns her head in fear, then takes the pills.

INT. ILLIANA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The mother returns with an ashtray and puts it next to the father. He stares at it then sweeps it off the table with his arm. It shatters on the floor.

FATHER
Illiana!!

Jed backs away from the scene.

EXT. TERRACE - NIGHT

Illiana lights a cigarette. Her hands are shaking.

INT. TOILET - NIGHT

Jed urinates, flushes, and washes his hands. He takes a plunger from next to the toilet.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Father pours himself more wine, looking furious. He flicks his cigarette into a pile of ash on the table.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

As Jed is passing, he sees the mother in the kitchen and stands in the door watching her. The plunger is in his hand, at his side. She gives a start and looks at him.

MOTHER
Would you like some coffee with
your desert?

JED
No, thank you.

MOTHER
Some tea then.

It is not a question, more of a command.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Would you help me?

He comes closer and she notices the plunger in his hand. Without commenting, she takes it out of his hand and puts it on the counter. She holds onto his hand and stares at it. He stands there without expression.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Father downs his drink and pours another. He mutters to himself angrily.

EXT. TERRACE - NIGHT

Illiana finishes her cigarette. She seems to be in a trance-like state now. She looks into house, at the father, who is reflected in a glass surface. The father looks towards kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The mother moves closer to Jed, gazing at his hand, seeming to be in a kind of trance.

MOTHER
You are strong, you look for one
who is weak. Here your looking end.
You make complete in other. Here
the line is broken, become more
strong. You are -

She stops and looks up at him.

JED
Yes?

MOTHER

You are dangerous man. My daughter
is child. You need woman. Strong
woman, big heart, like you - strong
heart. Here-

She puts his hand to her left breast, pulls open her blouse
so it is inside, touching her flesh.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Feel my heart!!

Jed does not resist. She gasps and kisses him passionately
and as he does she begins to shudder violently. She is having
a seizure.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The father gets up and walks towards kitchen.

EXT. TERRACE - NIGHT

Illiana watches her father with wide eyes but not clear
emotion.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jed lowers the jerking, unconscious mother to the floor as
the father enters. He sees his wife on the floor with her
shirt open, Jed leaning over her. He shouts something
unintelligible and rushes over and grabs Jed. He yanks him to
his feet.

FATHER

(in his own tongue)

What did you do to her, *diable!*?

They both look at the mother, still shuddering, saliva coming
out her mouth.

The father swings at Jed. Jed dodges and picks up the
plunger. He pushes the rubber end forcefully into the
father's face. The suction effect causes it to grab onto his
face, while he flails his arms ineffectively, trying to
remove it. Apparently he can't breathe. After a few moments,
Jed pulls the plunger off the father's face with a loud
popping sound. The father, his face bright red, gasps for air
and falls forward, unconscious.

At this moment Illiana enters. She seems like a little child now. She stares at her mother, delirious on the floor and foaming, then at her father, also on his back, unconscious.

ILLIANA

Papa?

Jed looks up at her coolly. Illiana seems transfixed by the scene. After a moment Jed goes into the living room. Illiana follows him.

INT. ILLIANA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

He opens a work basket and takes out a pair of special scissors, for cutting clothing. It is as if he knows exactly where to find them. He pauses to exchange a look with one of the dolls.

ILLIANA

(child voice)

What are you doing?

JED

You *will* see.

He returns to the kitchen, Illiana following. He kneels down and begins to cut off the mother's clothes.

ILLIANA

What you doing to momma?

JED

(looks up at her)

Come and see what mommy and daddy are doing, Illiana.

She stares at him, then at them. SHOT of dolls, watching the scene with dispassionate eyes.

ILLIANA

They gettin' naked!

JED

Want to play with them?

Illiana laughs and goes over, kneels down beside Jed, who is now removing the father's clothing.

ILLIANA

Ha!

Jed finishes undressing the father and begins to move his unconscious body.

JED

What shall we have them do?

Illiana's eyes twinkle mischievously.

A SERIES OF IMAGES OF THE NAKED PARENTS IN GROTESQUE SEXUAL POSITIONS, WEARING CLOWNISH MAKE-UP, SURROUNDED BY DOLLS, WITH VEGETABLES IN THEIR ORIFICES, ETC.

EXT. BUILDING - NIGHT

Jed and Illiana are running away from the building, like kids. Jed is ahead of Illiana, who follows. Jed does not look back.

INT. TUNNEL - NIGHT

They are walking now, down a tunnel, Jed still several paces ahead, Illiana walking like a little girl. Gradually her walk becomes less and less childlike until she is walking like a woman.

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Jed passes the bar but Illiana notices it and shouts.

ILLIANA

Hey! Let's get a drink.

Jed stops. He does not turn. Illiana walks up to him until she is directly behind him. Jed looks over at the bar, which has a dark, dungeon-like theme.

She smiles and turns him around until he is facing her. He seems frozen now, something like despair on his face.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

She leads him by the hand towards the toilets. They reach the ladies and she opens the door, looks in, then leads him inside. He goes passively along.

INT. BAR TOILET - NIGHT

She goes into a cubicle. He stands outside as if at a loss.

ILLIANA
Come on. And close the door!

She takes out white powder (oxycontin) and lays it out on the toilet lid. Snorts it.

ILLIANA (CONT'D)
Do you want some?

JED
No.

ILLIANA
Suit yourself.

She snorts the rest then moves closer to him.

ILLIANA (CONT'D)
And now I want you to fuck me.

JED
I'm not sure that's a good idea.

ILLIANA
Why not? Isn't this the future you saw?

JED
Some of the variables have changed but-

ILLIANA
I'm ready now. I want you to fuck me.

She moves closer towards him.

JED
I don't think you know what -

ILLIANA
Trust me. I know.

She brings her mouth close to his and puts her hand on his crotch.

ILLIANA (CONT'D)
Don't you want me? *Part* of you does.

She goes down on her knees and unzips his fly. He closes his eyes.

INT. DILAPIDATED ROOM - NIGHT

A seedy-looking man lies on a bed looking towards something. There is the sound of a baby gurgling and whining. The man reaches into his trousers.

MAN

Put it in his mouth.

The sound of whining becomes a sucking sound.

INT. BAR TOILET - NIGHT

Jed's eyes are closed. He opens them. A tear rolls down his face.

JED

Now it's quiet.

Illiana begins to shake and shudder.

The SOUND of water rushing through the pipes as we move into the toilet bowl, all the way into darkness.

TITLE: DOLLS

INT. POLICE STATION, LINK'S OFFICE - DAY

Link is sitting at his desk with his computer open. On the wall behind him are dozens of printed images of the digital "mask" that obscured Jed's face on the Spypod video recording. A 3-D figurine of the image of Jed stands by his desk - advanced 3-D printing creates an actual effigy. The figurine's head is a weird blob shape of various features merging together.

Link is running the images through the computer trying to find a facial match. Obviously wrong matches come up: Obama. Ed Gein. Osama Bin Laden. Kevin Spacey. Gabriel Link. He stares at his own image and mutters a curse.

He checks another screen and finds it blank. He reaches into a drawer and takes out a tiny surveillance drone in the shape of an insect. He programs it via his computer with specific coordinates (or a prior setting "Palmer's office"), and then activates it.

The drone buzzes out his office, down various passages, passing Brinks, who is carrying a file, until it reaches Palmer's office.

INT. POLICE STATION, PALMER'S OFFICE - DAY

Palmer is at her desk and does not notice the drone as it enters. Brinks enters and waves the file.

BRINKS
Got something for you.

INT. POLICE STATION, LINK'S OFFICE - DAY

Link watches the scene on his computer, and hears the dialogue.

BRINKS
You wanted anomalies. This definitely qualifies.

PALMER
Leave on the desk. Thanks.

BRINKS
(laying on the desk)
You got it.

Brinks leaves Palmer's office. Link tries to manipulate the drone to read the file cover but there's nothing on it. He goes and stands beside the Jed-effigy (if it is full-size?). He notices something: on one shirt sleeve there are two buttons, on the other only one: a missing button. He goes back to his computer and brings up file on dead girl (from OPENING SCENE), clicks on "evidence" and finds an image of a button in a plastic bag.

He runs the image through his 3D printer, producing a replica of the button. He takes it out and holds it next to the effigy-sleeve. It is a perfect match.

He notices then on the other screen, Palmer is reading the file. He goes and sits down, directs the drone to a position behind her.

INT. POLICE STATION, PALMER'S OFFICE - DAY

Palmer hears the buzzing and turns. She squints her eyes and sees the drone-fly. She rolls up the file and gets up.

INT. POLICE STATION, LINK'S OFFICE - DAY

Link sees Palmer coming towards the drone/camera.

LINK

Uh-oh.

INT. POLICE STATION, PALMER'S OFFICE - DAY

She swats the fly-drone.

INT. POLICE STATION, LINK'S OFFICE - DAY

The screen-image of Palmer's office goes dead.

LINK

Uh-oh.

INT. POLICE STATION, PALMER'S OFFICE - DAY

Palmer picks up the crushed drone, which is buzzing limo, electronic entrails showing. She goes round the desk and out the door, still holding the rolled up file.

INT. POLICE STATION, LINK'S OFFICE - DAY

Link closes the screen-image and tries to look busy. Palmer comes storming in waving the rolled up file.

PALMER

Link!

LINK

Palmer. Great timing, I just found something-

He picks up the button and puts it in the palm of his hand, extends it towards her. She doesn't bother to look at the button but instead places the dead drone onto his palm. It lies next to the button.

LINK (CONT'D)

What's this?

PALMER

Don't play dumb, Link. You know what it is.

LINK

Can this wait?

PALMER

Did I or did I not tell you no more surveillance? It's gone past creepy.

Her voice is raised and a couple of people outside the office look over. Link closes his hand over the objects, gets up and closes the door. Palmer is staring at him challengingly. He seems at a loss for words.

PALMER (CONT'D)

I know you watch me at night, Gabe.

LINK

You're hooked up for it. If you don't want to be seen, why allow cam-access?

PALMER

I've got nothing to hide.

LINK

So what's the problem?

PALMER

(coolly)

Don't try and turn this around, Link. It's unprofessional and you know it.

LINK

(heated)

Didn't we already cross that line, Evelyn?

PALMER

That was a mistake.

LINK

Chalk it down to human error, huh?

PALMER

This isn't the time or the place for this discussion.

LINK

Fine.

(jerks head at file)

What's in the file?

PALMER

Didn't your pet drone already give you a full report?

LINK
Is it private? I wouldn't want to-

PALMER
Reverse-psychology, Link? You've
picked up a few tricks I see.

LINK
I learned from the best.

They stare at each other for a few seconds. She hands him the file with a sigh.

PALMER
Knock yourself out.

She turns to leave. Link opens the file.

LINK
What is it?

PALMER
(stops, turns)
Look at the photos.

He finds the photos of the parents in weird sex poses.

INT. ILLIANA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DAY

Illiana's parents sit at the table, giving statement to two policemen.

PALMER (V.O.)
A Ukrainian couple, run a small
doll-making business in _____. They
filed a complaint this morning.
Apparently their daughter's
boyfriend assaulted them.

INT. POLICE STATION, LINK'S OFFICE - DAY

Link is still looking at the bizarre photos.

LINK
They're doll-makers?

PALMER
While they were unconscious he
stripped them naked, put make-up on
them, and took photos.

LINK
Playing with dolls?

PALMER
You'd know all about that, right?

She eyes the effigy.

LINK
(looks uneasy, thinks
maybe she is referring to
his sexual habits)
What's that supposed to mean?

PALMER
Forget it.

LINK
So why bring this to me?

PALMER
I didn't, remember?

They stare at each other for a moment. Palmer sighs, as if
relenting slightly.

PALMER (CONT'D)
They caught the assailant on CCTV,
leaving the building with the
daughter, either following him or
chasing him.

Link starts flipping through the file eagerly.

LINK
There's an image?

PALMER
The girl came out but he didn't.
Face scrambled. Some sort of
advanced tech. Either that or-

LINK
(slams file shut)
It's him!

He goes over to his desk and opens a screen on his computer.

PALMER
Your Spidey-sense tingling?
(he ignores her)
Seriously, Gabriel. Have you
noticed anything unusual about your
behavior recently?

LINK
 (stops, looks up at her)
 What?

PALMER
 (approaches the effigy)
 This guy isn't your doppelganger.
 This isn't a cop thriller you're
 in.

LINK
 What - different genre?

PALMER
 We are off the map now.

LINK
 You seem pretty interested in him
 yourself.

PALMER
 He's an anomaly.

LINK
 That's what you like, right - the
 weird ones?

The insinuation is all-too-clear. Palmer rolls her eyeballs.

PALMER
 Have fun with your dolls, Link.

She leaves the room. Link watches her go, with perhaps a wistful or a resentful look, or both.

On the screen, separate images of Illiana's father and mother. Link gets out his phone, puts on a headset, and dials. He gets a recorded message on the phone.

ILLIANA (V.O.)
 Hi. I'm having too much fun to talk
 right now. Leave a message and when
 I'm in the mood, I *may* call you
 back.

A tinkling laugh and a beep. Link shuts off phone, dials another number. SOUND of dialling.

INT. BAR TOILET - DAY

A bar hand opens the cubicle door and finds Illiana's body.
 [A real body, not doll?]

SOUND OF RINGING

INT. ILLIANA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DAY

Illiana's mother and father are sitting in the living opposite each other. They are not moving. The father has doll parts at his feet. They look like figurines. The phone rings.

EXT. BAR - DAY

An ambulance arrives and paramedics rush out.

Police arrive on the scene.

The body is carried out on a stretcher.

INT. ILLIANA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DAY

The phone is ringing. The mother picks up.

INT. POLICE STATION, LINK'S OFFICE - DAY

LINK

Hello, Mrs. Oleksienko? This is Detective Link from Psychological Forensics.

INT. MORGUE - DAY

The body of Illiana is given a once over by the medical examiner. He checks her fingernails for any abrasions, crotch for signs of rape, body for bruise marks, eyes. He takes a blood sample. Meanwhile we hear Link's voice:

LINK (V.O.)

I was wondering if you knew the whereabouts of your daughter? ... Did she stay with you last night? Yes, I have her address. I was wondering you have a recent picture of her, a digital image, which you could send? I don't know if she's missing, there's no reason to think she is just yet. But I do want to talk to her. Great. My number is ---

Meanwhile, the medical examiner adds his finding to the report.

For "cause of death" he types in "heart failure, cause unknown. Traces of alcohol, _____ [prescription med. for anxiety] and oxycontin, insufficient to cause death." He hits "save."

INT. POLICE STATION, LINK'S OFFICE - DAY

There is a beep on Link's phone and he sees a file has been sent. He brings up an image of Illiana.

LINK
Got it, thank you.

At that moment his computer also makes a sound and he sees an "UPDATE ALERT: HEART-GIRL-DEATHS."

LINK (CONT'D)
So far we haven't turned anything up on him, but we have your description.

As he speaks he clicks on the Update and sees the case report, reads "JANE DOE, HEART FAILURE, UNKNOWN CAUSE OF DEATH, AGE ESTIMATE: 24. TRACES OF ALCOHOL, OXYCONTIN & ----". There is an image of Illiana's body in the toilet, and then a shot of her cadaver at the morgue. Link looks from the image to the one on his phone.

LINK (CONT'D)
One more question Mrs. Dollykinko - I'm sorry, Mrs. Oleksienko. Do you know where your daughter met this man? Do you know the name of the bar? What kind of comedy routine? OK. Yes, thank you. I have to go now. Please be sure and call me if you hear from your daughter.
(he makes a face,
realizing his mistake)
Thank you. Goodbye.

He turns off the phone and looks at the shot of Illiana from the morgue.

He does a quick search on bars that have open mic comedy night, finds the correct venue [Is it the same as bar where Illiana died?]. He goes to her Facebook page. The first thing he comes upon are the weird sex-images of her parents. He searches further back, further back, until he finds images of the comedy club night. There are various shots, including ones of Illiana taken by Laura, her friend. In one of these, Jed can be seen towards the edge of the screen, doing his routine. Somehow Link instinctively recognizes him.

AS HE NARROWS HIS EYES AT THE IMAGE, ALL THE BLOB-LIKE PHOTOS BEHIND HIM COME TOGETHER, MERGE INTO A SINGLE, RECOGNIZABLE IMAGE OF JED, AS SEEN IN THE PHOTO ON ILLIANA'S FB PAGE.

LINK (CONT'D)
Keizer Soze has a face.

He runs a face recognition check and up comes a profile of Jedediah Frost.

LINK (CONT'D)
Pleased to meet you, "Jedediah."

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Palmer stands outside the elevators. The doors open, two cops come out, nod at her, she nods back. She looks around, enters the elevator.

INT. POLICE ELEVATOR - DAY

She presses the "close doors" button, then passes her finger print over a scan-screen. This allows her to enter in a different floor destination, several levels below the official levels. It takes a while to get there. She dials a number and speaks into her headset.

PALMER
Link's going to pick him up soon.
... Already on my way.

EXT. SLUM - DAY

Link walks the streets of Jed's neighborhood. He talks to the street walkers, showing them a print-out the photo of Jed from the bar. The girls shrug, either indifferent or ignorant, or both.

INT. UNDERWORLD - DAY

Elevator doors, closed, are surrounded by a strangely austere, featureless environment. The doors open and Palmer comes out.

She walks down a very strange, curved corridor, with translucent white walls. It seems to be lit by an invisible light source.

She reaches the end of the corridor, it seems like a dead-end. She touches her hand to the wall and then walks straight through the wall.

On the other said, Palmer stands bathed in light. She nods, acknowledging an unseen presence.

EXT. SLUM - DAY

Link talks to another girl, one with a surgically altered face, who seems more cooperative.

From a distance, another girl, the owl-face "sex tech" we saw with Link before spots them. She comes over at a quick march.

ISHTAR

Hey! What you doing, girl. That's my trick!

Link turns and recognizes her, puts his hands up to placate.

LINK

Take it easy, Ish.

ISHTAR

Don't "take it easy" me! What you doing making time with this skank whore? I ain't good enough for you all of a sudden?

LINK

This isn't what it looks like, Ish.

ISHTAR

Oh? So what is it then?

LINK

It's strictly business.

ISHTAR

What you think I'm doing? I ain't in this for the tickles, Jack.

CUT TO:

INT. JED'S MOTEL ROOM - DAY

OVERHEAD SHOT FROM JED'S WINDOW: Link walking with purpose towards the building.

Jed closes the terrace door and leaves his room.

EXT. JED'S MOTEL - DAY

Link approaches the building as Jed comes out the front door. He stands there, facing Link on the other side of the street. He raises his hand in a wave.

TITLE: A MOMENT OF TRUTH

INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Jed and Link sit facing each other.

LINK
This is a waste of my time.

It is an empty show of bravado. Jed smiles compassionately.

JED
And your time is precious.

LINK
What's that supposed to mean?

JED
It's later than you think. You just need to let yourself see.

LINK
Are we back to the Dead Zone again?
What do you see, Johnny?

JED
I see everything. I have learned to filter out what is inessential.

LINK
If you see the future, K-Pax, then you knew those women would die.

JED
It was a possibility.

LINK
I think you had something to do with what happened.

JED
I am involved with everything. When
you sleep at night, I watch over
you.

LINK
There's a comforting thought.

JED
It all ends tonight.

LINK
(ignores comment)
You want to tell me what happened
to those women?

JED
No one can be told. You can see.

LINK
See how?

JED
Everyone is different.

LINK
(impatient)
Who are you - Morpheus? Quit
talking in riddles!

JED
It sounds like a riddle to you
because you are missing most of the
pieces.

LINK
Give me a break! This isn't some
movie!

JED
Are you sure ab--?

LINK
(cuts him off)
And you're not some Ozymandias
dancing circles around the good
guys! You're just some pathetic
loser who gets off by screwing
young girls!

Jed just looks at him and remains silent. Link takes out the recording device from Jed's room.

LINK (CONT'D)
 Recognize this? No? How about this.
 (he presses play)

JED ON TAPE
 Another girl vacated tonight. There
 must be a way... for them to
 receive the transmission without
 total withdrawal. Or do I need to
 keep looking?

LINK
 Total withdrawal? That what you
 call death on your planet?

JED ON TAPE
 Can what does not fully live really
 die?

Link is disoriented for a moment when he realizes the tape
 has answered him.

LINK
 (to Jed)
 You gave those girls something! I
 don't know what it was but you did
 something to them!

JED ON TAPE
 It is something outside of me that
 acts.

Without thinking, Link addresses the recorder.

LINK
 What something? You're following
 orders?

JED ON TAPE
 It is more like following odors.

Jed smiles. Link is stunned and bewildered.

LINK
 How'd you do that?

JED
 Time is not what you think it is.
 Nothing is.

LINK
 Christ!

Jed gazes at him for a long time, almost a full minute. There is the sound of a dripping tap. The distant sound of someone yelling, either in anger or pain, or both. Finally Jed smiles.

JED

You are caught between three emotions: curiosity, doubt, and fear. You want to know if any of this is true. But if it were true, you could die. But you have enough doubt for your curiosity to overcome your fear.

Jed lowers his eyes for the first time. Link appears to be in mild trance.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Palmer is watching the scene. CUT to a screen view as if through a satellite, with digital data covering room temperature, air pressure, etc, including all the data about Link and Jed's physiological processes.

PALMER

Link's heart rate just dropped by about 20 percent. His breathing is 170 percent deeper. Body temperature 4 degrees lower. He appears to be in mild trance.

INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Link seems unaware of his surroundings.

LINK

As a child I walked in my sleep.

JED

I know.

LINK

My parents were careful never to wake me.

JED

They were right not to.

Link looks at Jed with a childlike expression

JED ON TAPE

When the dream ends, the dreamer
goes with it.

There is another long silence. Link slowly returns to his normal self. It is unclear if he remembers what has just transpired.

LINK

Tell me why.

JED

(smiles)

Explanations explain nothing.

LINK

(wearily)

Humor me, Yoda.

JED

You watch a lot of movies. I think you may be in danger of overdosing on fantasy.

LINK

Pot calls kettle black. Film at 11.

JED ON TAPE

Awakening is a chain reaction. I am one link in the chain. The only thing that desires in me is physiology. If it is suppressed, I will die.

Link turns off the recorder impatiently.

LINK

So then others die instead?

JED

What is really dying? It is a form of liberation, momentary, incomplete. A moment of truth that erases a lifetime of lies.

LINK

You are insane.

JED

If I was insane, I could function normally in society, as you do. Since I became sane, my actions have become socially aberrant.

LINK

(with disgust)

Nuts always think they're saner than anyone else.

JED

There is only one purpose to awakening and that is to awaken. I have become a pure expression of my unconscious, and it is monstrous, yes, but it is also true. It is what is most true for me to do. These things must be done. Those who cry out for their suffering to end are crying out to me. There is only one way out of the nightmare, and that is to wake.

LINK

You really believe all that crap?

JED

Like I said, explanations explain nothing.

LINK

You're saying those women died because they were awakened?

(Jed nods)

What about you? Why didn't you die?

JED

I don't know.

LINK

(sharply)

You the only one who can face reality without dying?

JED

I don't know.

His eyes go unfocused and he seems to be elsewhere.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR TOILET - NIGHT

Jed sits on the toilet, Illiana's dead body at his feet. He is crying noiselessly. His eyes seem to be as unseeing as hers.

INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Jed and Link sit facing each other in silence. Link's face shows a similar expression of grief. Jed now looks at peace. A full minute passes. Link's expression begins to change to one of surprise and uncertainty.

INT. UNKNOWN LOCATION - UNKNOWN TIME ZONE

Screen view with digital data. Palmer's voice is heard through a device.

PALMER (V.O.)
Link's heart rate is rising now.

CUT TO:

INT. LARGE HOUSE - NIGHT

As if from a child's point of view, the objects in the house seem unnaturally large. We are seeing from the POV of Link's child self, sleepwalking, camera moves through the rooms as if in some other world, to the sound of heavy breathing. Voices come from elsewhere, ghostly and unreal.

MALE VOICE
Don't wake him. Just let him be.

FEMALE VOICE
He may hurt himself.

MALE VOICE
He will wake himself soon.

CLOSE-UP of a child's eyes opening with a gasp.

JED (V.O.)
When the sleepwalker awakes, the dreamer dies.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE-UP on Link's eyes coming into focus. Jed is staring at him.

JED
You felt it.

Link takes a moment to pull himself together before speaking.

LINK

(unsurely)

So you know a few hypnosis tricks.
Big deal. You ain't no mystery man.

JED

You felt it.

Link says nothing.

JED (CONT'D)

People think that awakening is getting free of something. It's not. There is nothing to get free of, except maybe an idea. Awakening is freedom to experience what is, without blinkers or shields. It's not rising above anything. It is sinking all the way into. It is like being a baby again. Every small thing goes all the way into the body, into each and every cell of being. It doesn't stop there, it passes right through, because there is no thought for it to stick to, no way to identify with what is happening in the body. Each moment comes and then it's gone, leaving no traces. But each moment is total and final. Whatever happens is consuming, totally consuming. If there is love, it is experienced by every cell of the body. If there is loss, it is the same. Total intensity. Each instant is a death, and a being born. There is neither any joy nor any torment that you have ever experienced in your unawakened state that can compare to the intensity, savagery, and purity of each instant of the awakened state.

LINK

You're saying that's what killed them?

JED

What reality is, is ultimately devastating. In every instant, the universe is destroyed. And from those ashes, a new one is born.

(MORE)

JED (CONT'D)

Each and every instant. And it never ends. It never ends.

There is a terrible silence that follows. Link becomes acutely aware of every detail in the room. When he looks into Jed's eyes it is like looking into a bottomless abyss. Link's expression shows fear.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Palmer is watching closely.

PALMER

Link's heart rate is up almost 200%. Body temperature down 12 degrees in his extremities. He appears to be having a panic response.

INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Link is breathing rapidly. Jed smiles.

JED

Do you still want this?

A moment passes while Link flexes his fingers, recovering his composure somewhat.

LINK

There's nothing to want, is there?

JED

For you, a good night's sleep is the ticket.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Outside the interrogation room, looking through the one-way glass, Palmer watches as Link gets up and puts on his jacket, picks up his cigarettes and leaves. She goes to meet him. He gives her a blank look. He somewhat resembles a sleepwalker.

LINK

He's an anomaly all right. Brother from another planet.

PALMER

He's neurodivergent.

LINK
More like neurodeviant.

PALMER
There's no way this is going to
trial. You do know that, right?

LINK
(steely)
I'll find a way.

PALMER
Like searching his room without a
warrant? Link, you may not like
this guy, but he's clean.

LINK
If he's clean, I'm Hannibal Lecter.

PALMER
(raises an eyebrow)
From what I've been able to
observe, his brain is wired
differently than neurotypicals,
wired for extra-consensual
perception.

LINK
What?

PALMER
He perceives reality differently.

LINK
Yeah, he's nuts.

PALMER
If you mean deluded, probably, yes.
The problem is, if he's deluded,
how did he kill those women? And if
he's not deluded, how is it murder,
exactly?

LINK
He as much as confessed to killing
those women!

PALMER
Even if he confessed, the jury
would want to know *how* he did it.
Are you going to say he killed them
with his cock? At best, he's going
to wind up under psychological
evaluation. At *best*.

(MORE)

PALMER (CONT'D)
(Link looks disturbed)
But if I'm right about him, he's a
threat to more than just sex techs
and party girls.

LINK
What kind of threat?

PALMER
If he's an extra-consensual
perceiver, his mere presence may
affect how reality functions.

LINK
Come on!

PALMER
You saw those recordings. How would
you explain them?
(Link is silent)
You want me to talk to him, see
what I can find out?

LINK
(shrugs)
Be my guest. I've had enough of Joe
Black for one night.
(he hands her a card key)

PALMER
(takes card, smiles a
little more warmly)
You look dead tired.

LINK
Yah.

PALMER
Still having trouble sleeping?
(Link shrugs)
These should help.
(hands him a small plastic
bottle)
Strictly under the counter. Take
two if you want to sleep right
through. Whatever you do don't take
all of them, all right?

She touches his arm, his eyes go blank.

LINK
(trancelike)
Thanks. I appreciate it.

PALMER
You did good, Gabe.

LINK
I did?

PALMER
Now take a load off.

She looks at him with tenderness. He seems like a child almost. He nods absentmindedly. Palmer turns and her face shows sorrow. She enters the interrogation room as Link watches her go. He pauses to watch her through the glass.

INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Palmer sits down opposite Jed and neither says a word. They stare into each other's eyes. Both of them seem sad.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

On the other side of the glass, Link watches them for a moment. He turns away and walks towards the elevators.

TITLE: NO SUCH THING AS A CAKEWALK

INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Finally, Jed averts his eyes.

PALMER
(surprised)
Are you afraid of me?

JED
Fear is a state of mind. I am no longer confined to my mind.

PALMER
That didn't answer my question.

JED
It did. You just didn't understand the answer.

PALMER
Maybe. I think you're uncomfortable
with women.

JED
You want to psychoanalyze me.

PALMER
Do you have a problem with that?

JED
No. You might though.

PALMER
Why's that?

JED
Like I said, I am no longer defined
by the contents of mind.

PALMER
There's a lot more to the psyche
than mind.
(staring match)
Everyone's unconscious of
something.

JED
Whatever's unconscious becomes
manifest through action.

PALMER
Does that mean you act
unconsciously?

JED
I don't act. I observe.

PALMER
What do you observe?

JED
What?

PALMER
When you observe yourself, what do
you see?
(Jed seems unsure)
Nothing?

JED
There is an awareness... of an
absence. Awareness where self once
was.

PALMER
How does that feel?

JED
Feel?

PALMER
You know, feelings? Emotion,
affect, sensations? Do you have
them?

JED
Of course.
(pauses to observe)
It feels empty.

PALMER
You feel empty?

JED
No, there is emptiness where "I"
shou- where "I" used to be.

PALMER
Where the "I" used to be, or should
be? Which is it?

JED
(smiles)
Now you are trying to manipulate
me.

PALMER
Only into seeing something.

JED
What I see is that you want to fit
me into your idea of human.

PALMER
That's possible. Is it also
possible you needed to remove
yourself from other people's idea
of you?

JED
Why would I need to do that?

PALMER
Why would you?

JED
(thinking)
I am not driven by needs.

PALMER
Isn't everything driven by needs?

JED
I am not everything.
(falters)
I mean, I am nothing.

PALMER
You're nothing?

JED
Yes.

PALMER
How does that work exactly?

JED
I am empty.

PALMER
Are you sure about that?

JED
What?

PALMER
If you were really empty, would you
be aware of being empty?

JED
There is fullness in the emptiness.

PALMER
Which is it? Fullness or emptiness.

JED
Both.

PALMER
Or neither?
(Jed looks uncomfortable)
Do you want to know what *I* see?

JED
If you like.

PALMER
I see a lonely person.

JED
(smiles)
Is that your diagnosis?

PALMER
Just an observation.

They sit silently for a spell.

PALMER (CONT'D)
Why did you feel the need to sleep
with those women?

JED
People do it all the time. It's
biological.

PALMER
Not when they know it will result
in someone's death.

JED
It was what they wanted.

PALMER
What - to have sex with you, or to
die? Or both?
(Jed doesn't answer)
You're saying they asked for it?

JED
Yes. No. It was indicated.

PALMER
Indicated how?

JED
By everything.

PALMER
By everything? Or by your own
unconscious needs?

JED
There is no difference. Everything
desires to merge.

PALMER
Everything desires to merge?

JED
Yes.

PALMER
That would include you then?

JED
(hesitates)
Everything includes everything.

PALMER
So if everything includes
everything - why does it need to
merge with anything?

Jed sits in silence. He does not have an answer.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR TOILET - NIGHT

Jed and Illiana stand facing one another in front of the toilet. She breathes deeply, and seems near to fainting.

ILLIANA
What's happening to me?

JED
You are beginning to wake. Breathe
more deeply. From here.

He places his right hand on her abdomen.

JED (CONT'D)
The person you think you are is not
who you are.

ILLIANA
I'm dreaming now?

JED
You are being dreamed.

He moves his hand up to between her breasts, then over to her left breast. She does not resist, shudders and gasps.

ILLIANA
I'm afraid.

JED
Everybody is.

He puts his hand between her legs. She closes her eyes. He brings his face close to hers, their mouths almost touching. He breathes into her mouth. Her eyes roll back inside her head. She stares up at him, beside herself with conflicting emotions: fear, amazement, desire, happiness, confusion.

He rips her underwear and she cries out. She stares at him like she is seeing for the first time.

ILLIANA
Oh God. This is it!

Her eyes roll back and she begins to jerk violently.

JED
No. Not that way, over here!

Jed closes his eyes.

INT. SHABBY OLD-FASHIONED ROOM - NIGHT

A whorish looking woman leans over a baby (seen only from baby's POV). Sounds of baby crying. It evokes Jed's earlier flashback on the toilet, during his "enlightenment." Only now the room is very different and the mother also.

MAN (V.O.)
Now take out your breast.

INT. BAR TOILET - NIGHT

Foam comes out of Illiana's mouth. He grabs her face.

JED
Stay with it! Stay with me.

Her eyes roll back in her head. Jed's eyes glaze over.

INT. SHABBY OLD-FASHIONED ROOM - NIGHT

The camera swings to one side. A seedy-looking man lies on the bed, staring lasciviously.

The woman takes out a breast - it looms large and fleshy.

MAN
Now let it feed.

The man puts his hand down his trousers.

INT. BAR TOILET - NIGHT

Illiana starts to orgasm, her body shaking and jerking violently. Jed holds her close, looking over her shoulder. His eyes seem not to be seeing anything, or to be seeing internally.

INT. SHABBY OLD-FASHIONED ROOM - NIGHT

The breast comes forward, until it floods the scene with white-flesh color, and then with blackness. There is a sucking sound and more softly, the sound of the man panting.

MAN (V.O.)
Yeah, like that. (etc)

INT. BAR TOILET - NIGHT

Jed's eyes express indescribable loss. He strokes Illiana's hair. The camera PANS around to show her lifeless face, the eyes wide in terror. [Possibly doll] Illiana's face

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Jed's face, his eyes wide and dazed.

Palmer takes out a small electronic device and activates it. Two fly-drones buzz and fall to the floor. She stands up, leans over and picks them up. She runs the device over the camera, on a screen it says "card wiped."

She walks around the table to a position behind Jed.

A DIGITALIZED IMAGE OF THE ROOM (AS BEFORE) SHOWS THAT JED'S HEART-RATE IS RISING.

She leans over his shoulder and whispers in his ear.

PALMER
Your awakening is incomplete.
That's why you can't control it.
There's a part of you still holding
on. We can help you to let go of
that part.

JED
You're one of me?

PALMER
(smiles)
We've been observing you for a
while. You have an unusual gift.

JED
(realizing)
That's why I couldn't see the full
spectrum with you. You're outside -
you've been blocking it.

IN A SILENT FLASHBACK, PALMER IS SEEN SITTING AT THE "SLOW
CLUB" WHERE JED MET ILLIANA, AT THE TABLE WITH THE ODD MAN IN
BLACK, WATCHING JED WITHOUT HIS AWARENESS. HE SEES ONLY THE
MAN IN BLACK.

PALMER
You can only see what you're ready
to see.

JED
(realizing still more)
There are others, like me?

PALMER
A few. Each of you are different.
More different than ordinary humans
can ever be. That's the nature of
neurodivergence. There are only
individuals.

JED
So I was right to seek others?

PALMER
There's a more efficient way.

JED
Do I have a choice?

PALMER
Have you ever?

JED
No. But this is-

PALMER
Something you didn't foresee?

JED
Yes, it's- The indications are no
longer clear.

PALMER
Lost the odor trail? You just
leveled up, Jed.

Jed begins to see something more clearly - a vision of him on TV, etc.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

The door to the interrogation room opens and Jed comes out. A moment later, Palmer. Her expression is peaceful and, if not for her eyes, blank. She takes Jed by the arm.

PALMER

This way.

They walk to the elevators, Palmer presses the call button. They stand side by side facing the doors.

PALMER (CONT'D)

There's a war raging, Jed. A war of perception.

JED

You want to use me.

PALMER

To help you find what you are looking for.

JED

We're leaving?

PALMER

If you want.

JED

And even if I don't want. What about Link?

PALMER

He got what he was looking for. A clean slate.

INT. LINK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Link lies on his back on the bed, arm outstretched. His eyes are wide and his mouth his open, baby-like. On the bedside table, the bottle of pills Palmer gave him is on its side, empty.

A SERIES OF FLASHBACKS SHOW HOW JED AND PALMER WORKED TOGETHER (UNBEKNOWNST TO JED) TO HYPNOTICALLY PREPARE LINK TO TAKE THE PILLS.

JED

I think you may be in danger of overdosing

(V.O)

When the sleeper awakes, the dreamer dies.

PALMER

Whatever you do, don't take all of them.

(touching his arm)

Take a load off.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Jed realizes what he has helped to implement. The elevator doors open and they enter.

INT. POLICE ELEVATOR - NIGHT

They stand side by side. Palmer touches her finger to the screen and punches in the special code. Jed seems confused.

JED

You used me to get to Link? Or Link to get to me?

PALMER

Don't flatter yourself. We are all being used equally.

JED

Is he one of me? Of us?

PALMER

He might have been. He wasn't ready.

JED

What will happen to him?

PALMER

Is that compassion?

JED

(surprised)

I don't know.

PALMER

Neurological malware. If he takes a small dose, the last few weeks will be wiped clean. If he takes them all, as we suggested, then his hard drive will be totally reformatted, leaving nothing. Total amnesia. He'll go all the way back to being a baby again.

JED

So he'll be free?

PALMER

I doubt it. How was it for you - being a baby?

Jed seems deeply disturbed by the question. For a moment he wrestles with some internal pressure. He looks up at her helplessly. She touches his arm, consoling.

PALMER (CONT'D)

Do you know what a cakewalk is, Jed?

JED

No.

The question helps him to focus again. She regards him with kindness, smiles almost imperceptibly.

PALMER

Me neither.

The elevator doors open.

INT. UNDERWORLD - NIGHT

The elevator doors open.

PALMER

This is where we get off.

Jed smiles.

BLACK SCREEN, MUSIC.

SPLIT SCREEN WITH CREDITS AND SHOTS OF PALMER AND JED WALKING DOWN CORRIDOR TO WALL, ENTERING INTO THE LIGHT.