

DETAIL OF A LIFE

By

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TITLE: SPRING DAWNING

This is the world of spring dawning. Everything is green and wet, as though it has just rained. The sky here is filled with puffy clouds.

EXT. SCHOOL BUILDING

We take in a long shot of the rain falling straight down around the camera, then pan down to the hundreds of featureless students trekking into the main doors of a High school.

We zoom onto the face of YOSHA looking up into the sky, through a bus window. He is prepubescent, wearing thick glasses, eyes squinting.

INT. BUS

He appears miniscule in the huge bus seat. When the bus stops moving, he struggles to get down from it.

EXT. BUS

He climbs down from the bus with some difficulty. Sitting on one step to lower his legs down to the next, repeating until he reaches the street. He begins to walk with the flow of students, who tower over him so that we can only see up to their knees from his perspective. He totes an absurdly large laptop dragging on the ground behind him.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY

YOSHA manages his way through the crowd, getting jostled and shoved as he comes to his locker, which he must stand on tip toe to reach the combination. The other students being so much taller than he creates a forest of legs for him to wander in.

INT. CLASSROOM

YOSHA is sitting at his desk, which is so large he can barely see over it, when the bell sounds. The class quiets down and the teacher begins instructing, but all we see is YOSHA'S face in the glow of the laptop, the surrounding sounds become muted and distant in the background.

TEACHER
(Off camera)
Yosha?

The voice is distant. There is no response, then louder and clearer.

TEACHER
(Off camera)
Yosha?

The sounds of the room come back into full volume and YOSHA looks up from his desk.

TEACHER
(Off camera)
You are in class now. You can put
your video games away until later,
at a more appropriate time. Now
I'd appreciate it if you would pay
attention to class.

YOSHA stares into the camera for some time, expressionless. Finally he closes the laptop, takes it off the desk, and pulls out a notebook and pen and stares forward, blinking.

TEACHER
(Off camera)
Thank you...

Some of the other students sound amused by this interchange. The teacher begins talking again and immediately mutes away into nothing. YOSHA continues to stare into space, eyes unfocused.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY

Students are rushing about in the hallways, YOSHA stumbles through the throngs in a semi daze, looking around bewildered. Finally, he presses into an archway, his back against a closed door, where he slowly slumps to the ground, breathing heavily. The bell rings and the legs of students walking between classes thins out. YOSHA relaxes, sitting Indian style and opens his laptop. The screen lights up his face and smiles, pleased.

Two booted feet enter the scene, this is the JANITOR, towering over YOSHA. YOSHA looks up slowly and his smile

vanishes.

JANITOR
(Off camera)
Hey Professor.

YOSHA swallows uncomfortably. His hand goes to the laptop keyboard and the screen's light goes out. Without taking his eyes off the JANITOR towering off screen, he reaches up and closes the laptop.

INT. HALLWAY

YOSHA is walking alongside the JANITOR'S legs, looking uncomfortable and cradling his laptop.

JANITOR
(Off camera)
You know Professor. The world won't seem so big and scary forever. It just seems that way at first, but the more you look around at it the smaller it gets. When I first started working here, this school seemed huge, then it felt regular sized, and now it feels pretty small.

A pair of legs walks by, this is the BULLY.

BULLY
(Off camera)
Looks like the Art Fag was trying to skip class again.

JANITOR
(Off camera)
You better be nice to this boy Clarence. One day his tax dollars are gonna be paying for your prison cell.

YOSHA smiles at this. They reach the door to his classroom and the smile fades as the door opens.

JANITOR

(Off camera)

Found him in the hallways again
Mrs. Miller.

MRS. MILLER

(Off camera)

So nice of you to join us Yosha.

CLASS

(Off camera)

(Laughs)

YOSHA enters the classroom, head lowered.

INT. BATHROOM STALL

YOSHA sits wedged between the towering toilet and stall wall. His laptop is open and his face illuminated by its glow, but he is not smiling. Instead he looks frustrated, his concentration broken and it quickly becomes apparent why. From the neighboring stall we can hear the sounds of two teens making out.

After several moments, tossing his head to one side and then the other in aggravation, he finally gets up and moves over to the other side of the toilet, wedging himself down in between it and the wall. As he does this, the sound effects change from those of lustful teenagers to hushed pot-smoking ones.

POT SMOKER 1

(Off camera)

Hey my turn. (Muffled coughing.
Trying to hold the smoke in)

POT SMOKER 2

(Off camera)

Stop wasting it.

POT SMOKER 3

(Off camera)

Damn that is some killer kind.

A billowy cloud of smoke rolls out from under the stall and YOSHA starts coughing.

MAKEOUT STALL TEEN

(Off camera)

Hey keep it down! I'm trying to
get intimate with my gal over
here!

YOSHA rolls his eyes and closes the laptop.

INT BUS

YOSHA stands on the bus seat, staring out the window
at a world of towering houses, and trees. It looks
like spring outside, green with new foliage and wet
with rain, a canopy of clouds rolls across the sky
with bits of blue sticking through.

BULLY

(Off camera)

Ahem.

YOSHA blinks and looks over to where the BULLY is
looking at him over the forward seat. He is smiling
wickedly.

BULLY

What's up Art Fag? Enjoying the
scenery? Does it inspire you? Give
you good vibes?

YOSHA regards him neutrally and shrugs.

BULLY

What's a matter with you? Can't
talk? You ain't too bright are
you? Little kid going to a big
kids' school, I ain't impressed. I
bet you're so dumb you can't spell
dumb. You're dumber than a box of
hair!

YOSHA smiles and others on the bus start laughing.

BULLY

You know, you got the right to be
ugly, but don't abuse the
privileges!

Sounds of laughter grow, YOSHA chuckles.

BULLY

You're so ugly I bet your momma
had to get drunk to breast-feed
you! What are you gonna do for a
face when the baboon wants his ass
back?

YOSHA is laughing out loud now.

BULLY

(Suddenly angry)
Hey! I'm joking you!

AARON

(Still laughing)
I know! It's funny.

BULLY punches him in the face.

EXT. BUS

YOSHA struggles down the bus stairs, holding his nose
in one hand and lugging his laptop with the other. He
sits on a step, hangs his feet down to the next step
and repeats until he is on the street. The bus doors
close and it rolls away.

YOSHA

(Watching the bus,
mutters)
My taxes will pay for your jail
cell.

YOSHA sighs and hefts his laptop. We can hear kids
playing off screen. YOSHA looks at his laptop
longingly and seems to relax a little.

KID

(Off camera)
Hey Yosha! Catch!

A ball flies on screen, hits YOSHA square in the
chest, knocking him to the ground. An innocent looking
blonde-haired KID comes on screen and picks up the
ball.

KID
Sorry about that Yosha.

AARON
(Getting up)
I can forgive you considering
you're only third generation
walking upright.

KID
Huh?

AARON
Nevermind. It was a joke.

KID
Oh. Wanna play soccer with us?

AARON
No, thank you. I have more
important things to do than
partake in this puerile and
unproductive distraction.

KID
Um... Okay. Bye then!

KID rushes back to sounds of children playing. We follow YOSHA as he walks up the driveway, past a gigantic SUV. ON the porch, he reaches up on his tip toes for the door handle, pauses and instead climbs up into a giant rocking chair. He looks around suspiciously and opens his laptop. Just then the door opens.

MOTHER
(Off camera)
That better be your homework young
man.

AARON
(Disappointed, shuts the
laptop)
Yes Mother.

INT. DINNING ROOM

Focus on the laptop, follow up to YOSHA sitting at the

dinner table, staring at it longingly.

FATHER

(Off camera)

Hey Junior, you better finish off
those brussel sprouts.

YOSHA looks over the edge of the dinner table at the absurdly large vegetables waiting on his plate.

INT. BATHROOM

YOSHA standing on a stool, brushing his teeth with a toothbrush so big it barely fits in his mouth.

MOTHER

(Off camera)

Be sure to get those back molars.

YOSHA mumbles something in the affirmative, in the bathroom mirror we can see him staring at his laptop resting on the bed in the other room.

INT. BEDROOM

YOSHA tucked into bed, blank-faced.

FATHER

(Off camera)

Lights out Tiger.

The room goes dark, and then darker as the sound of the door closing is heard. YOSHA's eyes look to the vanishing light. He listens to the sounds of his parent's voices fading away, and then he slips beneath the covers.

INT. UNDER THE COVERS

We follow him crawling around long enough to get the idea that this is a very large bed. Then his eyes light up with recognition and he reaches off screen. The familiar light of the laptop lights up his face and his smile brightens familiarly.

The computer screen displays a 3-D tracing of a room

in 50's art Deco. This leads into a room of antique design, which leads into a postmodern décor and on and on into endlessness.

YOSHA moves some of the objects around, changes the perspective of the room, and adds decorations from another window. Then he renders the images, bringing it into solid computer animation

AARON

(Off camera)

Here art is everything and there is all the time in the world to create it.

(Pause)

The perfect world.

The picture solidifies into reality...

TITLE: SUMMER DAY

This is the world of eternal daylight. Bright colors and mismatched, tacky styles are the norm. Brand names and commercialization abound.

INT. SEAIRTH'S HOME

SAM walks into the frame and begins a trek down the hallway. We follow him through the various rooms and their different styles and presentations. Classical music plays in the background; this changes to pop music and other diverse styles to match the mismatched presentation of this world. SAM come to the end of the rooms out into a garden where SEAIRTH sits with a brush in hand, a canvas before him, and a glass of wine in the other hand. He is in his mid-20's, blonde-haired, blue-eyed.

SAM

Hello friend, what are you up to
as if I couldn't guess?

Sits down and pours himself a glass of wine.

SEAIRTH

(Without looking at him)

Hello Sam, have a glass of wine.
It's a good Merlot I uncovered
last night at Emile's.

SAM

You're still hanging out at
Emile's? That place still hasn't
gone out of business? They've been
around for months now and they
haven't changed a thing. Don't you
find it boring?

SEAIRTH

It's a neo-traditional-quasi-home-
cooked-meal-archetype with heavy
provincial influences, they aren't
supposed to change. Besides, I
like the food there; it's familiar
to me. I'll regret it when it's
gone.

SAM

You know Seairth, familiarity
breeds...

(Waves his hand in the
air, searching)

...something. Anyway, you don't
diversify enough anymore.

SEAIRTH

(Smiles)

How was the movie?

SAM

Awful, it was a neo-avant-garde-
reimagining of a love-story set
against the historical backdrop of
political revolution. None of us
could follow it. The director
actually had a scene where he kept
the same camera shot for almost
two minutes. We walked out.

SEAIRTH

We?

SAM

Susan and I.

SEAIRTH

What happened to Tina?

SAM

We split; she was starting to bore
me.

Seairth gives him a look

SAM

Don't give me that look Mr.
Hasn't-been-on-a-date-in-over-a-
year.

SEAIRTH

(Returning to his
painting)

I'm waiting for that special
someone.

SAM

Oh please, you need to get laid.
(Seairth smiles and
shakes his head, Sam
squints at the painting)
Who's that?

SEAIRTH

A special someone.

SAM

She's not very pretty, strange
choice for a subject.

SEAIRTH

She's beautiful to me, besides
it's the person, not the
appearance I'm interested in.

SAM

Ah, yes, of course... The
"beautiful on the inside" defense.
How do you know her?

SEAIRTH

I don't. Not really, anyway. I saw
her at the museum once, couldn't
figure out how to approach her.

SAM

(Laughs)
So how do you know anything about
her?

SEAIRTH

I could see it in her eyes... You
know a window to the soul kind of
thing.

SAM

(Not convinced)
Really, and what do her eyes tell
you?

SEAIRTH

(Thinking)
She's a deep thinker, a complex
individual.

SAM

That's it?

SEAIRTH

You need more?

SAM

Is she a good lay?

SEAIRTH

(Rolls his eyes)

SAM

Is she wild in the sack? What do her eyes tell you about that?

SEAIRTH

Stop.

SAM

Hmmm... The way your mind works. I guess you still haven't found your career yet, considering you're out here, sipping wine and doodling your fantasy girl.

SEAIRTH

No, nobody appreciates my work, it's just not good enough. I don't know what I'm doing wrong.

SAM

Well, for one, you're working with the same old tired medium. Nobody gives a damn about neo-classical-romantic-beauty-emphasizing canvas and oil displays any more. It's been overdone.

SEAIRTH

That's like saying photography is overdone. The possibilities of the blank canvas are endless, you can't tell me I'm just doing what's been done before.

SAM

People are trying so many other art forms now though--

SEAIRTH

And I respect and appreciate all of them. Neo-exhibitionist-photo-realism art, neo-post-modern-film-based-fantasy art, neo-natural-industrial-subversive art, neo-post-post-modern, neo-abstract-fecal... What's wrong with being a traditionalist?

SAM

Or a romantic, you're a dreamer in a world of dreamers. The only difference is that everybody else is trying to dream up the next thing, while you sit around dreaming about the beauty of the past.

SEAIRTH stares deep into the eyes of the painting.

SEAIRTH

Yeah, I guess.

SAM steps between them and points at the painting.

SAM

This is a moment now gone, let it go. Look forward. Be here now.

SEAIRTH

(Puts down the paint brush.)

Hmmmm...

SAM

Come on; let's go to that exhibit you were so jazzed about.

They Leave.

INT. MUSEUM GALLERY

There is a circle of pedestals, each with ordinary everyday objects sitting on them. SEAIRTH approaches one with a cinderblock, another with a can-opener, a third with a pencil. He stares at each in deep contemplation. SAM gives each a puzzled look and looks between each object and SEAIRTH several times in confusion.

SAM

Okay, I don't get it.

SEAIRTH

Huh?

SAM

It's a brick. It's just a brick.
There's nothing special about it.

SEAIRTH

Sure there is.

SAM

What?

SEAIRTH

It's sitting on a pedestal in an
art exhibit.

SAM just looks at him

SEAIRTH

Never mind. Just humor me. Let me
make a deep examination of a few
more ordinary objects and we'll go
someplace else, okay?

SAM shrugs and follows SEAIRTH around staring into space,
bouncing impatiently.

SAM

You wanna go to a concert later
tonight? It's a neo-ska-freeform-
emo band with heavy thrash-punk
experimentations.

SEAIRTH

(Rolls his eyes)
Certainly, but can we discuss it
later? I'm kind of trying to lose
myself in this art.

SAM

It's not art. It's a brick.

SEAIRTH

Beauty is in the eye of the
beholder.

SAM

It's only skin-deep too. Nothing
pretty about this.

SEAIRTH

It's a beautiful idea.

SAM

It's in your head.

SEAIRTH

What did I just say about the
subjective nature of art?

SAM

(Guessing)
That it's an idea?

SEAIRTH

Before that... I said it was in
the eye of the beholder. It's
there to mean something different
to each person. Art means nothing
without a mind to perceive it, to
interpret it.

(Points at the brick)
What does this make you think of.

SAM

(Squints at it)
A brick.

SEAIRTH

Good observation, surprisingly realist coming from you. Have you ever seen the man in the moon? Or a tortilla chip that looks like someone famous?

SAM

Yeah, I see faces in wood grains and stuff.

SEAIRTH

But you know there's nothing actually there. Your mind knows it's just a rock or a potato chip or a piece of wood, but you still can't stop seeing the faces and butterfly's and elves in it.

SAM

Yeah?

SEAIRTH

So your mind tries to form relations in spite of what our reason tells us. We see a face in a rock, but it's just a rock. Our brains never stop thinking until we are dead. Now look at the brick again and tell me what you are thinking.

SAM looks and furrows his brow, bouncing one leg impatiently.

SAM

I'm just about bored right out of my skull.

SEAIRTH

(Waves his hands in frustration)

SAM

(Suddenly looks amazed)
Oh my god, I see it! I get it!

SEAIRTH

Really?

SAM

(Turns to Seairth)

You're an idiot.

LEVY

(From Off Camera)

It's just a brick. That's not art.

SEAIRTH

(Angrily)

It's not just a brick!

LEVY comes into frame, peering at the brick. She is the girl from the painting. SEAIRTH'S eyes go wide.

SEAIRTH

Uh... Uh... Uh..

SAM points at Levy, eyes wide.

SAM

Hey! I know you! You're--

SEAIRTH

(Elbows him)

SAM

Uh, never mind.

LEVY quirks an eye at SAM, then turns to SEAIRTH

LEVY

I'm sorry, why is it not just a brick?

SEAIRTH

Well, um... You are correct. It is just a brick, but when you put it in a museum and place it on a pedestal it becomes a work of art.

LEVY

(Skeptical)

Uh-huh.

SEAIRTH

Well-- It's not art... and that's the point too. You see, when you take an ordinary object and bring it into the context of the museum we attempt to apply significance to it.

LEVY looks the brick up and down once.

LEVY

Yep, that sure is a brick all right.

SAM

I think my friend is attempting to apply too much significance to this brick.

LEVY and SAM laugh.

SEAIRTH

Well, that is another way of looking at it.

LEVY

That maybe the artist is laughing at you for trying to make so much of it? Well, have fun staring at your brick. I'm going to the neo-post-post-modern-dance show to relish some real entertainment. This scene is too yucky.

LEVY leaves and SEAIRTH stares after her.

SAM

So that's your dream girl? That's really funny.

SEAIRTH

Why is that funny?

SAM

Because I know her, she's a local performer with neo-Renaissance Fair troupe.

SEAIRTH

Really? She's a thespian?

SAM

Among other things. You know how stage troupes are.

SEAIRTH

No, how are stage troupes?

SAM

I dunno. She's your stereotypical theater girl. She's wild, into the drug scene, promiscuous...

SAM trails off as he notices SEAIRTH hanging on his every word.

SAM

Why are you staring at me like that?

SEAIRTH

Like what? Continue.

SAM

No, I don't think I will. You've got an odd look in your eye. You're scheming on this girl. I don't think that's smart.

SEAIRTH

(Spacey)

She sounds like fun.

SAM

She'll eat you alive.

SEAIRTH

I could handle it.

SAM

You think so? Let's go talk to her.

SAM grabs SEAIRTH'S arm, SEAIRTH resists.

SEAIRTH

No, she's probably had men approach her that way her whole life. I have to touch her differently, to make myself stand above the rest.

SAM

Fools stand out pretty well.

SEAIRTH

I will be her secret admirer. I bet she's never had a secret admirer.

SAM

That could also be interpreted as a stalker.

SEAIRTH

What did you say her name was?

SAM

I didn't.

SEAIRTH stares at him expectantly, and SAM rolls his eyes.

SAM

Levy, her name is Levy.

SEAIRTH

Come on, I must get started on this right away. I can feel a brainstorm coming on.

They Exit

INT. SEAIRTH'S LIVING ROOM

SEAIRTH is pacing back and forth. SAM is staring at a palm-sized television set, looking bored.

SEAIRTH

How can you be so calm?

SAM

I'm bored; the two go hand in hand.

SEAIRTH

You're just sitting there, staring
at that television set.

SAM

And thinking about how I'd rather
be playing video games--

SEAIRTH

Or watching a concert or a movie
or socializing at a club. Doesn't
anyone in the world ever think
about taking part in it? Don't you
ever think about trying to make
the world a better place?

SAM

Of course, that's why I stay out
of it.

SEAIRTH

Well, help me to bring some light
into someone's life will you? I
don't know what to do.

SAM

Send her flowers.

SEAIRTH

Too mundane, beauty like hers must
be properly courted.

SAM

Write her a poem.

SEAIRTH

I'm not a poet.

SAM

Oh, then write her a dissertation
on bricks and their significance
in the art world.

SEAIRTH

(Confused)

R-really?

SAM stares at him, shaking his head in astonishment.

SAM

No.

SEAIRTH

I am so confused! How can I bridge
the chasm between our two worlds?

SAM

Get a lobotomy? Catch a venereal
disease?

SEAIRTH

You really have something against
this girl, don't you?

SAM

I have a problem with what she
will do to you.

SEAIRTH

Don't worry about me, I'm stronger
than you think.

(SAM gives him a look)

I am really. I know that once she
sees past my outsides and sees the
depth of my passions and the
intricacy of my thoughts she will
fall madly in love with me.

(Snaps fingers)

That's it! I will bear my soul to
her. I will court her with words
deeper than any she has
experienced before.

SEAIRTH pulls out a pen and paper and starts writing.

SAM

You can't just bare your soul to
her.

SEAIRTH

Why not?

SAM

Because you'll scare her; you have
to begin with a sense of mystery
and build up your image.

SEAIRTH

But what about my personal
character?

SAM

What about it?

SEAIRTH

You know. Who I am.

SAM

Look, do you want her to like you?

SEAIRTH

(Hesitant)

Yes.

SAM

Then you have to portray an image
of masculinity to her; you need to
be the stereotype of all that is
man.

SEAIRTH looks down at himself.

SEAIRTH

Uh, oh.

SAM

Hmmmm... Yeah, you better just
pour your heart out to her and
pray for the best.

INT. SEAIRTH'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

SAM is sleeping on the couch. SEAIRTH comes in shakes him
awake and hands him a coffee-stained crumpled sheet of
paper.

SEAIRTH

Here, this is my seventh revision.
I think it's almost perfect.

SAM

(Groggy)

Huh?

SAM takes the papers

SEAIRTH

Read it.

SAM

(Squints at it, rubs his
eyes and yawns)

The first time I was blessed with
your visage you were admiring a
portrait of the Lady Isabelle. You
could have been standing next to
the Mona Lisa and there would
still be no comparison, you were
beautiful in a way I had never
seen before...

(Yawns again, and begins
humming the syllables as
he scans the letter)

...yadda, yadda, yadda... Angel
from heaven... Yadda, yadda,
yadda... One look would cleave my
soul...

(flips page)

...lighten a room with the power
of your presence... Hmm hmmm
hmm... Eyes of bluest skies...

(flips page)

...hair cascading across porcelain
features...

(flips page)

...rosebuds...

(flips page)

...summer breeze...

(flips page)

Ah... I just want you to know that
someone in this world greatly
admires you and would do anything
to be in your favor... Love... The
One...

(Hands the letter back to
Seairth, nodding his
head)

...Very effective.

SEAIRTH

Perfect! I'll pretty it up and
have it delivered first thing in
the morning!

SEAIRTH rushes out of the room, SAM is already fast asleep on the couch. SEAIRTH stops suddenly, staring at the letter

SEAIRTH

Actually, this last paragraph here kind of throws off the timing of the entire confession portion of the letter. Hmmm... I better smooth that out.

SEAIRTH walks out of the room, outside we can see the sun starting to rise.

INT. ALAN'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

SEAIRTH paces in the living room, multiple TV sets all play different channels so that the sound is jumbled. He chews his nails nervously. SAM enters and SEAIRTH grabs him, but SAM is distracted by the televisions.

SAM

Oh, "Real Life!" I love that show! It's so refreshing to see actors presenting real characters in a dramatized fashion. Looks like it's just starting too!

SEAIRTH

Well?

SAM

(Noticing him)

Huh? Oh, yeah. I delivered the letter like you asked.

SEAIRTH

And? Did she read it?

SAM

Yeah, and it really flattered her, she read it twice, and you better believe you owe me big time for this one. As if reading that damn thing wasn't boring enough, watching this woman's lips move while--

SEAIRTH

What did she say? Did she give you
a message?

SAM begins searching his pockets

SAM

Oh yeah... She wanted me to give
you this.

SAM pulls out a tab of paper

SEAIRTH

It's just her phone number...

SAM

Yeah, wasn't that your goal?

SEAIRTH

I... I don't know. I mean, it's
like the whole letter, my pouring
out my heart to her has been
reduced to some elaborate pick-up
line.

SAM

Yeah, and so? There's something
wrong with this?

SEAIRTH

Well, it's just... I was hoping to
trade some correspondence and
build up to the climax where we
meet and...

(Trails off)

SAM

You're lucky she had enough brain
power to write down her number.
Just call her.

SEAIRTH

When?

SAM

(Shrugs)

How about now?

SEAIRTH

But what will I say?

SAM holds his hand up to his ear with the pinky and forefinger extended to represent a phone.

SAM

Hello, this is Seairth. I'll be your stalker this evening.

SEAIRTH looks at the number, then slowly looks at the phone.

SEAIRTH

Could I have some time alone?

SAM

Sure.

SAM flops down on the couch and turns up the volume on one of the TV's. SEAIRTH looks at him for a few seconds, then picks up his phone and walks into the adjacent room. SEAIRTH sits down and stares at the number and the phone. We hear a few beeps as he turns the phone on and dials three numbers before turning it off again. He takes a deep breath, waves his hands, practicing a few introductions.

SEAIRTH

Hello, this is Seairth...
(Shakes his head. Deep sexy voice)
Hello.
(Shakes his head)
..too fake.

He beeps the phone on again and immediately clicks it off, standing up and pacing the room, practicing the conversation again. He stops, closing his eyes, holding his breath, he slowly takes a deep breath and as he begins to exhale he dials the number, closes his eyes again and listens to it ring. It rings four times and then picks up on the fifth, we can hear LEVY on the other end.

LEVY

Hello?

SEAIRTH loses all composure.

SEAIRTH

(Squeaks)

Hi, uh, I mean

(Deeper voice)

Hello. This is Sam-- I mean

Seairth-- No, I'm

(Does the quotation mark
thing with his fingers)

...the One.

(Looks at his hands
absurdly)

I'm the one who wrote you the
letter.

LEVY

Which was it, Sam or Seairth?

SEAIRTH

(Begins to tremble)

Seairth. Sam was the guy who
delivered the letter.

LEVY

Okay, hi Seairth.

SEAIRTH

Hi.

Long pause

LEVY

Wow.

SEAIRTH

Yeah, ahem, Wow.

Long Pause.

LEVY

I'm sorry. I don't remember you
from the museum.

SEAIRTH

Oh, that's okay. I wouldn't expect
you to.

LEVY

Well, what do you look like?

SEAIRTH'S eyes widen; he looks around and catches himself in a mirror-fixates on that.

SEAIRTH

Well... I'm blonde, straight hair... Blue eyes, dark complexion.

LEVY

You sound nice.

(Pause)

That was a compliment.

SEAIRTH

Thank you.

LEVY chuckles. SEAIRTH smiles and calms down a little, he continues pacing.

LEVY

Yeah, you're definitely a shy one. That's cool, a lot of my friends are the shy, intellectual-type... What do you do?

SEAIRTH

I'm a neo-realist-romantic with heavy traditionalist-inspirations and classical-embellishments working in a pastel medium.

LEVY

I'm sorry; I don't know what that is.

SEAIRTH

I paint pictures of things that are classically beautiful as realistically as possible with a romantic emphasis on the perfection of the subject.

LEVY

(Laughs)

I'll take your word for it. You should paint something for me sometime.

SEAIRTH stops pacing, a big smile spreads across his face as he focuses on the painting of her

SEAIRTH
I have the perfect piece. I'll let you have it.

LEVY
Sweet, I'll look forward to it.

SEAIRTH
Wonderful, I'll have Sa-- my assistant deliver it immediately.

SEAIRTH walks in on Sam and kicks him awake.

LEVY
It's sweeter than honey to meet you Seairth.

SEAIRTH
The feeling is more than mutual.

LEVY
I have to go now my treat. Call me later tonight.

SEAIRTH
I would love to.

LEVY
Have a juicy day.

SEAIRTH
You as well.

LEVY
Goodbye.

SEAIRTH
Goodbye.

We hear the phone click as she hangs up. SEAIRTH listens to the silence on the line until it resets to a dial tone and he beeps the phone off. He stares at the phone a second,

then clasps it to his heart and spins around and around. SAM is staring at him, perplexed. SEAIRTH grabs him by the arms.

SEAIRTH

She called me her "treat" Sam! Can you believe it?

SAM

What's gotten into you? You're all confident and... Manly.

SEAIRTH

(Narrowing eyes and looking into space)

I have a purpose and that empowers me.

Evil grin, then his eyes widen and he is transferred back into panic-mode.

SEAIRTH

You have to help me out. I need you to deliver something.

SAM

Again?

SEAIRTH looks around the room wildly.

SEAIRTH

Wrapping I need wrapping... This will do.

SEAIRTH zeros in on a tapestry, pulls it down, lays it out on the floor, grabs the painting and lays it down in the center, folding the tapestry over it. He then pulls the cords from around the curtains and ties it up into a bow. He stands back, there is sweat on his face and he is red and breathing heavily. He picks it up and thrusts it against Sam's chest.

SEAIRTH

Take this to her, post-haste.

Looks down at the gift pressed against him, looks at SEAIRTH with a quirked eyebrow, slowly grasps the gift

SAM

This is a very expensive
fabricated-antique-medieval-
representation of a tapestry

SAM

(CONT.)

you've just wrapped your worthless
artwork in.

SEAIRTH'S face contorts into anger, he stabs a finger at
the door.

SEAIRTH

Go!

SAM looks at him, shocked, and walks out the door robotic,
stunned. Seairth rubs his chin and begins pacing.

FADE.

INT. SEAIRTH'S HOME - DAY

SEAIRTH is pacing in his room. Just as we left him. The
phone rings, and he dives for it, fumbles it in the air,
clutches it in his hands, still ringing. Closes his eyes,
takes a deep breath - beeps the phone on and puts it to his
ear. He is so calm and aloof that it's unrealistic.

SEAIRTH

Hello?

INT. LEVY'S APARTMENT

LEVY has a powerful grin on her face and her eyes are
narrowed wickedly.

LEVY

It's succulent, sinfully
delicious.

We see the painting resting on a chair with the tapestry
cascading down around it.

SEAIRTH

I assume you've received my gift.

LEVY

I can't believe it; it's like
looking into a mirror. You drew
this from memory?

INT. SEAIRTH'S HOME

SEAIRTH

After I saw you that day in the
museum, I had to capture your
radiance.

LEVY

I only wish my tits were actually
that big.

SEAIRTH

(Looks worried)

Uh-- The subject is always
perceived in a light that reflects
the nature of the observer.

LEVY

(Dismissive)

Uh-huh. So isn't your shrine to me
gonna look sorta barren without
this?

SEAIRTH

(More worried)

Shrine? I'm not sure--

LEVY

(Laughing)

Never mind. So when do I get to
meet you stranger?

SEAIRTH

(Pause)

Meet?

LEVY

Well yeah, how do you ever expect
to work your way into my panties
if you don't meet me to impress
me?

INT. LEVY'S APARTMENT

SEAIRTH

I-- I assure you, my intentions
are purely--

LEVY

Booooring, you wrote me this
letter of your life story just so
we could talk on the phone?

INT. SEAIRTH'S HOME

SEAIRTH

Well, my plan was--

INT. LEVY'S APARTMENT

LEVY

Was what? To talk me to death?
You've got the courage to send me
this letter, painting, talk sweet
to me on the phone but you don't
have the guts to meet me face to
face?

INT. SEAIRTH'S HOME

SEAIRTH

No, I do, it's just--

LEVY

Oh my god... Are you like some
kind of horribly disfigured
accident victim? Hiding in the
shadows? Only coming out at night?

SEAIRTH

(Weird look)

Where did that come from?

INT. LEVY'S APARTMENT

LEVY

(Shrugs)

Some movie. So are we gonna hang
out or not?

(Suddenly sweet voice)

Don't be afraid, that's not very appetizing. You've won points with the painting and the letter. All you have to do is be confident. That's the most attractive feature in a man is confidence.

SEAIRTH

Okay.

LEVY

So let's have lunch then? You pick the place.

INT. SEAIRTH'S HOME

SEAIRTH

(Swallows)

Okay... You ever have Eastern food?

INT. LEVY'S APARTMENT

LEVY

Bleach, hate it. You know they eat dogs over there?

SEAIRTH

Actually, I don't think that's--

LEVY

I know! Let's check out that neo-retro-post-modern-ultra-tacky place that just opened up.

INT. SEAIRTH'S HOME

SEAIRTH

(Odd look)

You mean that one with all the imitations of old movie props--

LEVY

I hear they serve the food on roller-skates and unicycles too!

SEAIRTH

Ummm.

INT. LEVY'S APARTMENT

LEVY
Come on! Don't be sour. It'll be fun; it'll give you the opportunity to show what a good sport you can be.

INT. SEAIRTH'S HOME

SEAIRTH
Well...

LEVY
Pleeeeeeease?

SEAIRTH
(Smiles)
Okay, you've twisted my arm.

LEVY
Yummy, let's meet in an hour then?

SEAIRTH
Okay.

INT. LEVY'S APARTMENT

LEVY
Lip-smacking, I'm gonna run and get dressed.

INT. SEAIRTH'S HOME

SEAIRTH
Sounds good--

The phone clicks as she hangs up. Seairth looks confused, looks around, stands up and begins to walk in one direction, stops and turns to walk in the other.

SEAIRTH
Oh my god, what do I do now?

FADE

EXT. MONDO'S RESTAURANT

SEAIRTH standing on a busy street corner bouncing nervously, behind him we see a loud, tacky (maybe TV screen) neon sign flashing "MONDO'S". He checks his bare wrist as if checking the time, rolls his eyes at this foolishness and goes back to looking around nervously. LEVY emerges from crowd and his face brightens, he approaches her and she focuses on him. They come face to face.

SEAIRTH

Hello.

LEVY narrows her eyes and quirks her head at him, then disappointment apparent

LEVY

You must be Seairth.

(She sighs and walks a slow circle around him)

I'd hoped you would be taller.

(Shakes her head)

Your physique is a bit unsavory too...

(Smiles suddenly and looks him in the eye)

We can be friends though.

SEAIRTH

But...

LEVY

But what?

SEAIRTH

It's just that I...

Looks around and waves his hands in search of the words.

LEVY

Yes?

SEAIRTH

I thought we...

LEVY

(Blinks expectantly and searches his face)

SEAIRTH
I thought we had connected.

LEVY
(Looks puzzled)

SEAIRTH
When we talked on the phone, I
thought we... Sort of... Bonded.

LEVY
What gave you that idea?

SEAIRTH wrinkles his brow and looks up into space.

SEAIRTH
You know, I don't know.

LEVY
(Shrugs)
Well, it happens. Get over it.

Waves her hand in front of his face to get his attention,
he looks at her

LEVY
Let it go, just try to have fun.
(Snaps her fingers in
front of his face)
You know... Fun? Ha-Ha. Hee-Hee.
Fun?

Stares at her for a second, then shakes his head as if
waking up, stutters.

SEAIRTH
Of- of course. Let's go have some
fun.

LEVY
(Gives him and odd look)
You don't sound like you mean it,
but that's okay. I'm going to have
a delectable time.

She grabs his hand and drags him into the restaurant.

INT. RESTAURANT

Inside of the restaurant is incredibly tacky. SEAIRTH stares into space with a confused look, LEVY plays with her straw and looks all around trying to take it all in.

LEVY

Wow, can you believe this place? I bet they get all kinds of recognizables in here. Executives, Pop Stars... Oh my god--

LEVY bounces in her chair, waving her hand at someone off screen. She suddenly looks extra flirty.

LEVY

Hey Michael.

MICHAEL enters the scene, he is well dressed, tall, classically attractive, muscular. He positions himself between LEVY and SEAIRTH, with his back to SEAIRTH.

MICHAEL

Hello Levy, what brings you here?

LEVY melts into his gaze.

LEVY

Just sampling the scene.
(Gestures to Seairth
without looking at him)
This is my friend Seairth.

MICHAEL

(Waves a hand at Seairth
without looking at him)
Hey. Listen Levy you should come
by later.
(Begins rubbing her back)
I'm working with a new medium and
would love to have you as a
subject.

LEVY

(Smile grows bigger)
Just drop me a line.

MICHAEL

I'll do that. Nice to meet you
Adam.

MICHAEL waves a hand to SEAIRTH without looking at him. LEVY watches him go, we see SEAIRTH watch him leave without interest. LEVY turns back to SEAIRTH, excited.

LEVY

Oh my God! Did you hear that? He's gonna use me as a subject!

SEAIRTH

What's his medium?

LEVY

Photography. He's a neo-erotic-orifice-centered-bondage enthusiast. I did an exhibition with him last year. He took pictures of me in bondage. My favorite was the series of me tied down with leather straps, he pinned them to the floor with a nail-gun.

LEVY looks distant, shaking her head slowly with an evil grin on her face

LEVY

Mmmm... Mmmmm... Mmmmm... Too bad he's shaved his goatee it tickled deliciously.

(Notices Seairth staring at her, looking ill)

What? You couldn't tell it was me in the pictures, I had a hood on... Michael said it added to the mystique. Don't tell me you're still thinking you can get with me?

SEAIRTH

(Shrugs slowly)

My letter, the painting... They touched you. I know they did. I don't understand how you can forget they happened.

LEVY

Look, they were nice, and it was really sweet of you, but it's not going to happen. I'm sorry.

SEAIRTH

But why?

LEVY

(Out loud)

Because you're not my type! Okay? You know you're not my type, I told you you weren't my type the moment I saw you. You know this already!

The restaurant patrons are staring at the two of them after this outburst, LEVY stares at the embarrassed SEAIRTH fuming.

SEAIRTH

I just don't understand, I was hoping we'd--

LEVY

What?

SEAIRTH

--end up lovers.

LEVY

(Stares at him in a mix of shock and anger)

Why would I sleep with you?

SEAIRTH

That's-- That's not what I--

LEVY

You're not my type! You don't have anything going for you! Why would I fuck you?

SEAIRTH holds up his hands in a futile attempt to calm her down.

SEAIRTH

Please, I didn't mean--

LEVY

I've fucked major league sports legends. Punk Rock bands.

(Begins counting them off on her fingers)

Studio Executives! Movie Directors! Nightclub owners! I don't just give it up for anybody!

LEVY

(CONT.)

Especially not dime-a-dozen artists!

Long pause as SEAIRTH attempts to utter something. His mouth moving but no words are coming out.

SEAIRTH

But I love you...

LEVY looks disgusted, shakes her head and walks out of the restaurant.

LEVY

How tedious.

SEAIRTH looks around for a second, then follows.

EXT RESTAURANT

LEVY marches out, SEAIRTH following her. She suddenly turns to face him and he rears back to keep from running into her.

LEVY

Look Seairth, I'm sorry.

SEAIRTH

No I'm--

LEVY

Considering all the things that have been done and said, I think it's best if we don't speak to each other anymore.

SEAIRTH
(Eyes widen)
But I--

LEVY
I'm ashamed at how little you
believe in me. Don't ever try to
contact me again. Good day.

SEAIRTH watches in dismay as she marches down the street;
he is frozen, too stunned to move.

INT. SEAIRTH'S HOME - DAY

Knock at the door, it opens and SAM peeks in cautiously.

SAM
Hello?

He Steps inside, shuts the door

SAM
Hello? Seairth?

SAM comes into the apartment, which has been torn apart--
paintings ripped down, vases smashed, holes punched in the
walls, paint is smeared everywhere and toppled lights cast
haunting shadows

SAM
Hey Seairth buddy, I left some
messages. I figured things didn't
go to well.

He comes to the balcony, where SEAIRTH sits with a bottle
of gin, staring at a canvas

SAM
Seairth?

SEAIRTH
What do you do when the world you
imagine in your fantasies doesn't
fit with the reality of the world
around you?

SAM

You find new dreams?

SEAIRTH

(Obviously drunk)

No. Dreams are lying whores, you
switch whores and the new one will
just betray you like the last.

No... It's better to stop dreaming
and live only in cold reality.

SAM looks at the canvas and starts at what he sees.

SAM

Seairth, what is that?

We see a canvas covered in melted black candle-wax, broken
glass shards, barbed wire-- a dark industrial landscape.

SEAIRTH

It's where I am now, where someone
like me can thrive. It's a world
without dreams, a place where hope
is punished for the crime it is...

Slow zoom into the painting..

TITLE: AUTUMN TWILIGHT

This is the world of Autumn Twilight. An industrial nightmare of pipes, dirt, and debris, the primary colors are the brown of rust and dirt, and the burnt red color of eternal sunset. Wind and autumn leaves constantly blow outside in this world.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL LABRYNTH

The scene opens with a lightning strike. Looking down at a wet street, lit by a single street lamp, this world is an industrial nightmare of pipes, metal gratings, artificial lighting, and water dripping. Rust covers everything. All is drab and worn down. The technology is outdated and much broken machinery litters the landscapes.

We zoom into ALFRED coming into view as we pan down to the street. His head hangs low and his shoulders are hunched over. He is in his mid-50's. He walks along, looking over to the camera to reveal absurdly thick eyeglasses.

He wears a plain overcoat buttoned up and his hat is of a fifties style. We see him through several different shots: walking slowly along his pat to work. Each shot is framed by the rust, dripping water, garbage and vermin that characterize this world. His footsteps are the only noise we hear as he shuffles through these shots. Eventually he comes to a set of steel stairs, which he climbs and enters a door at the top.

INT. ALFRED'S WORKPLACE

Inside is characterized by the dull hazy lighting of florescent lights, which don't work very well; they are set to a low power. A low hum resonates in the background. ALFRED enters and closes the door behind him. He takes off his hat and coat and hangs them on a rack by the door, we pause at the rack to see the other coats and hats are all the same as his.

INT. WORKROOM

ALFRED shuffles his way into a room with slightly better lighting. There are monochrome monitors lined-up. He pauses as he enters the room and looks around meekly. We get a good look at his face now: bottle-cap glasses which distort

his eyes to make them look enormous, he is gangly and has bad posture. He shuffles down the row of monochrome monitors, at each one sits a man or woman, each wearing what looks like a prison uniform or jumpsuit. All are totally absorbed in their work and don't acknowledge Alfred as he shuffles past them, his eyes on the ground.

He comes to an empty seat and pulls it away from the desk as if to sit in it. Just then the BOSS enters the scene. ALFRED jumps when the BOSS starts speaking, but doesn't meet his gaze. The BOSS is standing straight at military-attention, his arms clasped behind his back as if he were General Patton speaking to his troops.

BOSS

Alfred my boy! How are you this session?

ALFRED is writhing while he talks, like a fish on a hook, never meeting the BOSS' gaze

ALFRED

I am fine sir. I am feeling fine that is. I am feeling better than ever.

ALFRED produces a feeble smile and poses to show it to the Boss, the expression is painful to look at. The BOSS begins to draw his gaze closely into ALFRED'S, as if trying to seek out eye contact, while ALFRED continues to writhe away from it.

BOSS

That's good to hear Alfred! You see, you have been barely on time for the last three sessions. You know what they say about being on time, don't you Alfred?

ALFRED

It's not as good as being early?

BOSS

Yes Alfred, so you see my dilemma. When one of my workers is not functioning at optimum performance.

BOSS

(CONT.)

I must worry about them, for we are a business and a business acts as an organism, a single unit composed of many organs. If one were to cease functioning properly the entire body would collapse. Do you understand what I am saying to you?

ALFRED

The chain is only as strong as its weakest link?

BOSS

Very good Alfred. I know this is merely a small error on your part, one you will correct before the next session. Now look

(He gestures at the other workers all busy typing or clicking away)

...for the next session I will expect you to be the first one here. Do you think you can manage that?

ALFRED

(Nods)

BOSS

Good! Also, I will expect you to stay an additional two hours after the end of this session.

The BOSS begins to walk away

ALFRED

But I always stay an additional two hours after my session.

The BOSS swivels around to face him.

BOSS

I meant in addition to that.

The BOSS swivels and walks away. ALFRED sits down and begins to work.

INT. ALFRED'S WORKPLACE - DAY

We are confronted with endlessly scrolling scenes of code, programming and nonsense code... It scrolls and fades into more code and scenes of ALFRED staring blankly at. Soon the other workers get up to leave one by one until only workers get up to leave one by one until only ALFRED is left.

ALFRED looks around himself cautiously, then yawns, takes his eyeglasses off and rubs his eyes wearily. The BOSS steps into the scene, ALFRED jumps, slaps his glasses on crookedly and begins typing again furiously.

The BOSS enters, slapping a hand on ALFRED'S shoulder.

BOSS

Alfred my boy! How goes the project?

ALFRED

It's coming along on schedule sir.

BOSS

Excellent! Excellent! So can you give me an estimate on your completion date?

ALFRED

Yes sir, just a few more sessions.

BOSS

A few? How many is a few?

ALFRED

Um. I believe three should do it sir.

BOSS

Precision Alfred. I realize it has been a long session and your mind is geared toward the code, but I require precision to report to my superiors.

ALFRED

Two sessions sir. Two and three quarters sessions sir.

BOSS

I'll let you off the hook this time Alfred, but normally you report to the second decimal place, not vague fractions. Are you certain everything is well with you Alfred?

ALFRED

Everything is fine sir. I've just been dealing with a rather difficult programming conundrum. I'll be fresh for the next session sir.

ALFRED shrugs pathetically.

BOSS

See to it that you are Alfred. Be sure to log your hours after you shut down. See you next session.

ALFRED

(Nodding his head vigorously)

Yes sir, of course sir.

The BOSS exits. ALFRED takes his seat, hands folded in his lap, and shoulders slumped. He sighs silently and stares into space for a long time.

FADE

EXT. ALFRED'S WORKPLACE - DAY

Shot of ALFRED climbing the rusty stairs to the door where he works

INT. ALFRED'S WORKPLACE - DAY

ALFRED sitting at his desk, his face pressed up close to his monitor, immersed in his work. We can hear his fingers rapidly typing away at the keyboard. We pan back to see the

other workers all lined up with their faces up close to their monitors.

BOSS
(Off screen)
Alfred!

All of the workers jump in their seats, but keep their faces the same robotic expression and do not pause in their work. Only ALFRED stops and turns around. The BOSS comes into the scene and leans in close to ALFRED

BOSS
Alfred, may I see you in my
office?

The BOSS walks away, ALFRED looks around with uncertainty then follows.

INT. BOSS'S OFFICE

This is a dark room, lit only by the many stacks of monitors, each displaying the work that is being performed by the workers. The BOSS sits down and swivels back and forth in his chair.

BOSS
Alfred, how long have you been
working here?

ALFRED
Six thousand three hundred and
forty-two sessions sir.

BOSS
A long, healthy career, Alfred,
I've always admired your
consistency.

ALFRED
Thank you sir.

BOSS
That's why it would be such a
shame if I had to retire you
prematurely.

BOSS

(CONT.)

Hey Yosha! Catch!
You see, you're not very far away
from your next advancement, and
you have such a promising future.
The quality of your work has
always been exact, until recently.
You have been coming into work
less early. I have been finding
errors in your appearance, for
instance, just the other day you
had a stray lock of hair bouncing
unkempt while you were working. It
took you a full hour to correct
the problem. I mean, look at you
now, it's been almost all day
since you last cleaned your
glasses!

ALFRED removes his glasses and begins rubbing them while
the BOSS continues. The BOSS stands up and walks around his
desk to pick up a print out - an old fashioned one with the
connected pages and hole punches for loading into a dot-
matrix printer.

BOSS

Today Alfred, while I was
evaluating your diagrams and
schemata I found this.

Holds up the printout so ALFRED may see--among the endless
lines of code there his a distinctly drawn "Happy Face" :)

BOSS

What is this supposed to be?

ALFRED puts on his glasses and squints at the paper, he
turns his head sideways and smiles slightly.

ALFRED

It looks like a smiling face
sir...

The BOSS looks at the page, eyes wide.

BOSS

A smiling face? Are your synapses firing properly my boy? It looks like an error! A stark, gargantuan blot of an error! Right there in the middle of your code. What am I to make of this?

ALFRED

Well... Sir... The code still runs properly... In spite of the... Uh.... Blotch... I--

BOSS

That's not the point Alfred! We cannot deliver imperfect code! We must be perfect, impeccable, without imperfection! This attitude of yours is a dangerous thing Alfred. I'm sending you for psychological analysis.

ALFRED

Yes sir,
(Lowering his head, then looking up surprised)
Psychological analysis sir? Is that necessary? I'm sure the glitch was merely a singular occurrence. Possibly a result of my feeling under the weather, I don't think--

The BOSS places a hand on ALFRED'S shoulder

BOSS

Alfred, stop thinking. You weren't born for thinking on your own... Your aptitude tests have shown your place in the world. Just relax, you will be sent for evaluation, the psychologist will give you mental exercises to strengthen your concentration and you will be back at your post alongside your friends in no time.

ALFRED looks scared and the BOSS pats him gently on the shoulder.

BOSS
Not to fear, all will be right
again soon and you'll feel much
better.

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE

ALFRED is strapped to a chair, surrounded by bizarre instruments. The PSYCHOLOGIST walks around him with a strange contraption on her head, peering at Alfred. She sits down in front of ALFRED.

PSYCHOLOGIST
I'm going to show you a series of
cards and I want you to tell me
what you see on them.

ALFRED nods and the PSYCHOLOGIST pulls out a set of cards. She holds one up, on it is a blueprint for an airplane.

ALFRED
That is a blueprint for a cargo
airship.

PSYCHOLOGIST nods and pulls out an inkblot.

ALFRED
That's a blot of ink.

PSYCHOLOGIST nods and pulls out another inkblot.

ALFRED
That is another blot of ink.

PSYCHOLOGIST nods and pulls out another blueprint.

ALFRED
That is a blueprint for a domicile
living space.

PSYCHOLOGIST nods, pulls out another ink blot

ALFRED

That is... That... It resembles an insect I saw on my way to work the other day... A butterfly I believe.

PSYCHOLOGIST

(Frowns)

No Alfred, I'm afraid this is another inkblot.

ALFRED

I know, but--

PSYCHOLOGIST

No Alfred... There are no 'buts' or 'I believes'... The world is an exact place. You see, these cards were meant to test your perception. Your perceptions are beginning to drift from a sensing of the world around you to an intuitive form of perceiving. It happens to many people, as they grow older.

ALFRED

I don't understand.

PSYCHOLOGIST

You see Alfred. The proper way to interpret the world is through the senses. This is the normal mode of perception. An intuitive individual interprets the world through their own thoughts and experiences. It is actually a very egocentric point of view, selfish and fails to contribute to the community. Don't worry though Alfred, we have many new techniques to stem the onset of the abnormality. In the old days I would have to burn out your frontal lobe and--

ALFRED

Why is it abnormality?

PSYCHOLOGIST

Because it lacks normality to think in such a way; it is unproductive. Understand this Alfred, you don't want to end up in the ward with the other imaginatives. They are truly lost souls, incapable of understanding the world around them.

ALFRED

Sir, if I may...

PSYCHOLOGIST

Yes Alfred?

ALFRED

If abnormality is the absence of normality... Then what is normal?

Pause. The PSYCHOLOGIST picks up the print out with the 'smiling face'.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Well, it certainly is not this error you made earlier today, the one your Supervisor told me you said resembled a "smiling face". I will need to speak with your supervisor and then we can have you released.

The PSYCHOLOGIST wads up the printout and tosses it in a wastebasket, stands up and walks out. ALFRED stares at the wastebasket.

INT. OUTSIDE PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE

PSYCHOLOGIST and BOSS are leaned in toward each other conspiratorially.

PSYCHOLOGIST

It's not too much to worry about, safe to say. This kind of Psychosis becomes more prevalent with the older generations.

PSYCHOLOGIST

(CONT.)

We believe that as the mind and body grow older and things begin to break down a kind of wandering of the consciousness takes place... This Misguided attention starts making associations between completely unrelated objects and subjects.

BOSS

You mean like his seeing a smiling face in the text of his algorithms today?

PSYCHOLOGIST

Exactly... Brains work very much like computer programs. If data is corrupted, errors in logic will occur.

BOSS

What can I do? I can't let my department suffer because of the individual. We are like a finely tuned machine, if we loose performance because of one loose bolt--

PSYCHOLOGIST

It's too early to tell. This could be an isolated incident, or the first stone in an avalanche. He could end up lost in dementia.

BOSS

What can I do?

PSYCHOLOGIST

Task him. Increase his workload. The key here is to keep him focused on the tasks at hand. If we can keep his stress-levels maximized, he won't have time to get lost in disassociation. We must make certain he cannot dream anymore.

PSYCHOLOGIST

(CONT.)

Should he get any worse... We must consider mor drastic measures.

BOSS

(Nods)

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

PSYCHOLOGIST

Alfred, I'm sending you home for the evening. When you get there, I want you to eat your standard rations and go straight to sleep no delaying or distractions. You are a very sick man and you must focus to ensure you do not grow any more ill. Do you understand?

ALFRED

(Nodding)

Yes sir, I want to get better.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Good. I'm glad you understand the gravity of the situation.

EXT. ALFRED'S HOME

ALFRED walks slowly up the stairs to his home, just another door with a number on it in a long row of uniform doors.

INT. ALFRED'S HOME

Old, wooden floors, dust and barren, crumbling walls mark ALFRED'S domicile. ALFRED shuffles into the room, removes his trench coat and hangs it up next to the door. His living room consists of a drafting board and a wooden chair. He walks through it into the kitchen where he pulls a box from the cupboard. It is labeled "Standard Ration #1010001 - Whey Protein and Complex Carbohydrates." He pulls back the cover and we see four lumps of putty. He picks one up and begins chewing it thoroughly.

He takes a sudden step away from the ration and moves to reach into his pocket, but stops. Shakes his head as if trying to rid himself of some thought. Takes another lump

of putty and begins chewing on it furiously. His posture is awkward as if he is attempting to keep still. The hand goes for the pocket again; and he stops suddenly, crushing his eyelids shut. He swallows the protein-ball down hard, and eyes still shut, he marches into his living room and walks up to the drafting board.

Once there, he finally opens his eyes and trembling, he reaches into his pocket and pulls out the wadded piece of paper from the PSYCHOLOGIST'S office. He sets it on the table in front of him and carefully pulls it apart and flattens it out on the table. We see the "smiling face" which he peers at closely and smiles. Pulls a sheet of paper from a drawer and begins to sketch the inkblot that resembled a butterfly.

There is a knock at the door and ALFRED quickly shoves the paper and sketch into the drawer. He opens the door and a man wearing a uniform similar to the BOSS' stands in the doorway.

TRAINER
Hello Alfred.

ALFRED
Oh, Hello sir.

ALFRED steps aside and ushers the TRAINER in.

TRAINER
I've never been to your quarters before. Very well organized.
(Sees the protein balls.)
Have I interrupted your afternoon food consumption?

ALFRED
Ummm.. No sir... I mean, yes, but it can wait.

The TRAINER nods, giving ALFRED an odd look.

TRAINER
I came by because you have failed to attend your last six after work-session skill enhancement classes. I wanted to make sure all was functioning properly with you.

ALFRED

Ah, yes sir. You see, my work session supervisor has been keeping me on for extra time, which has conflicted with my skill enhancement classes.

TRAINER

How unusual. For what reason has he kept you over?

ALFRED looks at his feet.

ALFRED

A drop in productivity.

The TRAINER places a hand on ALFRED'S shoulder.

TRAINER

These things happen Alfred, I'm sure you will compensate. What percentage of a loss did you experience?

ALFRED

Almost three percent.

The TRAINER nods sympathetically and turns away, then stops suddenly.

TRAINER

Three percent? That's quite a drop and your session supervisor must be concerned, but that doesn't account for your missing the skills Enhancement classes.

ALFRED

(Distraught)

Well I...

The TRAINER is staring at the drafting board.

TRAINER

There is something seriously wrong here, Alfred. Look at your work area...

The TRAINER pulls out the sketch, which is hanging slightly out of the drawer.

TRAINER
What is this?

ALFRED steps forward, holding his hands up.

ALFRED
It's nothing sir... Truly.

The TRAINER drops the sketch and gives ALFRED a look of fear.

TRAINER
This is very serious Alfred... You are irrational.

ALFRED
No sir, it's harmless.

The TRAINER steps back from ALFRED and points at the sketch.

TRAINER
That is not harmless Alfred. You are delusional. It's surprising you are even able to function. You have to put an end to this.

ALFRED
I know sir. I want to, but I don't know how.

TRAINER
It would be unfortunate if you were to end up in the asylums. No one returns from the asylums Alfred.

TRAINER begins marching to the door. ALFRED stops him.

ALFRED
But how?

TRAINER
Focus Alfred. You will be present for skill enhancement training tomorrow.

TRAINER

(CONT.)

If there is any lack of focus or effort on your part-- I will report you to the authorities.

TRAINER puts his hat on and exits, we see the look of concern on ALFRED'S face.

INT. ALFRED'S WORKPLACE - DAY

Scenes of ALFRED at work. We can hear the clicking of his mouse, watch his eyes dart from place to place on the screen. Scene fades into scene of ALFRED working throughout the day. Suddenly--

BOSS

Alfred!

We pan back to see ALFRED'S screen, on it is rendered a complete work of art in text. Trees, mountains, and sunshine as if drawn by a child. ALFRED jumps back from the desk as if shocked at what he has done. He then looks around, all of the other workers have stopped their labor and are staring at him in confusion. The BOSS stands beside him, glaring. ALFRED stands up and begins to run, but the BOSS steps in front of him.

BOSS

Calm down Alfred! Everything will be fine. I've called the authorities and they're sending over some experts who will help you.

ALFRED

No! They'll take it all away!

BOSS

(Grabbing Alfred)

You must understand Alfred! You are broken! They will fix you!

ALFRED

I'm not broken! I'm-- I'm a-- abnormal!

ALFRED breaks the BOSS' grasp and runs away.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL LABRYNTH - DAY

ALFRED runs madly down dark, wet streets. His gait is awkward and childish as one unaccustomed to running.

INT. ALFRED'S WORKPLACE - DAY

Two men in white lab coats come into ALFRED'S work.

BOSS
He just fled.

The lab coats nod, one looks to the other and signals to leave.

EXT. ALFRED'S HOME - DAY

ALFRED runs up the stairs, breaks open the door to his apartment violently.

INT. ALFRED'S HOME - DAY

ALFRED rushes into his apartment and stops suddenly, looking uncertain. The he runs to his cot in his bedroom and rips the pillowcase from his pillow. He then begins stuffing clothing into it, then to the cupboard, where he grabs some rations and puts them in the pillowcase as well. He looks around and stops when his eyes come to a vent in the wall. He takes a few steps towards it, but sirens outside stop him in his tracks. He moves towards the door, taking one last longing stare at the vent. He opens the door and steps outside.

EXT. ALFRED'S HOME - DAY

The sirens are louder, we can see lights flashing against ALFRED'S building. ALFRED looks bewildered. He runs to the stairs, but there are men in white LABCOATS coming up them. He runs back down the walkway, but there are more LABCOATS coming from the other direction. He turns around to find himself trapped from both directions now. One of the LABCOATS puts up a cautionary hand, while holding a straight jacket in the other.

LABCOAT
It's alright there friend. We are here to help. Just calm yourself.

ALFRED turns around to the other LABCOAT.

LABCOAT2

There's nowhere to go friend. Just relax.

ALFRED looks around, then drops the pillowcase.

LABCOAT

That's better.

ALFRED faces the LABCOAT with a look of grim determination. He then looks over the balcony at the debris-strewn ground below. He puts one leg over the railing.

LABCOAT2

Don't do it! Be rational!

ALFRED looks at the LABCOAT, narrows his eyes and smiles.

ALFRED

There's nothing rational in this world.

He whips his other leg over the railing and leaps. The LABCOATS reach for him, but it's too late. They lean over the railing. ALFRED is laid-out on the ground below, unmoving.

INT. DARKNESS

PSYCHOLOGIST

It's amazing he didn't hurt himself more seriously.

BOSS

How could he survive such a fall Doctor?

PSYCHOLOGIST

The insane are often capable of incredible physical feats. They do not sense pain the way we do.

INT. ALFRED'S HOME - DAY

ALFRED is lying on his cot. His eyes flutter.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Ah. The subject is coming to.

ALFRED suddenly bolts up and awakes, but is in a straight jacket. He struggles against it for a few moments, then stops and looks around. There are LABCOATS scanning every inch of his apartment, taking notes, one holds his sketch from earlier in his hands and frowns at it. ALFRED manages to sit up and continues to give the evil eye to the LABCOATS. Then his eyes come to rest on the vent from before. He breathes deeply and we can see him tense.

BOSS

Is there any hope for him?

PSYCHOLOGIST

(Staring at Alfred)

It is hard to tell. We haven't uncovered much here... A few sketches. Unfortunately we do not have the technology to look into a person's mind and see the extent of their disassociations.

BOSS

A shame, what an unfortunate end to such a competent career.

PSYCHOLOGIST

(Still staring at Alfred)

Indeed.

(Looks to the vent in the wall, where Alfred is staring.)

Technician, see what's inside that vent.

LABCOAT

Yes sir.

ALFRED

No!

ALFRED jumps up and lunges for the LABCOAT.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Restrain him!

Two LABCOATS are already on ALFRED, Pushing him down onto the cot.

ALFRED

(Wailing)

No! Noooo! You can't! Please!

BOSS

He's hiding things in the air vents? But what kind of man would do such a thing?

PSYCHOLOGIST

One who knows they are doing wrong.

PSYCHOLOGIST steps forward. ALFRED continues to wail as the Labcoat squats down in front of the vent, tilting his head at it. Then he places his finger on its edges and pulls. It takes a few moments, but the vent screen does come off suddenly and out spills a flood of sketches, notepads, and drawings. We see ALFRED, still restrained, with tears streaming from his eyes. Rocking back and forth against the arms of his captors.

ALFRED

No, please... Stop... You can't...

FADE

INT. THE ASYLUM

We follow ALFRED around for what could be weeks or even years. Scene after scene portrays his misery. Lying still in a cot with his eyes wide open. Staring out a dirty barred window. Pacing back and forth in his cell. A scene with the PSYCHS talking to him.

PSYCH 1

Alfred, what do you intend to accomplish in your life?

ALFRED

I want to swim in the stars and breathe the cosmos.

PSYCHS look at each other

ALFRED with a stone, marking a wall. Every so often we see the PSYCHS watching him from a window. Time passes. Finally the door opens and a psych steps into the room, the door

closes behind him. Long silence, ALFRED marks the wall with a rock.

PSYCH 1

Alfred, I'm afraid there is no hope for you. We have tried removing stimulus and you invent your own with this rock. We attempt to condition you through thought-therapy and you sink deeper into yourself than we can follow. We are committing you to the fifth ward, where you will spend the rest of your day.

ALFRED never looks at the PSYCH 1, only continues to mark at the wall. PSYCH 1 shakes his head and leaves the room.

INT. FIFTH WARD

An old-fashioned manual elevator comes to a downward halt. An Iron Gate is opened and then another. Revealing two PSYCHS and ALFRED. ALFRED is very haggard looking now, a scruff beard and unkempt hair. The PSYCHS lead him into the ward, where we are presented with a wide variety of crazy people. Some are talking to themselves, others are performing strange rituals with their hands. Some paw at ALFRED as the PSYCHS lead him through the group, but ALFRED does not notice. They bring ALFRED through the group and into a hallway, where they lead him to a room marked only by a cot.

PSYCH

These are your new quarters. Bathing facilities and food dispensers are located at the end of the hall.

ALFRED does not respond and the PSYCHS nod to each other and leave.

PSYCH2

He'll be dead in a week or two I'm guessing.

PSYCH

Yes, I suppose he will.

PSYCH

(CONT.)

(Points to a body lying
on the floor)

It looks like another one forgot
to survive.

They both go to pickup the body.

PSYCH2

It's unfortunate, considering we
give them every opportunity
possible.

They leave with the body and we see a middle-aged woman
crouching in the corner. She watches the PSYCHS go and
cautiously tiptoes down the hall to ALFRED'S room. She peeks
around the door frame to see him marking the stone wall
with a piece of chalk. He has drawn some mountains and a
sun in a child-like fashion. She comes into the room
carefully with a large smile on her face. She comes up
behind him and points to the mountains.

GRACE

I know that these are mountains,
these trees, and clouds, but why
is the sky so dark?

She points at the black sky, filled with darkness and
vibrant colors of stars like Van Gogh's "Starry Night".
ALFRED looks at her, eyes wide, when he is able to talk he
stutters.

ALFRED

In this world, there is no sun.
That way, the people who live
there can see far away places,
other planets.

GRACE

It's so beautiful. That must be a
happy place to live.

ALFRED

(Smiles Genuinely)

It will be, but it has much work
to be done yet.

GRACE holds up a finger.

GRACE
I know what can help it.

She grabs ALFRED'S hand and pulls him from the room. She takes him down the hall, to a loose brick in the wall.

GRACE
I hide these here so that no one will take them. The others don't understand, they are truly crazy... but I am...
(Waves her hand)
...different. That's all.

GRACE Pulls the brick from the wall and pulls out a variety of colored chalks

GRACE
These will add new life to your work.

ALFRED
How do you have this?

GRACE
I have been here a long time. I have made my own worlds too. Would you like to see?

ALFRED nods and she takes him to her room, which is covered wall to wall with child like drawings. ALFRED steps into the rooms and is overwhelmed. We pass through several scenes of the two talking with animation and vibrancy not scene in this world. Pointing at the drawings and talking.

INT. ALFRED'S ROOM

ALFRED and GRACE finishing a large drawing of an endless garden of statues under a nighttime sky filled with fantastic stars, galaxies, and planets.

ALFRED
This is the world I always wanted to live in...

They hold hands and we zoom past them and into the painting to the next world.

TITLE: WINTER'S NIGHT

This is the world of eternal night, and cold winter stillness. Black and white are the primary colors for this world, causing the moments of color to stand out all the more.

EXT. GARDEN - NIGHT

Scene fades gently into this world, a world of eternal darkness, lit only by moonlight. All trees are dead, black and stand up in spooky contrast to the white snow covering the ground. There are no clouds in the sky and we can clearly see the sky is filled with multi-colored nebula and galaxies, which slowly spin around the horizon. The moon spins around the horizon as well, casting eerie shadows through the tree branches.

A space helmet comes into the scene and we can hear shallow breathing coming from the person inside. It turns from side to side, surveying the landscape, then bounds with great leaps, exaggerated by the low gravity of this world, into the distance. We see a block of ice, as large as he, tethered to his back.

We follow the space-suited fellow as he bounds gently through the forest with the block of ice until he comes to a ledge--we can see the moon and skyline reflected in his helmet. We pan around to see what he is seeing: a vast canyon of complex ice sculptures and dead black trees with the slowly circling horizon in the distance.

At a slower pace, the figure walks through the sculptures, which depict a vast variety of things both fantastic and real, fairies and dragons, to deer and people. It walks slowly through these to the center of it all, where a large ice monument, a gravesite, rests. The figure unstraps the ice block and leaps up with it in hand to place it on top of the monument. He stands on the roof of the monument and walks a slow circle around the block. Pulling out a glowing red rod he steps back for a second, then lunges forward with a sweeping arc of his hand and cuts a chunk from the block, then another, pulls another tool from his belt and continues to sculpting.

FADE

EXT. MOON LATER

The facemask of the helmet shows two hands sculpting a figure, the view is distorted by the concave nature of the reflection. Suddenly the figure stops and takes two trembling steps backwards and begins shaking noticeably. He reaches a hand out, and we see the hands reaching out to touch the face of the sculpture, which is a beautiful woman. The hand trembles and caresses the air in front of the face. Then the figure drops to his knees and hands, heaving in the throws of despair, the hand still reaching out for the sculpture.

FADE

EXT. IVAN'S HOME

The figure walks slowly up to a bubble shaped home. Punches a button and a door slides open spilling out light, the figure steps inside and the door shuts behind. Inside the airlock we hear the hiss of air rushing through valves. It stops and a bell dings. The figure tiredly unscrews the bolts in his helmet and we hear another hiss as the suit pressurizes. The hands clasp both sides of the helmet and with the same strain pulls it off, revealing a heavily breathing, tired old man. He pauses to breath deeply for a few moments, then punches a button to open the inner door, and walks wearily into a room filled with darkness, as he steps in a few lights flicker on and a computer screen comes on. Scrolling information bars and new reporter's voice fills the room.

REPORTER

Authorities at the Planetary Core of Engineers today announced their mission to ignite the gas-giant X-31 is proceeding on schedule. Environmental Designers intend to convert the planet into a fusion reactor in an attempt to increase the light-energy in our solar system and create an environment capable of easily supporting biological life on those planets without internal fusion reactions.

REPORTER

(CONT.)

This historic event is not without its downfalls, many planets have expressed concern over the effects the heat and light will impact the way of life for many of their inhabitants--

The old man clicks off the screen.

EXT. IVAN'S HOME

Outside his bubble home we see a space ship landing, fires coming from its underside melt the snow-covered ground and turn it to mud. A ramp extends and a woman in a much less bulky space suit steps out, her helmet is a clear bubble. She steps out into the snow, looks at the house, turns her back to it, pulls out and opens what looks like a compact. It lights up her face and she begins to speak.

VALERIE

Hi, this is Valerie Wilkes reporting for intra planetary news. As trillions of people eagerly await the spark that will ignite Gas Giant X-31 into a heat furnace to warm our civilization. Others await the moment with a feeling of remorse. Remorse for the loss of a way of life, a culture which has relied on the darkness and freezing temperatures of their worlds for their livelihoods. Perhaps this loss is most deeply felt here, on the moon M-301, where Ivan Stillwater, and his recently deceased wife have lived for almost and eternity as ice sculptors. As Ivan lives with the death of his wife, he also faces the destruction of his life's work, and his own, nearing end.

She clicks shut the camera and looks thoughtful

VALERIE

Hmmm... That last part didn't
sound right.

She taps a finger on the camera in contemplation and marches up to the house, pushes the button to open the airlock and steps inside. The room depressurizes and she hits a button on her suit to minimize her helmet, steps up to the door and knocks softly.

INT. IVAN'S HOME - DAY

Inside the soft-knock sounds like a banging, IVAN spills his drink when he jumps at the sound. Sits up and looks at himself covered in the stuff. He puts the glass down and looks at a set of buttons on the arm of his chair.

IVAN

Hmmm... Okay, where's the button
to answer the door.

(Bangs again, Ivan looks
at the door)

Yes I hear you, give me a moment
so I can remember how to answer
the...

(Searches the set of
buttons)

Let's see... lights... Heat...
News... Hmmm... Oh, look at that I
can cook my meals from this
remote--

(Bangs again, he throws
up his hands in
resignation)

I give up.
(Pushes himself up to a
stand with some effort.)

I'm coming, I'm coming...
(He comes up to the door
and pushes a button to
open it.)

What?

VALERIE

(Surprised)

Oh, I'm sorry! I didn't meant to--
Hello, I'm Valerie Wilkes

VALERIE

(CONT.)

(Extends a hand)

I'm here to do the human-interest
story on your life and times?

IVAN looks at her hand and turns around to walk back into
the room.

IVAN

So you're the young
whippersnapper, here to make the
world feel sorry for the old man
and the death of his way of life.

Ivan turns to look at her, still with hand extended,
standing at the door

IVAN

Well don't just stand there,
you're letting the vacuum in... Or
the air out. I forget which... Or
how, it works.

He shakes his head, and sits down in his recliner. VALERIE
steps inside and regains some of her composure.

VALERIE

I really appreciate you giving me
this opportunity. I realize how
difficult it must be, especially
considering the recent passing of
your--

IVAN

How old are you?

VALERIE

I'm sixteen.

IVAN

Aren't you a little young to be a
reporter?

VALERIE

I'm old enough to pilot a
spacecraft.

IVAN

That's not what I asked. Driving a spaceship only requires technique and rudimentary coordination. Being a reporter requires worldly experience, a depth of knowledge so you may properly ask questions and delve into your subject. What are you anyway? Some kind of prodigy?

VALERIE

Yes Mr. Stillwater, I'm in the accelerated learning schools, my internship felt I was qualified enough to--

IVAN

I was a child prodigy... Feel special now, while you still can. When you grow up, you'll be just like everybody else.

VALERIE

So I've been told.

IVAN looks at her with some interest, then shakes his head.

IVAN

The news must not think much of this story to send a child to cover it.

VALERIE

On the contrary sir.

IVAN

Convince me.

VALERIE

A way of life that has existed since the dawn of recorded history is about to be washed away in the brilliance of a new star. The world of our forefathers being washed away by the flames of progress.

IVAN gives her an odd look. She waves her hands searching for the words. IVAN raises his eyebrows in interest, waiting for her next words.

VALERIE

You are the human-interest story of the millennium!

IVAN

(Disgusted)

Ugh. That was not how to convince me... How much like a sales pitch that sounded, how thoughtless and dishonest.

VALERIE

(Thoughtfully)

You're right. I'm sorry... The truth is... This story means a lot to me. Your story means a lot to me. I just wanted to understand.

IVAN

What is there to understand? I'm an ice sculptor, when they ignite the gas giant my life's work will melt away.

VALERIE

But why? Why let it be destroyed? Private collectors from all over the system are begging to own and preserve your collection.

IVAN

They can see the collection in virtual showrooms. Every piece is documented, ray-traced...

IVAN looks distant.

IVAN

(CONT)

Almost every piece.

VALERIE

Do you feel and regrets over the loss?

IVAN

Of course, I'm loosing the rest of my life. I've lost my soul-mate and now I will lose my soul's work... Or the physical expression of my soul's work... Or...

(Rubs his eyes)

I don't know.

VALERIE

You aren't certain?

IVAN

Of course I'm certain! Why wouldn't I be certain? --Wait, certain about what?

VALERIE

Are you certain you want to go through with this? You don't even seem to know why you are doing it. It seems to me-- and mind you, I'm only giving my impression based on what you've told me... It seems like you are still so distraught over the death of your wife that you are letting your emotions overpower your reasoning.

IVAN

I am not cynical over my wife's passing. It was expected, I had... We had more than enough time to prepare...

VALERIE

Prepare? You mean emotionally?

IVAN

Yes... That too.

VALERIE

I'm sorry, I don't understand.

IVAN

Hmmmm... You certainly ask a lot of questions for a teenager.

VALERIE

I'm a reporter, I'm supposed to ask questions.

IVAN

When I was your age I thought I knew everything. Things would have been easier for me in life if I had learned to listen more... Instead of pushing my ideal of the world on everyone else.

(Chuckles)

Even myself... It wasn't until after I'd spent years looking at the world the way it truly is that I found not only maturity in my work, but the maturity to see true love when it presented itself to me.

IVAN pauses when he notices VALERIE hanging on his every word.

IVAN

What? No questions?

VALERIE

You seem to do better without them.

IVAN

You are very perceptive. I suppose I can't give you my "youth wasted on the young" speech. You don't seem as though you've ever been young.

(Stands up)

I have work left to do in the garden.

VALERIE

You still sculpt knowing your work will be gone tomorrow's end?

IVAN

My wife and I sculpted in the garden, ten years ago with that knowledge.

VALERIE

But Mrs. Stillwater when interviewed always said she sculpted the garden for children to play in.

IVAN begins pulling on his space suit.

IVAN

And so the children played in it, and it was quite an attraction... And now those children have grown and found more sophisticated means of entertainment.

VALERIE

Such as?

IVAN

Mind chip games. Virtual worlds...
(Gives her a knowing nod)
Piloting spacecraft and playing news reporter.

VALERIE

But there are always more children. Aren't there?

IVAN

Not for Mrs. Stillwater there aren't.
(Puts on his helmet)
You're welcome to join me.

VALERIE

Oh yes, of course.

She hits a button on her suit and her helmet-bubble covers her head.

IVAN

Ha, how modern.

VALERIE

How can you see in that thing?

IVAN pulls up the reflective faceplate to reveal a clear glass one, allowing us to see his face.

IVAN

About as well as I can without it on, which is to say not very well at all.

EXT. IVAN'S HOME - DAY

VALERIE takes slow steps to match pace with IVAN'S shuffling gait, he begins to pick up pace as they walk.

IVAN

Ah, it's nice to be in this reduced gravity again. Makes me feel stronger than my age allows.

VALERIE

It's so peaceful out here.

IVAN

(Looks up)

It's perfect. Sarah and I searched the system for such a place, our own little world, where we could create our own fantasies--without the pressures of civilization.

VALERIE

Most people thought you were simply crazy. To move to such a cold, desolate world.

IVAN

It was the beauty of it. It inspired us. We didn't care about how hospitable the environment was or the conveniences of the social village. We just wanted to escape and build it all anew... How could such a canvas not spark the flames of our imagination?

VALERIE

But you didn't keep it to yourselves.

IVAN

No.. Eventually... When we had spent many years in the warmth of our creative fires... Sarah began to feel the yearnings of her maternal instincts... The need to share our joy with others and open our world up to the outside again.

VALERIE

So you opened it to the public, a park of the imagination.

IVAN

Yes.

VALERIE

...and now you've closed it. So that no one may see it.

IVAN

Yes and no.

VALERIE

Oh?

IVAN

I did close the park after the death of my wife, but the visitors stopped coming to see it long ago. The newness of it had worn off.

VALERIE

But the children--

IVAN

I told you, they grew up. They didn't have time for play anymore. People forgot and did not return... And our world became just the two of us once more... And now...

(Tears form)

and now...

VALERIE moves to put a hand on his shoulder, he turns away suddenly

IVAN

I have work to do, feel free to wander around the garden, as you like.

VALERIE

Thank you, but I--

He bounds off into the distance.

FADE

EXT. GARDEN

IVAN is molding his ice statue of SARAH, working on the bottom half of it now. A circle of children holding hands around her.

PAN OUT

VALERIE films this for a few moments, sighs and wanders around the garden, filming various statues

VALERIE

Before the Stillwater's arrived on the moon MT-01, it was a barren, lifeless world. A place no one could ever imagine wanting to live. Only the petrified trees and the frozen oxygen-water mixture covering the ground like snow remain as evidence that this moon once supported life. What disaster caused its destruction we may never know.

It is impossible for even the system's greatest experts on art to tell which statues were created by Sarah and which by Ivan. Whose elf is this? Who's mind gave birth to it? This ogre, was this her childhood nightmare or his adventure? We cannot tell where one begins and one ends. So unified were these two minds...

(Looks distant,
contemplating)

VALERIE

(CONT.)

Not even two sides of the same
coin or a yin to another's yang...
There was only...

She looks into the distance, at the figure working
hurriedly on the statue.

VALERIE

...One.

FADE

INT. IVAN'S HOME - NIGHT

IVAN is pacing with a sketchpad in hand, waving his hands
and shaking his head in frustration.

IVAN

It's not right, dammit! I can see
it, I can visualize it in my head
but I can't make it! Why not? Oh
Sarah, I need your imagination
here to help me now. I can't
complete this alone--

(Knock at the door)

The door is open!

The door opens, and VALERIE looks inside nervously.

IVAN

The door has been open for over
thirty years now. I have made my
welcomes to you now you may come
and go as you like.

VALERIE

Thank you, I'm just not used to--

IVAN

(Harshly)

You are my guest! Now be silent.
Make yourself at home and relax!

(Looks around lost)

Oh for the sake of-- What was I
doing?

IVAN

(CONT.)

(Notices the pad in his
hand)

Oh yes...

(Stares at the pad and
drops it on the table)

...Nothing.

VALERIE looks at the pad; there are several sketches of the
sculpture of Sarah on it.

VALERIE

This is the sculpture you were
working on in the garden.

IVAN

Yes.

VALERIE

I thought you were supposed to
finish the sketches first and then
begin sculpting?

IVAN

Yes... But none of the sketches
caught what I needed to commit to
ice. I thought that maybe if I
sculpted it into form I could see
what needed to be done.

VALERIE

You want to make her perfect, but
the sculpture isn't?

IVAN

I don't understand it. It's her in
every way it's her... Her smile,
the light in her eyes, her
presence, her radiance... It's
picture perfect, down to the
slightest detail.

VALERIE

I heard from an adult once, my uncle, that you can see a beautiful flower blossom, waving back and forth in the breeze and snap a picture of it, or capture it in video, but you can't capture that moment anywhere but inside yourself. Is that what it's like?

IVAN

You're uncle is correct, you can't capture the moment in something as crude as a picture or video, but you can in art. That is something only art can do... Capture the emotions of a second and explain it to the world. I can feel her, she's so close. I'm so close. I just don't understand it. She's incomplete... There's some crucial detail I'm missing and I simply don't know what it is.

VALERIE

Maybe we should go for a walk in the garden, look over your lives, maybe that will help.

IVAN

No, I must finish this, my time is running out. I have to work.

VALERIE

You've been working for months and that hasn't brought you any closer to finishing you're work.

(Stands up and puts on
her helmet)

Come on.

IVAN

There is nothing out there.

VALERIE

Everything is out there.

IVAN

I've seen it all.

VALERIE

I can show it to you in a new light.

IVAN

There is nothing new for me to see... Nothing worth seeing.

VALERIE

I know a reason you would want to see it with me.

IVAN

There is no reason you can give me to make me go out there.

VALERIE

I'm your daughter.

CUT TO

EXT. GARDEN

IVAN

So, baring Immaculate Conception, with my seed and another woman other than Sarah. Or Sarah managing to hide a pregnancy from me for nine months and shipping you off to an orphanage... How is it that you are my daughter?

VALERIE

Twice a year my parents brought me to these gardens to play until I was thirteen. They stayed in the ship most of the time, but it was my favorite place in the whole system.

IVAN

So you were speaking figuratively about being my daughter.

VALERIE

Yes.

IVAN

That's a relief.

VALERIE

I am your child though, just like so many others in the system. This place is a part of our childhood, a place of permanence, security... Like always being able to come home. Does that make sense?

IVAN

I understand the longing, the need, but nothing is permanent.

VALERIE

I'm starting to understand that. These trees will remain, after the ice melts away.

IVAN

The ice will form rain, which will wear the rock down. Time washes away all things.

VALERIE

I really loved this place.

IVAN

What did you love about it?

VALERIE

Well...

(Looks around)

...for starters, the pinwheel galaxy at the top of the sky.

We see a spiral galaxy spinning slowly at the peek of the sky.

VALERIE

I would lay on my back and look up at it for hours.

IVAN

That will still be there.

VALERIE

Not like that; not from this perspective. When the ice melts and releases the atmosphere frozen within it the sky will turn blue and blot out all the stars.

IVAN

That's just a theory.

As they walk along VALERIE searches the statues.

VALERIE

I know, but it won't be the same regardless, because it won't be in the context of this garden. There, that one there. This one.

They approach an ice sculpture that is like a mural; it has colors in it.

IVAN

(Smiles)

Ah yes, here, let me find...

He looks around and finds a switch on the side of it, flips it and the scene lights up, it is the Summer Day world.

IVAN

That's better.

VALERIE

I always loved this one.

IVAN

Yes, I wanted to create something bright and new.

VALERIE

May I ask you a question?

IVAN

Of course.

VALERIE

What is this?

She points at the sun.

IVAN

Ah, that is what I call starshine. I imagined one of those pinpoints of light in the sky and what one of the worlds around it must be like.

VALERIE

It looks so warm and inviting. I wonder if that's what it will be like when they ignite the gas-giant.

IVAN

Starshine is millions of times brighter.

VALERIE

How do you know so much about it?

IVAN

Because I have been dwelling on it for so long. I've researched it on the web, studied it in Science journals, read about it the letters--

VALERIE

The letters?

IVAN

Yes, the letters. The letters begging me not to let this happen. The letters begging me to reconsider. Think of the children they say. Is this how you honor the memory of your wife they say.
(Sighs)

Maybe they're right.

VALERIE

You have to do what you think is best.

IVAN turns to her and takes her by the arms

IVAN

What do you think my child? What do you think is the right thing to do?

VALERIE

I can't tell you, I can't see the big picture that you see. What will you accomplish by letting all this be destroyed by progress?

IVAN

(Uncertain)

Yes, you're right, what will it accomplish?

VALERIE

(Shocked)

You mean you don't know?

IVAN

I thought I knew. What if I'm being just a stubborn old man? I thought there was some purpose to letting it all evaporate into air... Some significance to the act... But I can't remember what that is... I don't know why I decided... No... Fought to let it happen.

VALERIE

I'm sure there's a reason Mr. Stillwater. You're one of the outside geniuses of our--

IVAN

No I am not! I am no genius; I am simply a foolish old man! A simpleton who can't even finish a simple statue in memory of his late wife!

(Eyes go wide and he begins to look around frantically)

Noooooo! What have I done? What have I done? I've ruined it!

IVAN

(CONT.)

I've destroyed it all! A
lifetime's work and it will all be
forgotten! What was I thinking?

(Looks around
frantically, shaking)
Something has to be done. We have
to do something!

VALERIE

What? What can we do?

IVAN stands up, takes a few steps towards one statue, stops
turns and takes a few steps in the other direction, hands
outstretched.

IVAN

We have to save them. What can we
do? We must do something.

(Turns to Valerie)

Perhaps we can call for help? I'll
give the statues away to anyone
who can preserve them. That will
bring people here.

VALERIE

That won't work Mr. Stillwater.

IVAN

Why not? You don't think they'll
come?

VALERIE

They will come, but they won't get
here in time. They ignite the gas
giant in less than twelve hours.

IVAN

Twelve hours! Is that all I have?

(Looking around again)

Maybe we can at least salvage a
few pieces... We can put them on
your ship...

VALERIE

My ship has no refrigeration
system Mr. Stillwater.

IVAN

(Not listening)

...but which to be saved? How to decide? How do you send some of your children... How do you choose which of your offspring are to be saved when... As a good parent... You've never played favorites. Never chosen one child over another, but loved them all equally... Each according to their uniqueness? How...?

VALERIE

I don't know what to say--

IVAN

The proper response...

(Turns to face her)

...is that a good parent would not have neglected their responsibilities to such an extent as to let such a thing happen.

(Turns back to the garden)

I am a bad parent and now my children will be taken from me.

VALERIE

Mr. Stillwater, that's not true--

IVAN

I must figure out what to save... I have to decide, if I can save just one...

IVAN takes off running into the garden.

VALERIE

Mr. Stillwater!

VALERIE pursues him.

IVAN

I must find the one.

He is darting this way and that through the trees and sculptures.

VALERIE

Mr. Stillwater, this is insane!

IVAN

It must be here somewhere! I will
know it when I see it! It will
just feel right.

He disappears into the maze. VALERIE runs in the general direction IVAN ran into. We can hear her heavy breathing as she runs, darting through the maze. Suddenly she comes into a small clearing where IVAN stands. She almost runs into him.

VALERIE

Mr. Stillwater--

She stops with a hand reaching out to him, but doesn't make contact. Instead she lowers her hand and walks up to stand next to him. We can see fear on his visage. She looks at what he stares at; it is an archway and a path.

VALERIE

What is it?

Long pause.

IVAN

It's her... It's what she was
working on before...
(Chokes, turns away)
I cannot go in there.

VALERIE

What's in there?

IVAN begins walking away, slowly. Stops, looks at the archway again, and continues to walk away.

IVAN

I don't know. I haven't the
courage to look.

VALERIE

Where are you going?

IVAN

(Stops, back to her)

Time is running out, I must figure
out how to perfect my monument to
Sarah before it's too late.

He walks off into the direction of the house, VALERIE
watches him go then looks up at the archway. She takes one
last look in the direction IVAN has left, and then steps
slowly into the path to SARAH'S section of the Garden.

EXT. SARAH'S GARDEN

This section of the garden is much like the rest, only many
of the statues are incomplete. VALERIE walks slowly through
the statues. She pauses to look at her watch, then looks up
at the sky.

VALERIE

It won't be long now.

Shakes her head sadly and continues to browse the statues,
she pauses to stare at a mural of Autumn Twilight World,
two figures drawing on a wall. She continues to browse and
then stops suddenly, eyes wide. She gasps slightly. Before
her is a statue of Ivan in his youth.

EXT. IVAN'S HOME

IVAN rushes to his home, stumbles into the airlock.

INT. AIRLOCK

IVAN strips off his helmet while still compressing.

IVAN

There's no time! There's no time!
It's not complete. What will I do?

INT. IVAN'S HOME

IVAN rushes into the home and falls onto his sketches. His
nose is bleeding from the sudden decompression.

IVAN

What is it Sarah? What's the
secret? What detail did I forget?

He grabs a box of photographs and spills them onto the floor, searching through them.

CUT TO

EXT. SARAH'S GARDEN - DAY

VALERIE is walking a circle around the statue of IVAN, admiring it. She comes around, face to face with it and stares into its face, gentle and kind, at peace. She steps back from it and narrows her eyes in thought. Suddenly they grow wide.

VALERIE
Oh my goodness.

EXT. IVAN'S HOME - DAY

VALERIE is running to the house, heavy breath. She slams the button to open the airlock with her fist and enters the decompression chamber.

INT. AIRLOCK - DAY

VALERIE
Mr. Stillwater! Come quick! You
have to see this! Mr. Stillwater!
Ivan Stillwater!

The inner door opens and VALERIE rushes inside.

VALERIE
Mr--

She cuts off as she sees IVAN collapsed on the floor, holding his head in his hands and mumbling unintelligibly to himself. His white hair is in disarray and there are tears streaming down his face. VALERIE regains her composure and in a more soothing voice, crouches down in front of IVAN.

VALERIE
Mr. Stillwater...
(Pause)
Ivan... I've found something you
need to see this.

IVAN
I've failed... I've failed her.

VALERIE

No you haven't.

(More forcefully)

Now get up! You have to see this!
Quickly, they'll be igniting the
gas giant any minute now!

She pulls IVAN to his feet and begins to pull him toward the airlock. She looks around for his helmet and sees it on the ground. She lets go of him to get it and he almost topples over, but she grabs him and leans him against the wall. Holds her hands up in case he begins to fall, then grabs the helmet and locks it on his head. Then leads him into the airlock, the door shuts and the outside opens, she pulls him out into the snow.

VALERIE

Come on Mr. Stillwater, you have
to see this... There isn't much
time.

EXT. CENTER OF THE GARDEN

VALERIE is still pulling IVAN along. They reach the tomb of his wife and she stops, turns to him and shakes him.

VALERIE

Look!

(Pointing up at the
statue)

Ivan, look at it!

IVAN slowly looks up, the sorrow in his face fades away, replaced by a sort of awe.

IVAN

It's perfect.

His face is lit up by a new light source. We see what he is looking at, both statues, IVAN and SARAH. Looking into each other's eyes, hands touching, glittering in the light of the new sun. As we watch, the statues begin to drop water as they melt, the snow turns to thick mist and the night sky slowly begins to turn to blue. All the time, IVAN watches the statues with jubilation. Clouds form and it begins to rain, the world becoming overcast. Ivan pulls off his helmet and basks in the spring shower. The statues melt

into formlessness and he turns to VALERIE, who still has her helmet on.

IVAN

(Gasping)

Thank you. You solved the puzzle.

VALERIE

The statues have melted.

IVAN

I've captured them; they are forever part of me... You witnessed it and it is part of you now.

VALERIE

But it's all gone... All that remains are virtual tours, and you said---

IVAN

When the time comes, you'll figure out how to tell the story.

(Suddenly his breath catches and he grabs his chest, but his face remains calm)

Oh, thank god, I thought this moment would never come...

He stumbles over to the tomb.

VALERIE

(Concerned)

Are you all right?

IVAN

Perfect... Absolutely perfect.

(Sits down)

My life is almost completely complete. There's only one thing missing now.

VALERIE

What's that?

IVAN dies.

VALERIE watches him, then looks around at the dirt and stone trees and rain falling. She and IVAN fade, the rock trees melt, and green foliage begins to sprout. The becoming Spring Dawning again.

THE END