

MR. NOBODY

Written by

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Version 11

1 - INT. LABORATORY - DAY

SCIENCE PROGRAM, over the OPENING CREDITS:

A pigeon in a lab cage is pressing a lever. A seed falls into its dish. The bird gobbles it down and repeats the process. The scientist then sets a timer: a seed is released automatically every twenty seconds. The pigeon, flapping its wings, observes the seed.

VOICE OF ADULT NEMO (OFF)
Like most living creatures, the pigeon quickly associates the pressing of the lever and the reward. This is Pavlov's well-known "conditioned reflex." But when a timer releases a seed automatically, every twenty seconds, the pigeon wonders: "What did I do to deserve this?" If it was flapping its wings at the time, it will continue to flap, convinced that its actions have a decisive influence on what happens. We call this "PIGEON SUPERSTITION."

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*
*

The pigeon flaps its wings continually as the seeds fall automatically into its dish.

*

END OF OPENING CREDITS AND TITLE: "MR. NOBODY"

*

2 - PROLOGUE

2A - A morgue. An unidentified body. It bears only one shoe, which is too small. The door of the refrigerated room closes on him.

ADULT NEMO (OFF)
What did I do to deserve this?

*

2B - A man of thirty-six - NEMO - opens his eyes. He is running down train tracks.

A train rushes toward him with a deafening roar, blinding him. Just as he is about to be crushed, he wakes up...

2C - He opens his eyes. He is behind the wheel of a car, his seatbelt on, underwater in a river. The windshield bursts and water pours into the car... He drowns...

2D - He wakes up underwater, sits up... He is in his bathtub. He coughs, spits out water. A stranger opens the door and shoots him in the chest...

2F - He wakes up. He is in a free-fall in complete darkness, in his bathrobe, turning in the void. Below him, a swimming pool. Empty...

2G - He wakes up... An alarm. He is at the controls of a spaceship. Meteorites are crashing into the vessel, the wide cockpit window shatters. The vessel explodes. AN ALARM sounds. *

3 - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Hologram of an alarm clock going off. An old man's hand gropes around, turns it off. The old man walks clumsily in the dark, bumping into things. He sees his clothes on a chair, next to a pair of slippers. He goes to the sink. He turns on the light and suddenly sees his face in the mirror. It is Nemo. He is extremely old. He is one hundred and twenty years old... He touches his face, trembling, stunned. He panics.

OLD NEMO

No... NO...

4 - INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Subjective point of view. A kind-looking psychiatrist, DR. FELDHEIM, a man of about fifty, sits facing us, looking at us. He is taking notes, sitting in a chair. A small video camera is recording the interview. Words from the exchange write themselves on what looks like a computer.

DOCTOR

How's it been going since last week? *

NEMO (OFF)

?! ... We know each other?

DOCTOR

We see each other every week.

NEMO (OFF)

Since when?

DOCTOR

Since I started working here. I'm Dr. Feldheim. And who are you? *

NEMO (OFF)

... Nobody. Nemo Nobody. *

DOCTOR

That's an unusual name. Don't you think? *

NEMO (OFF)
*Sometimes people call me Mr.
Craft... C.R.A.F.T...* *
*

DOCTOR *
Uh?... *

NEMO (OFF) *
"Can't Remember A Fucking Thing." *

The doctor smiles, amused.

DOCTOR
What was the first question I asked
you?

NEMO (OFF) *
... I don't know.

DOCTOR
Can you tell me how old you are?

NEMO (OFF)
Thirty-six. I was born in 1972.

DOCTOR
Would you mind looking at your
hands? You don't have to if you
don't want to.

Nemo's hands come into the frame, into the subjective point of
view. His hands are old and wrinkled. They are shaking.

DOCTOR (CONT.)
There's a mirror in front of you,
if you'd like to use it.

Nemo does not want to look. He hides his eyes.

DOCTOR (CONT.)
What year is this?

NEMO
This is 2008... I'm thirty-six, I
was born February 9, 1972...

DOCTOR *
So I guess it's your birthday.

The doctor hands him a newspaper: it is a slim, lightweight liquid
crystal screen... Nemo looks at the date on the "newspaper" on
which text and animated images mingle. At the top we read
"February 9, 2092." There is a picture of old Nemo on the front
page, above a headline that reads: "THE LAST MORTAL."

NEMO
I'm thirty-six! ... I've got to
wake up! ... To wake up!

*

We hear an alarm clock going off.

5 - INT. ADULT NEMO'S BEDROOM - DAY

Nemo wakes with a start. His alarm clock is ringing. Nemo is thirty-six. He catches his breath. His wife, ELISE, is sleeping next to him. He parts the curtains.

ELISE
Don't, Nemo... The sun hurts my
eyes.

He closes the curtains and goes into the bathroom. He turns on the light. He looks at himself in the mirror, reassured.

Continued CREDITS run over:

6 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - DAY

Music. Nemo is setting the breakfast table for five, his gestures smooth and confident. He squeezes fresh orange juice, cooks some eggs. He is in a good mood.

6A - He wakes his three children, JOYCE, age twelve, EVE, age eight, and NOAH, age six. He gets them dressed, full of gusto. He has them laughing.

NEMO
(yelling up the stairs)
I'm driving the kids to school.
Noah, put on your coat.

6B - Nemo grabs the day's mail as he goes out and looks through it distractedly.

7 - EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL - DAY

Nemo drops his children off at school. They kiss good-bye. He drives away.

8 - EXT. TOWN INTERSECTION - DAY

He looks at his watch. It is bizarrely divided into seven hours instead of twelve. He looks at the clock on the church tower. It also has a seven-hour face. Nemo is puzzled. In the sky are two suns.

8A - Nemo turns a corner onto a wide avenue lined with tall buildings. The end of the avenue is under construction. The workmen look at him. The few cars on the road are all stopped. Nemo gets out of his car. An electric billboard on a building displays running text between flashing ads. The giant letters spell out: "N...E...M...O... ..T...U...R...N... ..A...R...O...U...N...D..." Nemo watches the letters going by, puzzled. Passersby stare at him. They walk strangely (backwards). Nemo turns around and sees a tramp on the other side of the street. The tramp's face is Nemo's. Nemo can't believe his eyes.

NEMO

Hey!

The tramp continues on his way, dragging his things behind him. He goes into a building under construction. Nemo crosses the street and enters the same building.

8B - A security guard tries to keep him out, but Nemo pushes past him and goes inside.

There is nothing on the other side of the building. The façade is a set, panels and planks held up by buttresses. Behind it lies a beach, and then the sea. Nemo's footsteps in the sand precede him. He erases them as he walks. There are two suns.

8C - The sea is cut up into enormous blocks carried by helicopters. The latter are assembling the sea. An alarm clock goes off in the distance.

9 - INT. ADULT NEMO'S BEDROOM - DAY

Nemo wakes with a start. His alarm clock is going off. The scene is identical. Elise is sleeping next to him. Nemo goes through the same motions. He opens the curtains.

ELISE

Don't, Nemo... The sun hurts my eyes.

Nemo closes the curtains. We stay with Elise, who turns her back to him. Her eyes are open. Tears run down her cheeks. Nemo does not see her crying. He wants to turn on the light in the bathroom, but bizarrely, the switch is no longer to the left of the door, but to the right. He looks at himself in the mirror.

10 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - DAY

Nemo is squeezing oranges. He is less lively than the previous time. He drops an eggshell in the omelet.

10A - He wakes the three children. He gets them dressed.

Just as Nemo reaches the door to pick up the mail, he sees a big envelope slip inside under it. Nemo looks at it, puzzled. He glances through the window.

10B - Nemo just catches a glimpse of an old man dressed as a mailman. The man looks like old Nemo. He is walking backwards, "back through time."

Nemo opens the envelope. He removes a photograph of himself with a different haircut and different clothes, in a big garden with two children and an unknown woman... Nemo doesn't understand. His children are running around him, yelling and playing. Nemo cannot take his eyes off the picture.

NEMO

Paul, keep it down!

*

The little boy, on whose T-shirt we read "Noah," stops and looks at his father.

NOAH

My name's not Paul!

NEMO

Paul?

Nemo closes his eyes...

11 - EXT. NEMO AND JEAN'S GARDEN - DAY

PAUL (OFF)

Daddy? ... Daddy?

*

JEAN (OFF)

Paul, don't wake your father!

Nemo opens his eyes. A little boy of seven, PAUL, is looking at him. Nemo was asleep on a chaise lounge, beside a swimming pool in a vast property, a glass of fruit juice in his hand. Nemo sees the woman from the picture, JEAN, approaching.

NEMO

Anna?

Nemo is terrified. The woman looks surprised.

JEAN

It's me, Jean...

NEMO

Jean? ... Am I dead?

JEAN
Go back and play, Paul.
(Paul wanders off)
Who's Anna?

NEMO
Anna? ... I don't know anyone
called Anna... *
*

JEAN
You're still tired, Nemo. You need
to rest.

She looks at him, a moment of silence.

JEAN (CONT.)
I'll turn the television on for
you. Call me if you need anything.
I'm going inside, the sun hurts my
eyes. *

NEMO
What?

JEAN
The sun hurts my eyes.

She turns on a television sitting on a garden table. She turns it
to the stock market news and walks away. Nemo surfs.

11A - Images of a huge accident. Dozens of cars are burning on a
bridge. Nemo channel hops. He stops on a nature program. Lionesses
are circling a gazelle. The lionesses move in closer, threatening.
In the background, to the same rhythm, dark silhouetted figures
approach Nemo. *

JEAN (CONT.)
Nemo, your friends are here, and my
father, too...
(She kisses her father hello)
Hello dad. He hasn't said a thing. *

The silhouetted figures circle Nemo. Nemo doesn't look at them.
One of the men kneels down and positions himself in Nemo's field
of vision.

MAN IN BLACK
Hello Nemo. How are you feeling
today? *

NEMO
...

MAN IN BLACK
Do you know who I am?

Nemo doesn't answer. He tries to keep watching the television.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT.)
We're all very worried about you,
Nemo. Everyone hopes you'll be back
in the office soon.

An older man, JEAN'S FATHER, leans toward Nemo with a serious air.

JEAN'S FATHER
It's collapsing. We've got to sell,
Nemo. You're the one who has the
signature. We need the secret code.

Nemo doesn't move a muscle.

JEAN'S FATHER (CONT.)
(aggravated)
The code, Nemo... Do you remember
the code?

12 - FLASH - EXT. STREET, ADULT ANNA - DAY

Bits of numbers. Then the number "12358" on the facade of a house.

13 - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Old Nemo is sleeping. Sensors are hooked up to his forehead and connected to a machine. Numbers run by. Needles are moving back and forth, drawing peaks on the paper. Two white shadows approach him.

DOCTOR (OFF)
He's dreaming.

Nemo's eyeballs are agitated.

14 - EXT. TRAIN STATION PLATFORM - DAY

The feet of a running child. CHILD NEMO is SEVEN. He is running down the platform, trying to catch a departing train.

15 - INT. CITY/MISC. - DAY

The image is broadcast on television. Clients in a café watch the screen. Some hold their pet pigs on leashes.

15A - People on a train station platform watch the same images on TV.

15B - An overly made-up presenter dressed to the nines is smiling above a multicolor flashing headline. He has a small pig on his lap, a pink ribbon around its neck. *

15B1 - Commercials run simultaneously in the corners of the screen. The hospital is in the background. *

PRESENTER *

This is Julian Marshall, live from New-New-York Hospital. We're about to see the final episode in our series "THE LAST MORTALS." Mr. Nobody is almost 120 years old, and has never been telomerized. Nor does he have a marvelous stem-cell compatible pig. Live on WWB: Mr. Nobody will be the last man on earth to die of old age. MR. NOBODY, THE LAST MORTAL! *

Booming jingle. Colored lights.

15c - A telephoto shot through a window of old Nemo on his hospital bed. The glass undulates in the wind.

16 - INT. MISC. - DAY

A young couple watching TV...

16A - Police in a station watching the show...

16B - An old woman with her pig...

16C - A giant screen on top of a building transmitting the show...

17 - EXT. FAÇADE OF THE HOSPITAL - DAY

The presenter turns towards the psychiatrist. *

PRESENTER *

No trace of his identity has been found in the national records. Nothing about his past. *

DOCTOR *

We don't know who Mr. Nobody is. Neither does he. Our patient's memories are confused. But it is not unusual, at a certain stage of illness, for very old memories to reemerge in great detail. *

18 - INT. OLD NEMO'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Old Nemo is watching television, stunned. He sees his own image through the window. On the other side of the window, several miniaturized cameras float in the air. Nemo presses a button. The window becomes opaque, displaying a repeating image of the bottom of the sea, like a screen-saver.

19 - EXT. TV IMAGE - DAY

PRESENTER

Should Mr. Nobody be allowed to die
a natural death? Should his
existence be artificially
prolonged? Make your vote now.
Press "X" for artificial
prolongation, "0" to let nature run
its course. We'll be back - after
this.

*
*
*
*

The presenter is replaced by an ad for holidays on Mars.

19A - We see a smiling family racing across a red desert in a futuristic vehicle. Bicycles are attached to the roof. They are amazed by the landscape.

VOICE OVER

*You, too, can take a family
vacation on Mars, a treat for the
young and the old. Book before
Union Day and save up to sixty
thousand units!*

*
*
*
*
*

20 - INT. TV NEWS EDITORIAL ROOM - NIGHT

The room is in a semi-darkness. Several silhouettes stand out against big windows. We do not see their faces.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The guy's pulling maximum ratings!
And we've got nothing on him! I
need a profile. I need a
background.

*
*
*

YOUNG JOURNALIST

He's been in that hospital
practically forever. No one knows
who he is. I've checked it out.
Never had a driver's license. Never
had a phone line or electrical hook-
up. Officially, he doesn't exist.
So they called him Mr. Nobody.

*
*
*

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Look harder, dammit! This guy
didn't just come out of nowhere.

*

21 - INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Old Nemo is once again sitting across from his doctor.

DOCTOR

Let's try something new. I'm
thinking of an old technique. I
can't promise anything. Maybe
snatches of memory will come back,
maybe nothing will happen. Are you
willing to try?

*

Nemo agrees with a nod.

The doctor places a small shiny metallic sphere in front of Nemo's
eyes, suspended in mid-air. Then it starts swinging, very close,
left to right, right to left...

DOCTOR'S VOICE (OFF)

*You are very relaxed... You hear
only my voice...*

*

*

...**21A** - a child's feet running down a station platform

...**21B** - tracks rushing past very close below us

...**21C** - branches swaying in the wind

...**21D** - a drop falling from a faucet...

...The pendulum swings in close-up.

...**21E** - the beam of a lighthouse beside the water lights us
regularly...

*

DOCTOR'S VOICE (OFF) (CONT.)

*...your eyelids are getting
heavy... your arms and legs are
getting heavy... I'm going to count
to three... when I say three, you
will be asleep... One...*

*

*

*

21C(cont.) - A swaying branch, seen through a window

...**21F** - we move back and enter a child's room...

DOCTOR'S VOICE (OFF) (CONT.)

...two...

21G - A hand caressing a cheek... The face of a woman, ANNA...

22 - INT. SHOWROOM - DAY

DOCTOR'S VOICE (OFF)
*Remember the day you came here...
Three. You're sleeping.*

Adult Nemo wakes with a start. He is lying on a bed and looking around. We've never seen the room before, and it is extremely clean and neat. Nemo notices a price tag on the bedside lamp. Nemo takes his clothes from the chair. He gets dressed as he looks around.

A couple enters the room, in their coats, holding a child by the hand. They look at Nemo with surprise. We are in an immense showroom of bedroom furniture. Distraught, Nemo walks through the store, hurrying to the exit.

23 - EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF THE SHOWROOM - DAY

Nemo leaves the showroom. The street is strangely empty, not a car, not a single passerby. Across the street, a swing hanging from a tree branch swings from left to right. A movement much like the pendulum.

DOCTOR'S VOICE (OFF)
*...Remember even further back...
when I say three... one... two...
three.*

*
*

Nemo looks up. In the sky, a small plane is pulling an advertising streamer. Written on it: "SLEEP."

*

24 - EXT. TRAIN STATION PLATFORM - DAY

Short flashes in the dark. Child Nemo is seven. He is running down the platform trying to catch a departing train.

DOCTOR (OFF)
Remember...

25 - INT. LIMBO - DAY

Everything is white. We can only make out a few forms in the whiteness... Naked children wander about in slow motion... There are pools of steaming water... Children's heads emerge from the water.

VOICE OF OLD NEMO (OFF)
*I can remember a long time ago...
long before my birth...*

*
*

VOICE OF CHILD NEMO (OFF)
(The voices overlap, slightly
out of sync)
*...long before my birth... I was
waiting with those who are not yet
born. When we're not born yet, we
know everything...*

*
*
*

A child is seated in the whiteness. He is waiting. It is child Nemo. We approach his mouth.

CHILD NEMO
...Everything that will happen.

He has no cleft on his upper lip. Other children are wandering around. A unicorn passes by. A light approaches some children, who look up.

CHILD NEMO (OFF)
*When it's your turn, the Angels of
Oblivion place a finger on your
mouth. Shhh. It leaves a mark on
the upper lip. It means that you've
forgotten everything. But the
angels missed me.*

*
*

*
*

Two angels fly above the children, and place a finger to their lips, one after the other. When the finger is removed, a shallow vertical cleft has appeared on the upper lip. The Angle of Oblivion forgets Nemo. Nemo's face plunges into the water with those of the other children. Everything turns white.

*
*

*
*

26 - EXT. SKY - DAY

The clouds part, allowing us to see the earth below...

CHILD NEMO (OFF)
*Then you have to find a daddy and a
mummy. It's not easy to choose.*

27 - INT. MISC. - DAY

A series of interviews follows, like a casting call. Couples of every kind, sitting on their sofas, talking to the camera.

27A - A chic, overly smiley couple:

SMILEY COUPLE WOMAN
They're so cute when they're
small...

SMILEY COUPLE MAN
...with those little shoes...

SMILEY COUPLE WOMAN

We'd like him to be a tennis
champion.

27B - A shy couple is trying to control a struggling little boy.
They spank him.

SHY COUPLE WOMAN

It would be nice for the older one
not to be all alone...

27C - A sad couple. The man is drunk.

SAD COUPLE WOMAN

I think it would help my husband if
we had a child. We'd call him
George. Right, George? We had a
dog, but it died.

27D - Two men holding hands.

MAN

It's an important experience.

27E - A couple of old Texans with cowboy hats. *

OLD TEXAN MAN

Blond an' blue-eyed. That's all I'm
askin'.

27F - An Eskimo couple speaks Eskimo. We understand nothing.

27G - A teenage couple.

TEENAGE GIRL

It's not that we want a kid, but we
slept together.

27H - A disillusioned couple.

DISILLUSIONED MAN

...It's normal to think about
children when you reach a certain
age, for women at least.

DISILLUSIONED WOMAN

It is the meaning of...

DISILLUSIONED MAN

(interrupting her) *
...of life. I hadn't finished,
darling. It is the meaning of life.

27I - An ordinary couple looks at the camera. They shrug, not
knowing what to say. They say nothing. They are holding hands.

CHILD NEMO (OFF)

In the end, I chose them. Because the lady smelled nice. And the man said:

FATHER

Well, I can tell you how we met. It was meant to be. Have you heard of the butterfly effect?

28 - EXT. JAPAN - DAY

It is springtime in Japan. A few Japanese are walking through a park. A butterfly is perched on a flower. It flaps its wings and flies away. The wind blows gently through the leaves of a tree. *

28A - Clouds move in the sky. The air current merges with others from the sea...

29 - EXT. OCEAN - DAY

...We are flying above the ocean, among the clouds... The clouds merge with other clouds. The weather becomes stormy...

30 - EXT. CHILD NEMO'S STREET - DAY

...We descend over a small town in England. It is autumn. A leaf twirls, floats over the rooftops... We follow it.

30A - It flies over NEMO'S FATHER. A young woman is going the other way, NEMO'S MOTHER. The leaf lands right at Nemo's father's feet, and he slips and falls. The young woman runs to help him get up. They look into each other's eyes. Love at first sight. A bolt of lightning in the sky.

CHILD NEMO (OFF)

Once upon a time there was a daddy and a mummy named the daddy and the mummy. They found a cute little baby and called it the cute little baby.

31 - ENDOSCOPIC SHOT

The face of the fœtus, curled up on itself. It opens its eyes.

32 - MODEL

A model of child Nemo's street. Pretty little houses that look alike, each with its own yard. A child's hand positions a tiny car. A bawling baby.

CHILD NEMO (OFF)

The little baby was born there. He was born that day and not another. His parents were those parents. Why? Because that's the way it is. The baby can cry outloud, but it change these facts. "From sperm to worm." His daddy and his mummy live at number 7.

*
*

The number "7" on the wall of the house.

33 - INT. CHILD NEMO'S HOUSE - DAY

Baby Nemo looks at his mummy. His mummy hides behind a bedsheet. He can't see her anymore, and waits. His mummy say "Peek-a-boo!" The baby laughs.

33A - A hairbrush. The mother's lips, to which she is applying lipstick. The mother is singing a song. The baby's hand lifting the father's sleeve in order to touch his watch.

CHILD NEMO (OFF)

The mummy has a brush for her hair and lipstick for her lips. She smells good. She sings a little song: "Eenie meenie miney moe, catch a tiger by the toe..." The daddy has a watch and hair on his arm. The watch goes tick-tock. Daddy catches flies.

33B - A fly on the table. The father's hand approaches slowly, then grabs the insect just as it is about to fly away. The father opens the window and sets it free outside.

CHILD NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)

Everything we see exists. We can see it. The table is called "table," the chair is called "chair." We can see them. The little baby can see his daddy and his mummy.

*
*

33C - The father and the mother lean over us.

CHILD NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)
*I can see mummy's eyes, but I can't
see my eyes. The little baby can
see his hands but he cannot see
himself. So does he really exist?
... Do I really exist?*

33D - The baby's hands seen from a subjective point of view. Nemo is looking at his shadow on the ground, moving at the same time he does. The shadow moves on the floor, on the walls. He tries to step on it. He pinches himself. Then he bites his mother's arm.

CHILD NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)
*If the baby pinches himself, it
hurts. If he bites mummy, it
doesn't hurt.*

He looks at the reflection of his face in a dirty mirror. The baby takes his first steps, then falls down. The mother applauds. Thrilled, the baby lets himself fall again.

CHILD NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)
*If the baby falls, the mother claps
her hands. She says, "Bravo."*

33E - The mother falls down the stairs with a basket full of laundry. She hurts herself. The baby claps. He gets a spanking.

33F - FLASH: Anna, age five, swinging on a swing.

CHILD NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)
*Why am I me and not someone else?
Why does what exists exist? Why do
we remember the past but not the
future? When you ask mummy, she
says...*

33G - The mother, overwhelmed by house-cleaning, says to NEMO (AGE FIVE) as she vacuums:

MOTHER (VOICE OF CHILD NEMO)
Stop asking "Why?" all of the time! *

The father puts on his hat and coat and leaves the house. Child Nemo opens the door to make sure his father is no longer there, then runs to the television and turns it on.

33H - The smiling image of his father appears on television. He is presenting the weather forecast in a playful voice.

FATHER
An anticyclone moving in from the
Azores tomorrow will bring clear
skies through the weekend, so get
those barbecues out! *

34 - EXT. CHILD NEMO'S STREET (1977) - DAY

Thunderclap in a grey sky. Nemo is walking down the sidewalk holding his father's hand. It suddenly starts pouring. The father opens an umbrella. They pass some women neighbours on the opposite sidewalk as they bring in a table and chairs, leaving the barbecue in the rain. The father greets the neighbors politely as they stare daggers at him. The father smiles self-consciously.

35 - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

The door opens quietly. A shadow steps furtively into the room and closes the door. Old Nemo is asleep, hooked up to a life-support equipment. The shadow approaches him. *

JOURNALIST
Pssst... Sir...

The man clumsily knocks over a game of chess on the bedside table. The noise wakes Nemo up. He finds a timid young man in front of him, an old tape recorder slung over his shoulder. *

JOURNALIST (CONT.)
It's okay... I... I'm a *
journalist... The hospital won't *
allow interviews... I'd just like *
to ask you a few questions...

Nemo stares at him.

JOURNALIST (CONT.)
A friend of mine's a nurse here. *
They helped me get in. My paper *
really wants me to get something. A
biography, just a few dozen lines.

OLD NEMO
What time is it?

JOURNALIST
(looking at his watch)
Fourteen twelve.

The clock on the wall shows seven hours and not twelve. The journalist puts his old reel-to-reel tape recorder on the table. He loads a reel of tape. He holds out the microphone to Nemo. The journalist presses the "record" button...

OLD NEMO
Where did you find that?

JOURNALIST

I... I borrowed it from the university museum, but it still works. So. Um... Here we are.

OLD NEMO

I've got nothing to say to you. I'm Mr. Nobody. The man who doesn't exist. An old grump who mixes everything up. Go away.

*

JOURNALIST

Do you remember what the world was like before Quasi-Immortality?

OLD NEMO

What?

JOURNALIST

Telomerization. Endless renewal of cells. What was it like when humans were mortal?

OLD NEMO

I have no idea. There were cars that polluted, we smoked cigarettes, we ate meat. We did everything we can't do in this dump. It was wonderful. Most of the time nothing happened. Just like in a French movie.

*
*
*
*

JOURNALIST

And... sexually? Before sex became obsolete?

*
*

OLD NEMO

You don't need sex anymore? ... We screwed. People were always screwing. We fell in love.

*

JOURNALIST

The police have investigated you, and they've found nothing. But they didn't check the paper archives. It took a little patience...

*
*
*

He takes a paper from his pocket and unfolds it.

JOURNALIST (CONT.)

...but I found this. It's from a local paper in Ontario.

*

He holds out a photocopy of a newspaper article. The picture shows a car being hauled by a crane from a river. We see the portrait of a man, PETER.

JOURNALIST (CONT.)

That is you, isn't it?

NEMO

I don't know. It doesn't look like me. What time is it?

JOURNALIST

(looking at his watch)
Fourteen thirteen. Look: "Nemo Nobody." The name matches. It appears you died in a car accident in 2008. Your car was found at the bottom of a river.

36 - FLASH

The body of adult Nemo in the morgue. He is wearing just one shoe, which is too small. A police officer is smoking a cigarette next to him. The scene is shot in reverse, the smoke going into the cigarette. A woman identifies the body. It is Jean. She is holding a handkerchief. A tear goes back up to her eye.

37 - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

(cont.)

OLD NEMO

I am alive...aren't I? *

JOURNALIST

You were a scientist specializing in chaos theory... space-time, the multiverse. You had your own TV show. *

Nemo's face contorts.

38 - EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY

A picture of adult Anna in a small frame turns floating inside the car, underwater... bubbles rise to the surface... a hand struggles underwater... underwater views of algae swaying gently to the music... fish swim past... one of the fish comes very close to look at us... *

39 - INT. UNDETERMINED - DAY

A trout with almonds on a plate.

OLD NEMO (OFF)
*I always liked fish. I never
thought that one day it would like
me, too.*

40 - EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY

...the fish swims at us, its mouth wide open, ready to eat us. *

41 - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

JOURNALIST
Do you really remember nothing?

In lieu of answering, Nemo closes his eyes. The journalist takes out a portable VCR and opens it in front of Nemo.

JOURNALIST (CONT.)
I found this, too.

He presses play, and a scratchy image appears onscreen. Old Nemo watches, fascinated.

It is an educational program.

41A - *Peter is speaking to the camera. Behind him is a big constellation of stars.*

41B - *We see a simulation of the Big Bang.*

PETER
*What was there before the Big Bang?
There was no "before" because
before the Big Bang, time did not
exist. Time is a result of the
expansion of the universe itself.
But what will happen when the
universe has finished expanding,
and the movement is reversed? What
will be the nature of time?* *
*
*

Fuzz. The image disappears in the interference. The sound becomes inaudible.

JOURNALIST
That is you, isn't it?

OLD NEMO

I'm Nemo Nobody: the man who
doesn't exist. A crazy old fool who
pisses himself. What are you
looking for? There's nothing to
find. What time is it?

*
*

42- INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

The small pendulum swings back and forth in front of Old Nemo's eyes...

43 - INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - DAY

The same program as before, but this time adult Nemo is the presenter. The text runs over a teleprompter.

ADULT NEMO

But what will happen when the
universe has finished expanding and
the movement is reversed?

On a control monitor, images of galaxies ceasing to expand and beginning to contract.

ADULT NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)

*What will be the nature of time?
Will it reverse?*

*

43A - Image of a vase breaking on the floor, then, in reverse, the pieces coming back together...

ADULT NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)

*If string theory is correct, the
universe possesses nine spatial
dimensions and one temporal
dimension, ten dimensions in all.
We can imagine that in the
beginning, all of the dimensions
were twisted together. During the
Big Bang, three spatial dimensions -
the ones we know as: height, width,
and depth - and one temporal
dimension - what we know as 'time' -
were deployed. The other six
remained miniscule, wound up
together. If we live in a universe
of wound dimensions, how do we
distinguish between illusion and
reality? Time as we know it is a
dimension we experience only in one
direction.*

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

(MORE)

ADULT NEMO (OFF) (CONT.) (cont'd)
*But, what if one of the additional
dimensions wasn't spatial but
temporal?*

*

44 - INT. CHILD NEMO'S HOUSE - DAY

The hand of baby Nemo pushes a plate to the edge of the table. It falls and breaks. The baby mixing mashed potatoes and tomato sauce in his plate.

44A - The father smoking a cigarette. Wafts of smoke dissipating in the air.

CHILD NEMO (OFF)
*If you break a plate, it's broken
forever. If you mix the mashed
potatoes and the sauce, you can't
separate them later. It's forever.
The smoke comes out of daddy's
cigarette, but it never goes back
in.*

44B - The big hand on the living room clock moves forward a notch. We see a cog turning another cog, the mechanism grinding. We hear all kinds of tick-tocks.

CHILD NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)
We cannot go back.

45 - EXT. PASTRY SHOP WINDOW (1980) - DAY

CHILD NEMO (OFF)
*That's why it's hard to choose. You
have to make the right choice.*

Nemo is eight. He is glued to a pastry shop window. He is holding a coin in his hand. His eyes go back and forth between the Danish and the chocolate éclair. He can't decide.

46 - EXT. CHILD NEMO'S STREET - DAY

Nemo is on his way home. He is still clutching his coin. He walks past three little girls his age leaning against an iron gate who are watching him: ANNA, ELISE, and JEAN.

One is wearing a yellow dress, the next one a blue dress, and the last one a pink dress. All three of them smile at him, and all three are pretty. Nemo blushes.

ANNA
Hello, Nemo.

*

NEMO
Hello, Anna. *

ELISE
Hi, Nemo.

NEMO
Hello, Elise. *

JEAN
Hello, Nemo. *

NEMO
Hello, Jean. *

47 - INT. CHURCH - DAY

We see three weddings of adult Nemo. Three times he kisses the bride after slipping a ring on her finger. Once Anna, once Elise, once Jean, all now adults.

48 - EXT. CHILD NEMO'S STREET - DAY

Nemo keeps looking back at the little girls as he walks away. Then he looks at the coin he couldn't decide how to spend. He tosses it in the air, heads or tails.

NEMO (OFF)
*As long as you don't choose,
everything remains possible.*

49 - INT. CHILD NEMO'S HOUSE - DAY

Nemo and his father are looking at the sky through a telescope.

CHILD NEMO (OFF) *

*Daddy says you can predict exactly
where Mars will be in the sky, even
in a hundred years.*

50 - INT. CHILD NEMO'S ROOM - MORNING

It is morning. Nemo is sleeping, his eyes closed. Gently, he starts to levitate, a foot above his bed.

51 - VISION

A short flash: a toy car races down a hill and runs into a stroller. It is a scale model.

52 - INT. CHILD NEMO'S ROOM - MORNING

A yellow stain appears on the sheets. He is peeing. Nemo opens his eyes and cries out. He is no longer levitating. He gets up. He goes to see the little car near his electric train. He looks at his soaked pajama pants. He dresses quickly.

53 - EXT. STREET - DAY

CHILD NEMO (OFF)
*But the funny thing is that daddy
doesn't know what will happen to
him two minutes from now.*

*

Nemo's father parks the car at the end of the street. The street is on a hill. The father bites into a cookie. He stops chewing and spits something out, examining it as he gets out of the car. He forgets to put on the handbrake. He removes a piece of eggshell from his mouth. Behind him, the car slowly starts moving. Nemo comes running down the street in the opposite direction.

NEMO
Daddy!

54 - INT. INDUSTRIAL CHICKEN BARN - DAY

We see a hen laying an egg... The egg lands with many others.

55 - EXT. STREET - DAY

...The car continues rolling down the hill, faster and faster. A little further down the road, a woman is crossing the street pushing a baby carriage. Nemo's father is still looking at the piece of eggshell on his fingertip...

*

56 - INT. COOKIE FACTORY - DAY

A worker breaks an egg. A small piece of shell floats in the whites. The eggs get mixed with flour and sugar. The cookies come out of the oven and are packaged.

57 - EXT. STREET - DAY

The father looks up and sees his car rolling down the hill at top speed. He screams. The woman in the street pushing the carriage sees the car and screams in terror. The woman and the carriage are run over by the car. The father looks on with horror. Nemo reaches him, too late.

58 - EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

58A - Black and white archival footage. A research lab full of papers and two old blinking computers. A young man is checking the results being printed out.

ADULT NEMO (OFF)

Edward Lorenz, a meteorology
 analyst, had a computer simulate
 weather forecasts using simple
 equations relating air and water
 movements, heat, barometric
 pressure... One day in 1961,
 during the preparation of a series
 of weather reports, Lorenz took a
 shortcut, rounding his data up to
 the third decimal, instead of the
 usual sixth decimal place, assuming
 that the difference - one for a
 thousand - was of no importance.

*
*

*
*
*
*
*
*

58B - A calm sea. A storm at sea.

The text runs over the teleprompter in front of Nemo.

ADULT NEMO

When he returned an hour later, he
 noticed that the forecast, which
 should have been identical to the
 preceding ones, followed an
 evolution ever more divergent,
 until there was no longer any
 resemblance. Miniscule changes of a
 thousandth of a degree, a
 thousandth of a millibar, in
 association, caused enormous change
 in the end results: on one hand,
 perfect calm, on the other, a
 storm.

*

58C - A motionless butterfly on a flower.

ADULT NEMO (CONT.)

This is known as the "BUTTERFLY
 EFFECT." In a chaotic and unstable
 system, a butterfly beating its
 wings in Japan will perhaps cause a
 storm in Europe.

58D - A Japanese man fanning himself as he watches the motionless butterfly.

58E - Clouds moving in the sky.

58F - The hen laying an egg.

58G - The father biting into the cookie. The woman with the carriage being hit by the car. The father looking horrified.

Adult Nemo, presenting the program, looks into the camera:

ADULT NEMO (CONT.)
*"Pigeon Superstition" and the
"Butterfly Effect" are good
illustrations of our contradictory
state: we only accept simple
explanations, although the universe
is complex.*

*
*
*
*

59 - INT. CHILD NEMO'S HOUSE - DAY

The mother is setting the table while Nemo is trying to explain something to her.

MOTHER
That's not possible. No one knows
the future.

NEMO
But I can remember it.

MOTHER
We remember the past, not the
future.

NEMO
But me, I can. Sometimes things
happen and I have the feeling that
they've already happened before.

MOTHER
That's called déjà vu. It happens
to everyone from time to time.

NEMO
No, it's because of the Angels of
Oblivion. They didn't put their
finger on me. You can't understand.

*
*

59A - The father is sitting in an armchair, prostrate, motionless. A fly lands on the chair, next to his hand. He doesn't notice it. The fly climbs his hand, strolling about without provoking any reaction from the father. Nemo watches him.

60 - INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Nemo is in swimming class. He's the one having the most trouble swimming. Nemo sinks, flailing desperately as he tries to grab the aluminum pole the instructor refuses to put within his reach. Nemo coughs up water, cries. A whistle blows. The boys get out of the pool to go get dressed. The instructor stops them to let a group of girls go past. The boys all wait, eyes riveted on the girls. *
Nemo is hypnotized by Anna.

The boys leave the pool. The locker room door opens a crack. Nemo, hiding, alone, watches Anna. She swims like a goddess. He watches her dive from the twelve-foot board. She lands perfectly and swims the crawl with perfect grace. She is magnificent. Nemo is lost in wonder. Anna climbs gracefully out of the water and dries her hair. Their eyes meet for an instant. Nemo is petrified.

61 - INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Everyone has left. The pool is empty, even the lifeguard is gone. Nemo emerges from his hiding place. He is alone. He approaches the water. He hesitates. He climbs onto the diving board, twelve feet high. He is afraid of heights. He walks slowly to the end of the board. He jumps.

He belly-flops onto the water. He is underwater, struggling. Bubbles escape from his mouth. He tries to grab something, but cannot. He is drowning. We hear a muffled scream. He sinks to the bottom.

62 - FLASH

Underwater, prisoner in his car, adult Nemo struggles. Bubbles escape from his mouth. He sees light above him.

62A - Another flash. Under the water, Jean's face diving toward us.

63 - INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

The lifeguard suddenly dives in next to child Nemo and pulls him to the surface.

Nemo is lying on the ground next to the pool. The lifeguard performs artificial respiration. Nemo comes to, coughing. He breathes. *

64 - EXT. WOODS - DAY

64bis - Exhausted, Nemo gets off a bus. He is going home, his swimming bag over his shoulder.

He goes past a wooded area. He notices his mother, or at least he thinks he recognizes her. We can make her out about one hundred yards away, behind some branches. She is taking a stroll, looking all around. Nemo hides. He moves toward her, avoiding being noticed.

He reaches a pond. He hears whispered voices. He looks through the branches: he sees his mother kiss a man he doesn't know. He freezes. The man walks off in one direction. The mother adjusts her jacket and leaves in the other direction. Nemo waits without moving. He is as white as a sheet.

64A - Nemo is walking through the woods. He is looking for the man. He heads to the edge of the pond. He stops. A gust of wind rustles the leaves. Anna is sitting on a floating dock, throwing stones into the water. Nemo crouches down and watches her. A voice makes him jump.

ANNA'S FATHER

Okay, Anna, let's go.

The man who was kissing Nemo's mother comes over to Anna. Anna takes her father's hand and they leave together.

65 - FLASH

CHILD NEMO (OFF)

Then the daddy and the mummy kissed
all day long.

*

A short flash: in the living room, the father and mother are fighting.

65A - A vase breaks.

66 - INT. ADULT NEMO'S ROOM (2006) - NIGHT

Adult Nemo wakes in the dark. He turns toward a feminine shape: adult Anna is sleeping next to him. They curl up in each other's arms.

67 - EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

The mother, the father, and Nemo are on the platform of a small train station. They are waiting. The mother is holding her suitcase. The father looks distraught. His eyes are red.

They each hold one of Nemo's hands. Nemo looks at his father, then at his mother. They don't look at each other. The mother strokes Nemo's hair, kisses him. The train pulls into the station.

MOTHER

So, Nemo? Have you made up your mind? Do you want to come with me, or do you want to stay with your father?

*
*

Nemo squeezes his parents' hands. The train stops. The mother lets go of Nemo's hand and takes a few steps toward the train. The mother climbs aboard. She waves goodbye. The ticket inspector closes all of the doors but one, the one where the mother is standing. The train starts moving. Nemo lets go of his father's hand and runs as fast as he can down the platform. He is running alongside the train. The mother reaches her arms out to him through the open door. Nemo looks back at his father. He hesitates. He is halfway between his father and his mother. A urine stain spreads over his pants.

MOTHER

Run, Nemo!

The mother reaches for Nemo as he runs, trying to catch the train.

FATHER

Nemo!

Nemo turns back, hesitates. The mother grabs Nemo and pulls him into the train. The disconcerted ticket man helps her, then closes the door. Nemo looks at the silhouette of his father as the train pulls away.

68 - EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

...Repetition of the same scene. The train is leaving the station. Nemo is still holding his father's hand. He hesitates, then lets go and starts running down the platform. He stops for a moment, looks at his father, as if regretfully, looks at the departing train. He runs again, looking at his father as if with regret. He reaches the train. The mother holds her arms out.

FATHER

NEMO!

Nemo slows down, turns back toward his father. He stops at the end of the platform and watches the train move away. He has lost a shoe. He looks at his pants which are soaked.

*

His father comes running and takes Nemo in his arms. He tries to console him. He puts Nemo's shoe back on and the two of them leave for home. In the distance:

NEMO
Daddy, is it my fault?

FATHER
Of course not. It's my fault. *

69 - INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

The doctor is hypnotizing old Nemo. The pendulum swings in front of his eyes...

70 - EXT./INT. MISC. - DAY/NIGHT

We see brief flashes...flashes of the lights of a passing train...the tracks rushing by under the locomotive

...70A - a metronome

...70B - branches swaying in the wind

...70C - a swaying swing...

71 - INT. TRAIN - DAY

Nemo is in the train, with his mother. He presses himself against her. He is watching the landscape go by. *

71A - Through the window he sees train tracks crossing, joining up with other tracks, separating. A tangle of possible destinations.

72 - MODEL - DAY

A toy airplane held in a child's hand. The plane flies over a map. On the map, the letters O-C-E-A-N pass by. The plane flies over North America.

73 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT - EVENING

73BIS - Through the window we have a view of a big North American city.

The mother and Nemo are in an apartment that is not yet fully furnished. She unwraps a lamp and puts it in place.

74 - EXT. TRAIN STATION PLATFORM - DAY

Nemo is running after the train that is taking his mother away. His running feet. His shoelace breaks. He starts to lose his shoe. The train picks up speed, his mother moves away.

Nemo stumbles, steps on his shoelace. He stays on the platform with his father. We follow a butterfly circling up into the sky.

75 - INT. SHOE FACTORY - DAY

A butterfly flutters past the window. In the office of a shoe factory, the director is studying several grades of shoelace presented to him by a supplier.

SUPPLIER (STRONGLY ACCENTED)
I can give you a good deal on this
type of shoelace.

The director pulls firmly on the lace. It breaks.

SUPPLIER (CONT.)
...Very good deal.

76 - EXT. FATHER'S YARD - DAY

A wind gauge stops turning. Utter calm. Nemo is in the yard, observing his father. Nemo's father is watching the sky. He holds his paintbrushes and starts painting the clouds, carefully reproducing what he sees. When the father looks up, the clouds have changed shape and position. He tries to make corrections, to paint faster. He can't.

The father is sitting on a chair in the middle of the garden. He is looking at the sky above him, a camera in hand. Nemo looks at him. His father uses a cane to get up.

77 - EXT. FATHER'S YARD - DAY

The father spreads the pictures out on the table. He takes his paintbrushes and tries to reproduce the clouds on canvas, but it doesn't work.

78 - EXT. FATHER'S YARD - DAY

The father uses turpentine to erase his painting, scraping the paint off with a knife. He starts again from scrap. He looks at the clouds, holding his paintbrush.

78A - The clouds move too fast.

79 - INT. FATHER'S HOUSE - EVENING

The father opens a broom closet and throws his unfinished painting inside. He slams the door.

80 - EXT. FATHER'S STREET - DAY

Nemo is standing on the corner of the street where he lives with his father. He is watching a truck being loaded by movers. Anna and Harry are watching them work. The movers close the truck. Anna and her father get into the car and drive off. *

81 - INT. NEMO'S ROOM IN HIS MOTHER'S HOUSE (1980/1984) - DAY

Nemo, still eight years old, wakes up in his room in his mother's apartment. He lies back down and closes his eyes. The camera explores the objects in his room: the toys... his desk... We hear his mother's voice calling him.

MOTHER (OFF)

Nemo!

The camera continues exploring the contents of the room: pictures on the wall... teenage toys... books about the planets... We return, after a complete tour of the room, to the sleeping Nemo in his bed. He is FOURTEEN YEARS OLD. His mother's voice wakes him. She sticks her head into the room.

MOTHER

Bye, sweetheart, I'm off to work.
Don't be late for school.

82 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT - EVENING

The mother opens the door to her apartment and hangs up her coat. She takes off her nurse's smock.

MOTHER

Nemo... It's me.

In the foreground, teenage Nemo is lying in a pool of blood, motionless, his eyes wide open. His mother does not yet see him. She walks forward, sees Nemo dead on the floor, then puts away the groceries. *

MOTHER (CONT.)

I bet you haven't done your homework. Hurry up and finish, I've invited someone for dinner. And I'm counting on you to keep your mouth shut.

The mother disappears. No one is there. Nemo, deathly pale, still doesn't move. Then he gets up, picks up a bottle of ketchup, wipes the ketchup from his neck and his shirt.

83 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Nemo is sitting at the table. Laughter, small talk. The mother has invited Harry, the man Nemo saw her with in the woods. Harry is pretending to be at ease. Nemo stares at him without blinking. Harry tries to smile, but does not get a smile in return.

MOTHER

Nemo, don't stare at people like that.

HARRY

It's no problem.

MOTHER

He has a gift for making people uncomfortable.

HARRY

It's nothing.

NEMO

It will happen on a Saturday. The sun will be shining. You will be behind the wheel of your car. You are whistling. You won't see the crossroads. All of a sudden, a butcher's truck will appear on your right and you'll be crushed.

*

*

84 - EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Flash. Harry behind the wheel of his car, whistling. A tractor pulls in on his right. Sounds of an accident. The dashboard clock shatters.

85 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT - DAY (CONT.)

Nemo is staring at Harry, who is as white as a sheet. Nemo has a wet patch on his pants.

*

MOTHER

You're not funny.
(to the guest)

Nemo thinks he can predict the future.

NEMO

I can. I predicted dad's accident.

MOTHER

I've always wondered if you're not the one who took off the hand brake. No one can predict the future. No one knows what's going to happen.

NEMO

I do.

The mother slaps Nemo in the face. *

MOTHER

If you could, you would have known you were going to get that.

NEMO

I knew you'd say that.

86 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MOTHER

I'm so sorry...

The mother is at the door. Harry is leaving. We hear them whispering. The mother closes the door.

87 - INT. NEMO'S ROOM IN HIS MOTHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Nemo is in his pajamas, standing on the window sill, facing the void. The mother comes into his room. She is undisturbed by the danger of the situation. *

MOTHER

Are you proud of yourself?

Nemo lets go and leans into the void.

MOTHER (CONT.)

Why do you systematically ruin everything I... Don't you think I have a right to live, too?

Nemo falls into the void. His mother looks at the empty window. She lights a cigarette.

MOTHER (CONT.)

You could have stayed with your father if you'd wanted to.

87A - We pass through the window. Nemo is crouched three feet below, on a terrace adjoining the window. The fall was without danger. *

88 - EXT. WOODS - DAY

Police officers are searching some bushes. They find Nemo's body. He is missing a shoe. The scene is shot backwards, all the movements are in reverse. *

89 - INT. CITY SCHOOL - DAY

Fourteen-year-old Nemo is in a classroom, in the city where he lives with his mother.

TEACHER

Let me introduce a new student in our class. Her name is Anna.

Anna comes into the room. She smiles, a bit uncomfortable. Whispers. Nemo looks at her, open-mouthed. Anna turns around and catches Nemo's eyes. They look at each other without saying a word.

90 - EXT. BUS/COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Sitting in the school bus, Nemo is shaken by a bump. He is with his class. Everyone is laughing and singing. It is a school outing, and the children have overnight bags with them. Nemo isn't singing. A few seats away, Anna is laughing with her friends. She turns around. She smiles and comes over to him. *

ANNA

Hi. Do you remember me? I'm Anna.

NEMO

Yes.

ANNA

My father knows your mother.

NEMO

Yes.

ANNA

Have you been here long?

NEMO

No.

Nemo is too intimidated to answer anything but yes or no. The silence finally becomes embarrassing, and Anna gets up and goes back to her friends.

91 - EXT. BEACH - DAY

The young teens are running out of beach huts. They are wearing swimsuits. Nemo also comes onto the beach, wrapped up in his towel. He is wearing a ridiculous swimsuit. He sits down, away from the group. He takes a camera from his bag and takes a picture of the beach in front of him. After a moment, Anna comes and sits next to him. He blushes. She smiles at him. A moment of silence. Anna stands up and turns toward him. *

ANNA
You gonna swim?

Nemo doesn't answer. She takes him by the hand and pulls him. *

ANNA (CONT.)
Come on. The water's nice.

NEMO
No, I...

He clams up and stares straight ahead, looking sullen. Anna looks at the water and waves to her friends who are calling to her.

ANNA
Come swimming with us. They're my friends, come on...

NEMO
They're jerks. I don't go swimming with jerks. *

Anna is cross. Deeply hurt. She can't believe it. *

ANNA
Idiot. *

Anna turns her back on him and leaves. She goes swimming with the others. Nemo looks at his feet. He hates himself. We approach Nemo, closer and closer.

We draw close to his eye... We see a reflection in his eye... The reflection of a windowpane.

91A - A man's silhouette stands out in the frame...

92 - EXT./INT. TRAIN - DAY

...In the window of a train is adult Nemo's silhouette. He is in the train. A jolt of the train wakes the dozing Nemo. *

93 - INT. STATION - DAY

Nemo walks through the station. The station clock reads 9:12. Nemo passes a girl with a shaved head who is panhandling. He gives her his change. A woman he thinks he recognizes is coming toward him. The woman is holding two children by the hand. When they are side by side, they look at each other. It is ADULT ANNA.

ANNA
Oh my god!

*

NEMO
Anna!

ANNA
How are you doing?

NEMO
I'm fine... and you? Are those your children?

ANNA
Yes.

Silence. They don't know what more to say.

ANNA (CONT.)
Okay, well, see you around.

NEMO
Yeah... see you around.

They continue their separate ways. Nemo looks deeply moved by the encounter.

CHILD NEMO'S VOICE (OFF)
What on earth made me say, "I don't go swimming with jerks?"

*

He takes a picture from his wallet. The picture of the beach he took as a child. We move closer to the picture. We pass into it...

94 - EXT. BEACH - DAY

Fourteen-year-old Nemo is taking the picture of the beach. The same scene again. He is sitting apart from the group in his ridiculous swimsuit. Anna comes to sit next to him.

ANNA
You gonna swim?

Nemo doesn't answer. She takes his hand and pulls him.

ANNA (CONT.)

Come on. The water's nice.

NEMO

No, I...

He clams up and stares straight ahead.

NEMO (CONT.)

I don't know how to swim.

ANNA

Sorry? *

NEMO

I don't know how to swim. That's
it. Please don't tell anyone. *

Anna sits down next to him, understanding. They look at each other, smile, laugh. One of Anna's girlfriends runs up to them, wanting Anna to come with her.

ANNA'S FRIEND

Come on, aren't you gonna swim?

ANNA

No, I've got my period. I'll stay
here. Nemo'll keep me company.

Her friend walks away. Anna and Nemo look at each other and share a quiet laugh. Anna moves closer to Nemo. Their bare shoulders brush against each other. Nemo gets goose bumps. He doesn't dare move for fear of disturbing the delicate contact of their skin.

95 - INT. ANNA AND NEMO'S ROOM - DAY

Sheets. A woman's naked shoulder. Adult Nemo is sleeping close to her. He caresses her. It is adult Anna.

They hug. They put their arms right next to each other.

NEMO

Look...

The hair on their arms is standing up. They both have goose bumps. They embrace.

96 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT - DAY

Fourteen-year-old Nemo is in his mother's apartment. He is doing his homework. We hear the door open. We hear voices that then go silent. The mother comes into the room and approaches Nemo. She looks at him. She is uncomfortable.

MOTHER

Honey... I... I want to introduce
you to someone.

Nemo turns toward a man who is looking at him from the door. It's Harry, the man Nemo saw with his mother in the woods.

MOTHER (CONT.)

You've already met Harry. This is
his daughter, Anna.

Anna comes into the room after Harry. Nemo and Anna look at each other, both equally surprised. They act as if it's nothing.

MOTHER (CONT.)

Anna, this is Nemo. So, why don't
you shake hands...

They shake hands somewhat awkwardly.

97 - INT. MOTHER'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

All four of them are at the dinner table. Nemo's mother and Anna's father are chatting, somewhat nervously. They watch discreetly as Anna and Nemo sit facing each other without looking at each other, eating in silence. Underneath the table, Anna's foot is caressing Nemo's leg. Nemo blushes and looks even more intently at his plate. They secretly give each other the faintest of smiles.

Later. Anna and her father are leaving. Anna shakes Nemo's hand. Nemo's mother kisses Anna's father on the lips and whispers something in his ear. They have a whispered conversation. We can barely make out:

MOTHER

We mustn't go too fast... We can't
rush them.

98 - EXT. PUBLIC PARK - DAY

A sunny Sunday. Nemo and his mother, Anna and her father are picnicking on an island facing the town, in the sun. The father and mother walk off for a moment, hand in hand. They kiss in the distance, discreetly. Anna and Nemo are alone together.

ANNA

I can't believe them. Sometimes I
wonder how old they are.

NEMO

...

ANNA
Have they already slept together?

NEMO
I don't know.

ANNA
I hope they use johnny's. I don't
want to end up with a little
brother. *

NEMO
I'd rather die.

ANNA
Is your mum on the pill?

NEMO
I have no idea.

ANNA
You'd better slip it in her coffee
in the morning. It looks like her
hormones have gone to her head. *

A pause.

NEMO
Sometimes I can see the future.

ANNA
It doesn't seem like it would be
much fun to know what's going to
happen. Like reading your life from
a book... How do you do it? *

Nemo closes his eyes.

99 - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Old Nemo is in his bed. The journalist is sitting next to him. The recorder is still running.

OLD NEMO
Oh, you're still here... I'd
forgotten you. What time is it?

JOURNALIST
Fourteen-seventeen. I don't
understand. Did you stay with your
father or go with your mother?

OLD NEMO

Did I fall asleep? Some nights I don't sleep. So I think, I think... I think about how it was. That's all I have left... What do you see when you look at me? A grumpy old man who drools when he eats, who never answers questions. Who mixes everything up. Who's kept busy by getting his meals. But that's not me. Me, I wear short pants. I'm nine years old. I can run faster than the train. I don't feel my aching back anymore. I'm fifteen. I'm in love. I'm in love...

*
*
*

100 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Everyone is back at the mother's apartment. It is evening.

MOTHER

So, I think it'll be easier if everyone sleeps here. Nemo, will you lend your room to Anna, and you can sleep in the study?

*
*

Everyone looks at everyone else as though there was nothing out of the ordinary.

NEMO

Sure.

101 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

All the lights are off in the corridor. We see a light coming from under the door of the mother's room. We hear sounds of embracing, a squeaking bed. Nemo slips discretely from the study. Without a sound, he opens the door to the room where Anna is sleeping.

*
*
*

Complete darkness. He feels his way, bumps into something, holds his breath. He reaches the bed. He whispers.

NEMO

Anna?

Anna turns over and lifts the covers, inviting him to slip into the bed. He slips in and lies down next to Anna, very close. They look into each other's eyes. They touch each other's face. Anna gently runs her fingertips over Nemo's skin. Nemo shivers. We see the hairs on his arm straighten.

*

At the end of the hall, the sounds of Nemo's mother and Anna's father intercourse become louder and louder. We hear the mother reach a theatrical-sounding orgasm. *

Nemo's lips brush Anna's cheek. We hear only their controlled breathing. They finally kiss. They disappear under the covers.

102 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT (1988) - DAY

It is morning. Under the covers, Nemo and Anna are asleep in each other's arms. Time has gone by, their hair has changed. A voice rings out in the hall.

NEMO'S MOTHER (OFF)
Nemo? ... Nemo?

Nemo wakes with a start. As does Anna. Nemo yanks his pajamas on. He gets all tangled up in them, falls to the ground, hurries. He's in a panic. Nemo opens the door to the hall. His mother's back is to him, and he takes advantage to silently cross the hall, pulling up his pants, and slips into the small study. He jumps into bed as fast as he can and pretends to be asleep. We hear voices in the hall. *

ANNA'S FATHER (OFF)
Isn't he sleeping in the study? *

NEMO'S MOTHER (OFF)
No, I just looked, and he's not there.

Nemo opens his eyes, panicking. He jumps out of bed.

NEMO'S MOTHER
Anna, have you seen your brother?

ANNA
He's not my brother.

Nemo crosses the hall again as fast as he can, without being seen. He goes into the bathroom, flushes the toilet, slows himself down, and comes back out looking half-asleep.

NEMO'S MOTHER
There you are. Did you sleep well?

He groans, returns to the study and gets back into bed - this time falling asleep for real, exhausted. *

The camera pulls back.

102A - The camera leaves through the window...

103 - EXT. CITY - DAY

...The camera is still moving back. We see the apartment building. We move further back. We see the city from above. The image freezes. It is a postcard lying on a table...

104 - INT. FATHER'S HOUSE (1988) - NIGHT

The postcard is lying on the kitchen table. We hear the door opening.

Fourteen-year-old Nemo comes into the house and closes the door behind him. He has different clothes and a different haircut from the previous scene. The father's voice emerges from the kitchen.

FATHER (OFF)
Who's there?

NEMO
It's me.

Nemo comes into the kitchen. His father is in a wheelchair. He has aged. He looks at Nemo strangely. He doesn't recognize him. Nemo comes over and leans close to his father. He takes his hand. The father is still staring at him.

NEMO (CONT.)
It's me, Dad. Nemo. Your son.

FATHER
Nemo! Of course, son. Where were you?

NEMO
At the hardware store, Dad. I always work at the hardware store after school.

*
*

Nemo grabs a pan and starts cooking.

FATHER
You know, a boy your age should get out more. You can leave me alone you know. I can manage.

*
*

NEMO
It's no problem, Dad. I like being at home.

A bit later. They are eating, sitting across the table from each other. The father can only manage to use one clumsy hand. Nemo cuts his meat for him.

FATHER

A card from your mother came in the mail. You haven't looked at it.

NEMO

I know. I'll read it later.

FATHER

Won't you go see her someday? *

NEMO

I haven't seen her in seven years. *
If she'd ever wanted to see me,
she'd know where to find me. No,
I've got everything I need, Dad.
Everything's fine.

104A - A bit later, in the bathroom. Nemo is carrying his father. He undresses him. He gets undressed himself and starts running the shower. He carries his father in his arms and places him under the shower, staying with him. The father clings to his son as best he can and lets himself be washed like a baby. Nemo lathers him up.

Nemo dries his father with a towel. He is calm and attentive, his gestures assured.

104B - A bit later still, in the father's bedroom. Nemo dresses his father in his pajamas and puts him to bed. He kisses his forehead and turns out the light. *

NEMO (CONT.)

Night, Dad. *

FATHER

Goodnight, son.

Nemo leaves the room. The father calls him back:

FATHER (CONT.)

Nemo!

NEMO

Yes, Dad?

FATHER

You're a good son, Nemo. *

Nemo watches as his father falls asleep. He tiptoes out of the room.

105 - EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Nemo climbs astride an old motorcycle and kick-starts it. He pulls out slowly. He rides down the road.

105A - He rides. He rides faster and faster. He rides at breakneck speed, howling. He rides down a deserted road. He feels the wind on his skin. He rides. He howls. He is mad with rage.

105B - Finally, he arrives in front of his house. He parks his motorcycle silently. He is calm.

106 - INT. FATHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

He enters the house without a sound. *

106A - He opens the door to his father's room, finding him asleep. He goes to tuck him in.

106B - Then Nemo enters his own room. He sits down in front of an old typewriter and starts typing. Sheets of paper are piled next to the machine. The metal rods strike the surface of the paper and words appear: "After three months and six days..."

TEENAGE NEMO (OFF)

After three months and six days of travel, the shuttle was heading directly toward the Cancer nebula, in line with Uranus and its five moons. It was finally approaching Mars and the colonies. On board, the computer was monitoring the passengers' artificial hibernation...

107 - EXT. COSMOS - NIGHT

In the distance, the Cancer nebula. A spaceship passes quite near us - propelled by enormous solar sails - and disappears in the immensity of the cosmos, heading toward a small red planet.

108 - INT. SPACESHIP - NIGHT

Adult Nemo is in a state of hibernation in a container behind a pane of glass. He is in his fifties, white silvery hair. He has a burn scar on his face. Computers monitor his condition. A beam of blue light scans him constantly. Articulated arms examine him. On the screens we can see virtual representations of his vital organs. His heartbeat is slowed. In the corridor of the spaceship, three other chambers contain the rest of the crew...

We approach Nemo's frozen face. His eyeballs quiver slightly. His pulse accelerates.

ADULT NEMO (OFF)

Anna... Anna...

109 - INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

During the hypnosis session, the doctor's pendulum swings evenly in front of us...

OLD NEMO (OFF)
Anna... Anna...

110 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Nemo sees a tennis match on television through the open door of his parents' room. It is the throaty breathing of the players that we hear.

110A - EXT/INT. TERRACE / MOTHERS APARTMENT - MORNING

Summer sunshine. Nemo and Anna are lying on the terrace, in swimsuits and sunglasses. They are dozing, exhausted, pretending to read. They pass a joint back and forth. Anna's foot slips discreetly along Nemo's thigh.

Anna's father and Nemo's mother are preparing to go out. Anna hides the joint and waves the smoke away. They giggle.

NEMO'S MOTHER
We've got errands to run, we'll be
back in an hour.

ANNA'S FATHER
Put on a shirt, Anna... You're
going to get sunburned. *

The father looks at them insistently, as if he has some doubts. As soon as the door is closed, they burst out laughing. They throw themselves at each other, kissing, rolling on the breakfast table, knocking everything to the floor, rolling on the ground, undressing. Anna grasps him between her legs, they roll around on the couch, they roll around on the rug, laughing.

They catch their breath. Nemo takes an ice cube from an overturned glass and slides it gently over Anna's skin. He watches her skin contract, goose bumps appear. He slides the ice from her arm to her belly, then over the tips of her breasts, which stand up.

ANNA
You're mine. *

NEMO
And you're mine. *

Pause. Nemo looks sad.

NEMO (CONT.)

I'm wondering what would have happened if we hadn't met... Maybe I'd be with my father. But the most important thing would be missing.

ANNA

What?

NEMO

You.

Anna holds onto him tightly.

ANNA

Do you see our future?

NEMO

I've stopped seeing the future. It scares me when I don't see you. I don't want a future if you're not in it.

*
*

ANNA

Forever.

NEMO

Forever. Whatever happens. There is no life without you.

*
*

ANNA

No life without you.

*

111 - INT. FATHER'S HOUSE - DAWN

Teenage Nemo wakes up, gets out of bed.

111A - Nemo and his father are in the bathroom. Nemo applies shaving cream to his father's face and shaves him carefully. He is calm and attentive, his gestures precise. The blade slides over his father's neck. He finishes and puts aftershave on him.

*

FATHER

You look like my son.

NEMO

I am your son, Dad.

FATHER

My son is taller than you.

111B - Nemo positions his father in front of the window. The father gazes at the clouds moving slowly through the window frame.

*

112 - INT. FATHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Nemo is in his room, sitting at his typewriter. His fingers dance quickly over the keys. The pages fill up.

NEMO (OFF)

The spaceship was now only sixty-seven thousand kilometers from Mars, and we could already see the two moons, Phobos and Deimos. They were preparing to spend 779 days there, until Mars came close to the Earth again.

113 - INT. SPACESHIP - NIGHT

The motionless face of Adult Nemo, in his container. The shuttle's sails fold in. Mars appears, immense and red. It is magnificent. Its surface is covered with valleys, and we can discern the presence of four cities.

TEENAGE NEMO (OFF)

The onboard computer displayed:

*

On the space shuttle, the onboard computer displays the message: "END OF HIBERNATION."

114 - INT. FATHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

We see the typewriter keys writing on the white paper:

*

E-N-D O-F H-I-B-E-R-N-A-T-I-O-N.

Nemo rereads the words and stops. He takes the sheet of paper from the typewriter and lays it on the pile of pages that make up his novel.

115 - EXT. VILLAGE STREETS - NIGHT

It is dark. Nemo is walking toward the village. He stops in front of the village hall. There is music. Nemo hesitates. He takes a coin from his pocket, flips it, but can't catch the coin, which falls into the gutter. Nemo goes inside.

116 - INT. VILLAGE HALL - NIGHT

The village hall is crowded, mostly with young people. He hears someone burst out with laughter. He sees in the distance a girl his age, ELISE, who is laughing. She turns toward him. She gives him a little wave. A handsome young man, STEFANO, is next to her.

*

Elise holds onto his arm, and Stefano holds his girlfriend's hand and kisses her. Elise whispers something in his ear.

STEFANO
Are you crazy, or what?

Elise turns white. She passes from giggles to sobs. She crouches on the ground. Nemo freezes, watching.

STEFANO (CONT.)
Come on, it's no big deal, I didn't say anything mean.

Someone tries to help Elise up, but she stomps her feet on the ground, then tries to control herself, but breaks down crying again. People are uncomfortable. Elise pushes her way through the crowd. She is heading right toward Nemo, and stops in front of him.

ELISE
Shall we go, Nemo?

NEMO
Excuse me?

ELISE
Shall we go? This is such a bore.

She takes his arm and drags him toward the exit.

117 - EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Nemo and Elise come out of the village hall. Nemo is uncomfortable.

NEMO
How do you know my name?

Elise's eyes are still full of tears. She hiccups. He gives her a handkerchief. She refuses it.

NEMO (CONT.)
You'll drown.

She smiles. She looks at Nemo. She thinks he's nice. She takes the handkerchief, blows her nose. She smiles at him.

ELISE
We go to the same school, but you've never noticed me. You never look at anyone. Do you have a girlfriend?

*

NEMO

...

ELISE
Are you queer? Why don't you have a
girlfriend? *

NEMO
I don't know. I don't want one.

ELISE
Tell me about yourself. You used to
wet your pants. Everyone thinks
you're a weirdo. You're always all
alone. Talk. Say something. *

NEMO
...

ELISE
Do you like me? Do you think I'm
pretty? You don't like my accent,
do you? What are you thinking? *

NEMO
I've got a bit of a headache. *

ELISE
Say something, come on!

NEMO
Gravity on Mars is .38. Three times
less than on Earth. The ground is
covered with iron oxide dust.

Elise bursts out laughing. She looks at him, melting.

ELISE
You're incredible. Raise your hand
and say "I swear."

NEMO
Why?

ELISE
Promise that if I die, you'll go
spread my ashes on Mars.

NEMO
It is estimated that travel to Mars
would take six to eight months. The
first passengers will be white
mice.

ELISE
Say "I swear."

NEMO
(not daring to contradict her)
I swear.

ELISE
We were neighbors when we were
little. Elise... Don't you
remember?

117A - Flash: a little girl in a yellow dress watches child Nemo go by. On one side of her a little girl in a pink dress, on the other side one in a blue dress.

NEMO
Elise! ... Yes. I had the feeling
I'd seen you somewhere...

ELISE
That's called déjà vu. They say
that it's the signal from the eyes
going through your memory before... *
*
*

NEMO
No, that's not it...

117B - Flash: Nemo and Elise are sleeping in each other's arms, as adults, surrounded by their three children.

TEENAGE ELISE
In another life then? Anyway, I
remembered you!

She takes his hand and moves close to him. He squeezes her hand. They look into each other's eyes. He blushes, stirred up. She brings her face close to him. He approaches too. She steps back.

ELISE (CONT.)
You shouldn't. You don't know me...
I'm not a good person.

NEMO
Why do you say that?

Elise starts crying. He caresses her face. She moves close to him. She kisses him. She suddenly turns around and runs away.

NEMO (CONT.)
Elise! Wait!

ELISE
I'll call you!

NEMO
You don't have my number!

118 - INT. FATHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

118A - Nemo is looking at the phone. It doesn't ring.

Sitting at the table in his room, Nemo writes a letter. He writes, "Dear Elise," then stops. He wads up the page, takes a new one. He is in front of a blank page. He doesn't know what to write. He shakes. Beads of sweat stand out on his forehead. Slowly, he begins writing. His pen glides over the page making a sharp little noise.

ADULT NEMO (OFF)
*What happens when we fall in love?
As a result of certain stimuli, the
hypothalamus releases a powerful
discharge of endorphins...*

119 - INT. TV STUDIO - DAY

Adult Nemo is looking into the camera. It is a popular science program.

119A - A cross-section of a brain is in superimposition.

NEMO (CONT.)
*But why exactly that woman or that
man? Is there a release of
odourless pheromones that
correspond to a complementary
genetic signal? Or is it physical
features that we recognize? A
mother's eyes? A sister's dimple?
An smell that stimulates a happy
memory?*

*
*
*
*
*

119B - We see brief flashes of Elise looking at Nemo. We see her eyes, very close up...

119C - We see the eyes of Nemo's mother.

We see Elise's nose. The mouth, the chin. We see the hands. Her haircut is similar to his mother's. We see Nemo looking at her, breathing. We go into a nostril.

119D - We see glands contracting, we see the heart beating faster, the blood flow increasing...

NEMO (CONT.)
*Is love part of a plan? A vast war
plan between two modes of
reproduction? Bacteria and viruses
are asexual organisms.*

119E - We see bacteria multiplying through cell division. We see their genomes dividing into two perfectly identical codes.

NEMO (CONT.)

With each cell division, each multiplication, they mutate and perfect themselves, much more quickly than we do. Against this, we respond with a fearsome weapon: sex. Two individuals, by mixing their genes, shuffle the cards and create an individual who resists viruses better the more dissimilar he or she is.

119F - We see DNA mixing to produce a different combination.

NEMO (CONT.)

Are we unknowing participants in a war that is beyond us, a war between two modes of reproduction?

Credits music. The images stop rolling behind Nemo. The tape rewinds. The background goes out, leaving a blue screen. Nemo consults his papers and looks at his watch. The lights go on. We are in a TV studio.

LOUDSPEAKER VOICE

Okay, that's good for today.

NEMO

(to Peter, a passing assistant)
Was I okay? *

PETER

I thought it was good.

Nemo takes out his cell phone and dials a number.

NEMO

Honey? I'm running a little late. *

120 - EXT. ANNA AND NEMO'S HOUSE - DAY

Anna answers her cell phone in front of a pretty white house. The children play around her as she escorts them inside.

ANNA

No problem. We'll wait.

NEMO (OFF)

Anna! I love you.

ANNA
I love you more.

NEMO (OFF)
Me more.

ANNA
Me more.

NEMO (OFF)
Okay.

ANNA
Cheater.

121 - EXT. TV STUDIO - DAY

Nemo hangs up. He is walking briskly out of the studio. He takes his keys from his pocket. He climbs into his car and drives away. He passes a cyclist, who is forced to brake. The cyclist stops and lets him past.

122 - EXT. WOODS - DAY

Nemo's car is driving fast down a road that goes through a wooded area. In the distance, birds are bustling in the branches, chirping away. They land on the road surface, pecking at seeds. Nemo's car suddenly appears. One of the birds hits his windshield.

122A - Nemo swerves to the side, skidding. The car zigzags. Nemo loses control of the vehicle, and it goes off the road, plunging into a river...

123 - EXT. UNDER WATER - DAY

The car sinks under the water... Water pours in through the half-open window. There is no more air. Nemo struggles. Bubbles come out of his mouth. He strikes at the door in vain. His gestures become slower.

NEMO (OFF)
*Shit... I've got to go back. I have
to start again...*

*
*

In the rearview mirror we see:

124 - EXT. COUNTRY RAILROAD STATION - DAY

Child Nemo is running after the train that is taking his mother away. A baggage handler passes in front of Nemo with his cart.

Nemo stops and watches the train move away. The train moves away...

125 - EXT. ELISE'S STREET - DAY

...reflected in the motorcycle rearview mirror. Teenage Nemo is sitting astride his stationary motorcycle. He is holding his letter in his hand. He is watching a house, and sees Elise come outside. He hides. He is going to approach her. He doesn't dare. He clutches his letter so hard he crushes it. He sees Elise emerge from her house, laughing with Stefano. Nemo blanches. Their eyes meet. Nemo looks down and rides away.

STEFANO

Do you know him?

ELISE

That's Nemo. He's weird. He does everything he can to avoid me.

126 - EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Nemo is racing his motorcycle. He is going at breakneck speed. The wind is whipping at his face, tears run down his cheeks. He howls, but his voice is covered by the motorcycle's roar. It's the same road as usual, we recognize the bends. The road rushes by. The wind fills Nemo's eyes with tears. The turns are tight.

126A - Just ahead, a dead leaf lies on the roadway. The motorcycle approaches. All of a sudden, he skids. The motorcycle swerves. Nemo crashes to the ground. He is lying beside the road, motionless. Nothing moves. Oil from the motorcycle empties drop by drop onto the asphalt.

126B - Later. An ambulance is on the scene. There is a lot of commotion. Flashes of light. Feet and hands going by. People are trying to keep Nemo awake. He is carried away on a stretcher. Nurses talk to him, but he hears nothing. They put an oxygen mask over his face.

127 - INT. HOSPITAL (1988) - DAY

A body is lying on a hospital bed. It is hooked up to all kinds of tubes, breathing machines. It doesn't move. It is fourteen-year-old Nemo. His face is half-covered by masks and tubes. We can make out a presence around him. We sense a nurse placing a thermometer under his arm.

NURSE 1 (OFF)

Do you think he can hear us? Have you seen any reactions?

*

NURSE 2 (OFF)
*I don't know. But I've got a funny
feeling that he can...*

*
*

Nemo is confined to the bed and does not move. Nurse 1 leans over him.

NURSE 1
Sir? If you can hear me, move your
finger.

*

Nemo's hand. Nothing moves.

NEMO'S VOICE (OFF)
*Who's there? ... What am I doing
here?*

NURSE 1
Can you move your eyes?

Nemo's eyes remain hopelessly closed.

NEMO'S VOICE (OFF)
(getting louder and louder)
*I've got to get out of here... Go
back before the accident... I'VE
GOT TO WAKE UP!*

127A - We move away from him at top speed, passing through the walls, the hallways...

127B - We pass through the windshield of the ambulance as is it racing through the streets.

127C - Flash: we see the motorcycle accident in reverse.

128 - EXT. ELISE'S STREET - DAY

Back in time... Nemo is astride his stationary motorcycle. He is holding his letter. Stefano walks away down the sidewalk, Nemo hasn't seen him. He is watching Elise as she comes out of her house. He approaches her and stops in front of her. He looks her straight in the eye. She is both surprised and happy. He gives her the envelope.

NEMO
I believe in one thing. I believe
we should always say "I love you"
to the people we love.

They look at each other intensely.

NEMO (CONT.)
I love you.

She is deeply moved. He kisses her on the lips. She hugs him tightly. They kiss for a long time, without coming up for air. Suddenly, she draws back.

ELISE
I'm not a good person, Nemo. We...
We shouldn't. I... I love Stefano.

NEMO
What?

ELISE
Stefano. You saw him, at the party
with me. I... He doesn't love me.
He's with...that idiot...

NEMO
And so?

ELISE
I love him anyway. I can't help
myself. I'm in love with him. I...
I'm sorry.

Nemo is dumbfounded. He stares at her without moving. A butterfly passes above them, pirouetting in the sky.

129 - INT. FATHER'S HOUSE - EVENING

Nemo is crushed. He is playing chess with himself. His father looks at him tenderly.

NEMO
Dad, I'm getting married.

FATHER
Oh? And who's the lucky lady? *

NEMO
It's not that. I'm going to marry
the first girl who dances with me
tonight.

130 - INT. VILLAGE HALL - NIGHT

A dance in the village hall. Everyone is dressed differently from the first time. Nemo comes in. He sees Elise on the other side of the room. Their eyes meet. He wants to go over to her, but she turns away. She asks Stefano to dance. It's a slow dance, the lights are dim. Nemo watches her. She presses close to Stefano, puts her arms around his neck. She glances at Nemo. Nemo blushes, furious, and turns away. He asks the first girl he sees to dance. It is TEENAGE JEAN. She smiles at him, and seems very nice.

JEAN

Thanks, Nemo.

They go onto the dance floor and dance pressed closely together. Nemo looks at Elise dancing with Stefano. He is furious. Jean looks at Nemo. Elise glances at them. Nemo looks at Jean. He slowly moves his face toward hers. She pulls back a bit, hesitates. Nemo brings his lips to hers, and they kiss. Jean hesitates for a moment, then lets herself go, puts her arms around him. Elise forces herself to smile at Stefano. She pretends to be happy. Jean presses herself to Nemo. She is truly happy. She is in love. Nemo is furious. He lets himself be embraced by Jean, who is smiling, her eyes closed, tears in her eyes. She whispers:

JEAN (CONT.)

Nemo... Nemo...

Nemo closes his eyes. The image fades to black.

131 - EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Nemo, his face hard, is riding at top speed on his motorcycle. Jean is astride behind him, her arms around him, holding on.

CHILD NEMO (OFF)

On that day, I will make a lot of foolish decisions. ONE: I will never leave anything to chance again...

*
*

Teenage Nemo looks right at the camera and says:

TEENAGE NEMO

ONE: I will never leave anything to chance again. TWO: I will marry the girl on my motorcycle. THREE: I'll be rich. FOUR: We'll have a house. A big house. Painted yellow. With a yard. And two children, Paul and Michael. FIVE: I'll have a convertible. Red. And a swimming pool. I'll learn to swim. SIX: I won't stop until I've succeeded.

*
*
*
*

131A - Nemo's speech is peppered with FLASHES: Adult Jean. A white house, that grows bigger when the voice over says "big house" and turns yellow when the voice says "Yellow." A yard spreads around it, and an automatic sprinkler system starts up. A blue convertible appears in front of the garage and turns red when the voice says "Red." Two children pose in front of the house holding hands. Their t-shirts read "Paul" and "Michael".

*
*
*

132 - EXT. NEMO AND JEAN'S YARD - DAWN

The big pool in Nemo and Jean's yard, at dawn. Adult Nemo, in his bathrobe, is on the diving board, a bottle of scotch in his hand. He falls forward and spins in the air for a few seconds before plunging under the water.

133 - EXT. NEMO AND JEAN'S YARD - DAY

The vast estate. A gardener is mowing the lawn. Nemo floats in the pool, almost motionless. Jean screams and dives in fully dressed to save him.

Black.

PAUL (OFF)
Daddy? ... Daddy?

JEAN (OFF)
Paul, don't wake your father!

133A - Nemo's eyes pop open. He was sleeping on a chaise lounge, holding a glass of juice. He is beside a tarp-covered pool. Nemo looks at Jean.

NEMO
Elise?

The woman looks surprised. Nemo puts down his glass.

JEAN
It's me, Jean... Who's Elise? *

NEMO
Jean? ... Oh, right...

JEAN
Paul, you can keep playing.

Paul walks away. Nemo's expression is blank. His children are laughing as they play with a dog. Nemo moves to pick up his glass, but it's not there anymore.

NEMO
Didn't I have a glass?

JEAN
No... You're still tired, Nemo. You need to rest.

She looks at him, a silent moment. Nemo looks at his shoe, intrigued. The lace is broken. He pulls it off.

JEAN (CONT.)

Nemo... Do I matter to you?

Nemo looks at her.

JEAN (CONT.)

I'd just like to ask you one question. Did you do it on purpose?

*
*

Nemo looks at her, uncomprehending. Jean takes a paper from her pocket and unfolds it. She hands it to Nemo.

*

JEAN (CONT.)

I found it on the bedside table.

*
*

NEMO

Did I write that?... It is my writing. I don't remember...

*

Jean takes the paper back.

*

JEAN

(reading)

"There comes a time in life when everything seems narrow. Choices have been made. I can only continue on. I know myself inside out, I can predict my every reaction. Everything is predictable. My life has been cast in cement, with airbags and seatbelts. I've controlled everything. I've done everything to reach this point, and now that I'm here, I'm fucking bored. The hardest thing is knowing whether I'm still alive."

*
*

*

*

134 - INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Nemo is in his office, plunged in darkness. There is a picture of Jean on his desk. He looks at the broken shoelace in his hand. He looks at a candle flame. He holds his hand over the flame to see if it burns. He holds it there as long as he can. His hand starts to smoke.

135 - INT. ANNA'S ROOM IN THE MOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY

Teenage Nemo wakes with a start. He looks at his hand, which is unscathed. Blonde hair is spread out next to him. He studies it. It is Anna. They are in Anna's room. She also wakes up.

NEMO

Jean?

ANNA
What did you say?

NEMO
Anna, is that you? I had a dream...
a weird dream.

They hear a noise. Nemo jumps out of bed. He looks at the time, pulls on a t-shirt as fast as he can.

ANNA
Fast!

Nemo opens the door a crack. No one. Nemo tiptoes down the hall. We no longer hear sounds of love from the parents' room, but sounds of fighting.

136 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT - DAY

Breakfast. No one is talking. Anna's father and Nemo's mother are not speaking. They are angry with each other. Anna and Nemo glance at them discreetly.

ANNA
Everything okay?

ANNA'S FATHER
Everything's great. Mind your own business.

Everyone stares at their food in silence.

NEMO'S MOTHER
Well. It is important for you to understand... In life, things don't always work out the way we plan them. Harry and I thought... Life isn't always what we think it will be.

*
*
*
*

NEMO
What are you talking about? I don't get it.

MOTHER
Anna already knows.

Nemo turns toward Anna, who looks away.

MOTHER (CONT.)
Harry and I are going to separate.

Nemo looks at his mother as if he can't believe it.

NEMO

What? But why? You have no right,
I... What's wrong with y...

*

ANNA'S FATHER

You've played your part in it. I
don't know what's going on between
you two, and I don't want to know.
It's sick. You're brother and
sister. It is better that...

*

ANNA

We are NOT brother and sister!

Anna runs to her room and slams the door. Nemo follows her.

137 - INT. ANNA'S ROOM - DAY

Nemo bursts into Anna's room, but she avoids his eyes. He locks
the door behind him.

NEMO

You knew? ... And you didn't tell
me?

He turns away, furious. Anna takes him in her arms, holds him
tight, sobs. He turns toward her, also crying. Her father knocks
furiously at the door.

NEMO (CONT.)

Where? Where are you going?

ANNA

To New York. In ten days. My father
found a job there.

Both of them are crushed. They don't move. They hold each other
tightly.

ANNA (CONT.)

We'll meet every Sunday, near the
lighthouse. Okay? Until we see each
other again. For life. Okay? It's
not over. We still have time. We
have to take advantage of every
minute.

They kiss.

137A - A little later. They are lying on the floor, motionless,
holding hands. The sunlight moves through the room. They do not
move. It is endless.

NEMO

Ten days, that makes... 14,400
minutes. I wish everything would
stop right now, and things to stay
this way forever.

*

ANNA

They say that if you slow your
breathing, time slows down. The
Hindus say so.

*

*

They stare into each other's eyes, without moving, holding hands.
They hold their breath.

A little later, at night. They make love, almost without moving,
in slow motion.

A little later. Through the window, they watch the sun rise. The
branches of the trees dance in slow motion... They turn toward
each other in slow motion. Their fingers touch. We hear a faucet
dripping.

*

137B - A drop falls from the bathroom faucet, its fall slowing...
and it stops in mid air, as if time had stopped.

138 - EXT. SPACE AND MISC. - DAY

The planets slow their rotation...

ADULT NEMO (OFF)

*Will time stop moving when the
expansion of the universe reaches
its end?*

We pull back, away from the solar system. We see galaxies, move
back even more, see a mass of galaxies, pull back more, see a kind
of brilliance, a drop. We pull even further back and we see that
it is lachrymal fluid from an eyelid. We see an eye. We pull
further back.

138A - It is Anna's eye...

ADULT NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)

*Is the universe a miniscule part of
a much greater ensemble? Is the
entire universe contained in a
microscopic molecule, in a tear
perched on an eyelid?*

139 - INT. NEMO'S ROOM - DAY

A shining tear falls from Anna's eyelid and runs down her cheek.
The shadows of two teenage hands on the wall...

They touch, caress each other... Dust dances in the air, around their fingers... Through the window, falling autumn leaves hang in the air...

Very close up, Anna's mouth, her lips.

140 - INT. NEMO'S ROOM - NIGHT

Nemo and Anna are lying side by side, their eyes open... Anna touches her nose to Nemo's skin...

ANNA
(whispering)
I have to remember the smell of
every part of your body. I'll never
forget.

*

She runs her nose over Nemo's torso.

ANNA (CONT.)
(whispering)
You're the first and last person
I'll ever love.

NEMO
(whispering)
You are the first and the last.

They make love.

ANNA
We'll meet near the lighthouse. And
we'll write.

They kiss. They hold each other tight.

141 - INT. HALL IN THE MOTHER'S APARTMENT - DAY

Anna's room is empty. The boxes are stacked in the hall. Anna's father walks down the hall. Movers take the things away.

142 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Nemo closes himself in his room. He leans against the door. He doesn't want to see. He is crying.

ANNA'S FATHER (OFF)
Anna, it's time to go...

Nemo doesn't open. He listens at the door. He kneels down and looks through the lock. Through the hole, he sees Anna's eye. He hears her whisper.

ANNA (OFF)

I love you.

A noise. Anna's eye is no longer visible. The front door closes.

Nemo opens his bedroom door and runs as fast as he can to catch them.

142A - He rushes down the stairs.

143 - EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Nemo reaches the street just as the car is pulling away. We see the two red running lights move away and turn left. Nemo decides to cut through on a parallel street. He runs as fast as he can. He is out of breath, frowns, but runs even faster. He sees between the houses that he is even with the car. The car moves slightly ahead of him. Nemo accelerates. He knocks over garbage cans. The fences on the street rush past.

143A - He reaches a major road. He sees the headlights turn into the street and come toward him. Nemo stops, and without hesitating, steps into the road, spreading his arms in the darkness to stop the car. The headlights approach. The light blinds him, and he squints. The headlights come closer, without slowing down... They are very close.

Suddenly, the two headlights separate and pass on either side of him. Nemo can't believe it. He turns around. It was two scooters, which are continuing on their way.

SCOOTER RIDER

Hey kid, don't stand there!

Nemo watches them go, dazed, desperate. He howls into the night:

NEMO

ANNAAAAAA!

144 - INT. SPACESHIP - NIGHT

The motionless face of adult Nemo. Frost sticks to his beard and eyelashes. His skin is almost blue. Probes provide readings of the weak, distant beating of his heart.

ADULT NEMO (OFF)

(whispering, very near)

Anna! ... Anna?

144A - Flash: the three little girls in their colorful dresses: Anna, Elise, Jean.

TEENAGE NEMO (OFF)

"After ninety days, the onboard computer is still maintaining the passengers' metabolism at the level of a hibernating frog."

Nemo's face. We hear Indian music. Reflected in the glass of the container, the image of a television.

145 - INT. HOSPITAL (1988) - DAY

Indian music coming from a television set... In the on-duty personnel station, an Indian nurse is watching a brightly colored film: an Indian singer is declaring his undying love to a beauty.

145A - Teenage Nemo, in a coma, lies motionless on his hospital bed, hooked up to machines.

TEENAGE NEMO (OFF)

"He had always been fascinated by the fact that certain frogs can spend the winter completely frozen, and that, when spring comes, comma, they defrost and begin living again. Period. The onboard computer displayed:"

*

146 - INT. SPACESHIP - NIGHT

The computer onboard the spaceship displays: "END OF HIBERNATION." The ice on Nemo's face instantly melts and runs off. His color returns. Vital functions return to normal: pulse, brain, nervous system... The door to the hibernation chambers opens.

Nemo is in his fifties and has a burn scar on his face.

146A - We are in the center ring of the spaceship. Big bay windows look out into space. Hibernation cases open all along the ring, releasing passengers of every nationality. A stewardesses pass with fruit juice. Television screens broadcast a loop of images of earth: grass, clouds, rivers. Everything makes one think more of tourism than of a scientific expedition: the big bay windows looking out over the landscape, the chairs positioned to admire the view, the music. Welcome messages are played in every language. The passengers are handed suspicious-looking green meal trays. The planet Mars appears in the spaceship's line of vision, huge and red. The tourists look on in wonder. Nemo is seated among them. He is holding his suitcase on his knees, and on top of it, an urn.

A PASSENGER

This is a dream come true to me...
There are two tragedies in life.
(MORE)

*

*

A PASSENGER (cont'd)
One is not to fulfill your dreams. *
The other is to fulfill them. *
(He looks through the window.) *
It doesn't look like there's much *
to do. I hope I brought enough *
sudoku puzzles. *

147 - INT. HOSPITAL (1988) - DAY

Nemo remains entirely motionless.

NEMO (OFF)
*If I could at least move my
fingers... Or my eyes... Someone
just came in...*

The floor vibrates softly under the feet of a nurse as she comes into the room. She opens the curtains.

NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)
*Daytime... It's daytime... The sun
is out... It's warmer on the left
than on the right...*

The nurse undresses him. He feels her lifting his arm.

NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)
*She's different from the one this
morning... Not the same perfume...
Her hands are soft.*

She washes him. He feels the washcloth on his skin. The sun is shining on his face, and the shadow of the nurse passes back and forth over him. Nemo feels with pleasure the contact of her hands on his skin. The washcloth slides over his chest. A ray of sun washes over Nemo's face. The nurse offers an unexpected gesture of tenderness to the teenager. She looks around to see that no one is looking, then she kisses Nemo's forehead.

NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)
Elise... Is that Elise?

The Indian music gets louder.

148 - INDIAN MOVIE

The sun shines in the sky. The hero is singing to his love. They gallop on horseback over the hills. They embrace.

149 - EXT. ELISE'S STREET - DAY

Back in time... Nemo is holding his letter. He stops before Elise. He looks into her eyes.

NEMO

I believe one thing. I believe we should always say "I love you" to the people we love.

They look at each other intensely.

NEMO (CONT.)

I love you.

She is deeply moved. He kisses her on the lips. She suddenly draws back.

ELISE

I'm not a good person, Nemo. We... We shouldn't. I...

NEMO

You're the one I love.

ELISE

I have to tell you...

He puts a finger to her lips to stop her.

NEMO

Shhh... Don't say anything. You can count on me for Mars. I promise.

She smiles. He kisses her. She hesitates, then hugs him tightly. They kiss lengthily, without coming up for air. A plane goes by in the background, pulling a streamer.

150 - EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Adult Nemo and Elise step out of a church under a rain of rice. They are married. They get into a white car decorated with a ribbon reading "JUST MARRIED." They drive away.

151 - MODEL

A toy airplane, held in a child's hand. The plane flies over a map. On the map, the letters "OCEAN" run past. The plane flies over North America.

152 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S ROOM (2006) - DAY

An alarm clock rings. Nemo and Elise are thirty-six. Nemo gets up. The scene is identical to the one at the beginning of the film. Elise is sleeping. Nemo goes into the bathroom. We stay with Elise, whose back is to Nemo. Her eyes are open. Tears stream down her cheeks. Nemo didn't see her cry.

Nemo comes back into the room. He lies down next to Elise. Elise opens her eyes. As soon as she sees him, she cries more.

NEMO
What is it?

ELISE
I dreamt I was somewhere else...

NEMO
What do you mean?

ELISE
Nothing.

NEMO
Want us to go for a stroll today? *
Do you want me to...

ELISE *
I don't want anything. Nothing.

She starts crying again, her chin trembling, shaking from head to foot.

ELISE (CONT.) *
I'm so lousy... I'm worthless. I
can't stand this life anymore.

NEMO *
You're not lousy, you're fantastic. *
You're exhausted, that's all. It'll
be fine, you'll come out of it.
Think about it... You've got *
incredible kids, you've got...

ELISE
Stop trying to cheer me up, it
makes me feel even guiltier.

She is lying down, sobbing. Nemo looks at her, powerless.

ELISE (CONT.)
What's wrong with me? What's wrong
with me?

She turns toward him.

ELISE (CONT.)
Do something! Do something to make
it stop!

NEMO
I think it would be good if I
called a doctor.

She turns back toward him, her lips taut, waving a finger at him.

ELISE
No doctors!

Nemo puts a hand on her shoulder. She pulls away brusquely.

ELISE (CONT.)
Please... don't touch me. *

153 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - DAY

Nemo is preparing breakfast, the children are at the table. They look a little worried. Nemo tries to be lighthearted.

JOYCE
How's mum?

NEMO
She's tired. She's sleeping.

NOAH
She's always tired.

JOYCE
(as if distractedly)
Is she depressed?

NEMO
She has ups and downs.

JOYCE
I don't know about you, but next time mum has one of her crisis, I'm going to go live somewhere else. *

Nemo freezes, looks at her. He doesn't know what to say.

NEMO
So, does anyone have a joke? What's small, green, and goes up and down?

EVE
A pea in an elevator. It's not funny. Old people humour.

NEMO
I'll take you to school. Joyce, are you gonna be all right?

JOYCE
Of course. It's not because mum's not okay that I'm not okay.

154 - EXT. SCHOOL STREET - DAY

It is raining. Nemo drops off the children in front of the school and drives away.

155 - INT. CAR WASH - DAY

Nemo is in his car. Soapsuds spread across his windshield, swept by a noisy, spinning brush. It's pretty. Jets of water push the suds to the side windows. The car moves forward on its own, pulled by the mechanism. Nemo watches. It relaxes him.

156 - EXT. CAR WASH - DAY

Nemo leaves the car wash. He stops at a red light. Behind the wheel of the car next to him is Anna. Children are in the back seat of her car. Their eyes meet for an instant. They don't take note, don't know each other. Anna pulls away before Nemo.

157 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT - DAY

A picture of teenage Anna stands on the desk. Teenage Nemo is writing a letter. His mother walks past in the background. He closes the envelope, writes Anna's address. He closes his eyes and concentrates.

NEMO (OFF)

Anna.

158 - INT./EXT. NEW YORK - HARRY'S HOUSE - DAY

The postman slips Nemo's letter into a mailbox. Harry comes out of the house, picks up the mail. He tears up Nemo's letter.

159 - EXT. PUBLIC PARK - DAY

It is winter. Nemo is near the lighthouse where he and Anna said they would meet. He is alone, sitting on a bench. The park is deserted. Nemo closes his eyes and concentrates.

NEMO (OFF)

Anna... Can you hear me?

160 - EXT. NEW YORK - DAY

It is winter. Anna is walking down a street, over a bridge. She closes her eyes...

ANNA (OFF)
Nemo... I talk to you all the time.
Sometimes I have trouble
remembering your face. So I
reconstruct you in my mind, inch by
inch, until I can see you again...

161 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT - DAY

It is snowing outside. Movers are carrying boxes from the house as the mother directs them. The mother picks up the mail under the door. She discretely tears up a letter and throws it away.

162 - INT./EXT. MISC. - DAY/NIGHT

Nemo slips an envelope into a mailbox.

162A - We see the path the letter follows. The address is optically scanned. The letter enters an automated routing system. It is bundled with other letters, all tied together. The bundle is thrown in with others in big canvas bags. The bags are transported. The bags are opened. The strings around the bundles are cut. The letters are sorted into small slots. A stamp hits the letter: "NO LONGER AT THIS ADDRESS."

163 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Nemo is holding the letter. The apartment is almost empty. Nemo is at the table, across from his mother. His eyes are red from crying. He stares at his plate with no appetite.

MOTHER
Come on, eat your zucchini. It'll
do you good.

Nemo looks hopelessly at the slices of zucchini in his plate.

164 - EDUCATIONAL TV PROGRAM

A zucchini plant in a garden, with its big leaves. Adult Nemo appears in superimposition, speaking to the camera.

ADULT NEMO
Does the zucchini know pain?

A caterpillar moves across a leaf and begins eating it. We see the zucchini plant in cross-section. A red glow appears in the roots and spreads through the stems. Adult Nemo's face reflected on the teleprompter. The text goes by.

ADULT NEMO (CONT.)

When the insect bites into the leaf, the plant finds a bitter substance in its roots that it diffuses into the leaves to make them inedible.

The insect abandons the leaf. On another leaf, a kind of beetle is cutting a circular trench.

ADULT NEMO (CONT.)

Epilachna borealis has found how to block that move: they cut a circular trench through the leaf before the bitterness reaches it and feed on the inside.

The insect eats the edible disk.

ADULT NEMO (CONT.)

What does the zucchini feel? Is it pain? Is information carried chemically less painful than information carried by a nervous system? Does the zucchini cry out when you chew it?

165 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT - EVENING

The mother is chewing a mouthful of zucchini. Nemo looks at the slices in his plate.

MOTHER

We need to look to the future. It will be good to change houses, to have a new life...

NEMO

Will we have a pool?

MOTHER

You hate water. You don't know how to swim. You never know what you want.

NEMO

I do know.

MOTHER

That's news. And what is it you want?

NEMO

I know what I don't want.

MOTHER

So what is it you don't want? *

NEMO

I don't want to be like you.

The mother registers the blow.

NEMO (CONT.)

You know nothing about me. I've always loved pools. When I'm older, I'll have a pool.

166 - EXT. VILLA - MORNING

Adult Nemo is using a net to fish leaves from the surface of a magnificent pool in the garden of a magnificent villa. His gestures are calm and precise. An idyllic image. His hair is longer and his is unshaven.

A man in a bathrobe comes out of the house and hands him some money. Nemo thanks him and climbs into a truck marked "Pool Maintenance" with two colleagues.

167 - INT. URBAN TRAIN STATION - DAY

Nemo is leaving the station. On the big clock, the time reads 9:12. In the corridor, he passes a girl with a shaved head who is panhandling, sitting on the ground. He gives her some change. A voice calls out:

VOICE

Anna!

Nemo startles and turns back. It is a father calling to his little girl.

NEMO (OFF)

*Anna... I feel like I'll be seeing
you at every street corner...* *

The clouds move faster, then slow down again. The station clock reads 9:21. Anna steps out of the station. She is thirty-five. She passes CLARA, the panhandling girl with the shaved head and gives her some change. The girl looks at Anna, intrigued.

168 - EXT. URBAN STATION - DAY

There is a square in front of the station. Anna sits down at an outdoor café. She orders a cup of coffee. Nemo is sitting a dozen yards away from her. Their backs are to each other. Nemo distractedly watches people going by. They don't see each other.

ANNA (OFF)

Sometimes I tell myself maybe you live in the same town I do and I don't know it. Maybe you're here, very close. Nemo... do you still hear my voice?

Nemo looks at the sky. He takes a picture of the clouds with a Polaroid. The pool maintenance truck stops nearby. Nemo gets in.

When Anna turns around distractedly, he is already gone.

169 - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM (2092) - DAY

OLD NEMO

Tick tock tick tock... Nine minutes... Separated by an ocean of nine minutes... Tick tock tick tock...

A cleaning woman unplugs a machine cleaning the floor around Old Nemo's bed. She isn't listening to him.

170 - INT. NEMO'S INDUSTRIAL LOFT - NIGHT

Nemo goes into a very empty old factory. The walls are bare brick. There is no furniture, only a mattress lying on the floor, one table, one chair... Nemo walks past a picture of teenage Anna, on prominent display. He tacks up the Polaroid of the clouds next to hundreds of others on the wall.

171 - EXT. NEMO AND ELISE'S STREET - DAY

Behind the wheel of his car, Nemo - his hair short - is on his way home with the shopping. It is raining. At the corner of his street, he sees Elise walking barefoot through the rain, in her bathrobe, crying. Nemo gets out of the car, tries to take her in his arms. She struggles.

ELISE

I'm leaving! I'm leaving!

Neighbors come to see what's happening. Nemo manages to get her into the car. She bursts out sobbing. She slaps herself, taps her head against the windshield, pulls her hair, scratches her face. With each slap she says:

ELISE (CONT.)

Take that! And that! And that!

Nemo tries to keep her from hurting herself.

172 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - DAY

Bottles of medication sit on the bedside table. Elise is lying down, her eyes closed. Nemo lies down next to her. He notices, bizarrely, that a price tag is still attached to the bedside lamp. He pulls it off and looks at it, puzzled.

NEMO

I've given my resignation letter.
It's better that way. I'll find
something else. One where I can be
at home more.

*

ELISE

Do you love me?

NEMO

I love your eyes. I love your
mouth. I love your voice. I love
how you move. I love your
cheekbones. I love the sound of
your steps on the stairs. I love
how you eat strawberries. You have
a unique way of eating
strawberries.

*

ELISE

You love all that, but me, do you
love me?

NEMO

I couldn't live without you.

173 - INT. OR EXT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE OR YARD - DAY

There is noise, music. Nemo is hanging a garland from the ceiling. The children are helping him. The kids are running around, laughing. Guests arrive, Joyce's school friends. The older ones dance, jumping up and down. Nemo wanders among the children handing out pieces of cake. He is wearing a small pointed hat, and is really having fun. Joyce grabs his arm as he goes by, smiling. She shouts:

JOYCE

Life is great, Dad!

She laughs joyously. Nemo prepares a meal tray.

174 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S ROOM - DAY

Nemo goes into the room. Elise is in bed. He puts the meal tray down on the bed.

ELISE
I can't stand it anymore... I want
to die... And that noise!

NEMO
I'll ask them to keep it down. But
it's Joyce's birthday...

ELISE
Don't I have the right to a little
respect?

Nemo goes silent.

ELISE
What kind of a mother am I? I've
got to get up.

Elise gets out of her bed.

175 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - DAY

Elise comes down the stairs in her bathrobe. She slips in among the children and leads them in a farandole, with perhaps a touch too much energy and enthusiasm. The children are amazed at first. Elise laughs. She crawls on all fours behind guffawing children. She climbs onto the table and plays the orchestra conductor. Everyone is having fun. Nemo, a bit to the side, watches the scene, moved.

176 - INT. CHILDREN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Elise lying on one of the children's beds, her three children all lying close to her, asleep. Nemo lies down beside her. He puts his arm around her. She lets him.

ELISE
It was a nice day. The nicest in a
long time.

177 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S ROOM - MORNING

Elise comes into the room. She is having a hard time breathing. Nemo follows her in.

ELISE (CONT.)
Oh no... It's back... The terror is
back... I'm scared... *

NEMO
Do you want your pills? *

ELISE
I'm sick of pills. I'm sick of
doctors. It's pointless. I'm
afraid... I'm afraid...

She starts shaking and crying. Nemo is sitting on the edge of the bed.

ELISE (CONT.)
Do something! ... I can't stand it
any more. I'm afraid.

Nemo lies down next to her. He touches her. She pulls her hand away.

NEMO
I don't know what to do. I often
have this dream. Some prehistoric
time.

178 - MODEL - DAY

A child's hand places a plastic bear in front of a cave entrance.

179 - EXT. PREHISTORY - DAY

Elise is a prehistoric woman carrying a baby. She is alone in the cave. She screams.

NEMO (OFF)
*I hear you screaming. You're
afraid.*

Nemo, as a caveman, runs toward the screams. The cave opens onto a background which is an old black-and-white film. Bears (or mammoths) approach the cave. Nemo stands in front of the cave and hollers, pretending to throw his spear. The predators wander off. Nemo takes Elise in his arms to reassure her.

NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)
*I chase the bear. It runs away and
you're not afraid anymore. When I
wake up...*

180 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S ROOM - DAY

Nemo wakes with a start, sits up in the bed. Elise's eyes are open. She is terrified.

NEMO
When I wake up, you're still
afraid. There's no bear.

181 - EXT. ZOO - DAY

Nemo is sitting on a bench at the zoo, watching a sleeping bear behind the bars of its cage.

NEMO
I'm not a bear hunter. I'm an executive of a plant that manufactures photocopying machines, who quit his job. I don't dare move. My life adds up to nothing. Whatever I do, it's a disaster. I would so love to chase the bear away and for you not to be afraid anymore.

*
*
*
*
*
*

182 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S ROOM - DAY

Nemo puts his hand on Elise. She pulls away roughly.

ELISE
I don't want to be touched.

NEMO
Why?

ELISE
I don't know. That's just how it is. People can choose not to be touched. I'm free not to want it.

*

NEMO
Free...

183 - EDUCATIONAL FILM

183A - Eggs are placed in an incubator. We see the shells crack, the little beaks pushing from inside. The baby birds emerge from the eggs. Adult Nemo is facing the camera, in overlay, commenting:

NEMO
To what extent are our fears innate? When we hatch goose eggs in an incubator, and then above the baby birds, pass a form simulating two wings with a long neck - like a goose in flight - the birds stretch their necks and call out.

*
*
*
*

A scientist passes a cardboard cutout above the baby birds, clearly visible against the white ceiling, wings back and neck forward. The baby birds stretch their necks and call out to what they take to be their mother.

NEMO (OFF)

But if we invert the direction of the silhouette, it conjures the shape of a falcon, wings forward and long tail behind. The response of the baby birds is immediate: they will crouch in fear, though they've never before seen a falcon.

*
*
*
*

The scientist inverts the flight direction of the model, and the birds immediately lie down motionless in their nest, without a sound, trying to go unnoticed.

NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)

Without any instruction, an innate fear helps them survive. But in humans, to what ancient dangers might our innate fears correspond?

*

183B - A mouse. A spider. A snake. A crusading knight. A soldier from the First World War rapes a woman. Insects.

184- FLASH

In the forest. Dead Nemo's feet sticking out from under a bush. He is missing a shoe. Someone out for a walk comes near the body and notices it. The scene is shot backwards, the movements are in reverse.

185 - EXT. NEMO AND ELISE'S STREET - DAY

Nemo arrives home, his arms laden with groceries.

186 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - DAY

Short flashes. Elise swallowing a handful of pills. Lying motionless, at the foot of the stairs.

187 - EXT. NEMO AND ELISE'S STREET - DAY

Nemo drops his bags and starts running.

188 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - DAY

Nemo runs into the house. Elise is not at the foot of the stairs.

188A- In the bedroom, We see Elise hang up the phone. Nemo bursts into the bedroom. Elise is in bed. Her eyes are closed. Nemo exhales, relieved.

188B - Nemo goes to sit in a small recess where he has set up his old typewriter. He writes...

189 - INT. SPACESHIP - NIGHT

The spaceship is approaching Mars. The retrorockets blaze. We see a city getting nearer, under an enormous glass dome. The spaceship is approaching Phobos, linked by a space elevator.

NEMO (OFF)

*Probably the worst thing about
being on Mars is that nothing will
happen there. Time will seem
stalled and empty. A long Martian
year of 779 24-hour-and-37-minute
days.*

*
*
*
*

190 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - DAY

Nemo's typewriter. He isn't writing anymore. He is sitting on a chair. He looks out the window, the leaves are moving, swept lightly by the wind. Then the shadows cast by the leaves on the wall...

190A - A fly lands on his hand. He doesn't move. Nemo follows it with his eye, without reacting. Nemo looks at a drop of water dripping off a radiator pipe. The drop hits the ground in a small puddle. Nemo observes it but does nothing.

191 - INT. CAR WASH - DAY

Soapsuds spread across the windshield, swept by a noisy, spinning brush. It's pretty. Jets of water push the suds to the side windows. The car moves forward on its own, pulled by the mechanism. Nemo is in the car. He seems to enjoy the show. It relaxes him.

192 - EXT. RAILROAD CROSSING - DAY

Nemo stops at a railroad crossing. A train passes in front of him.

192A - We follow the train. We fly next to it.

193 - INT. TRAIN - DAY

We go into one of the compartments. Nemo, hair long, is sitting in the train.

194 - INT. CITY STATION - DAY

It is 9:12. The station is full of people. Nemo turns into the hall as he does every day. He walks past a pile of boxes along the wall. He stops. A hand is sticking out of the boxes. Nemo approaches and picks them up. Underneath is the motionless face of Clara, the panhandling girl. Next to her lie a syringe and a rubber tourniquet. The girl's face is pale, her eyes open and motionless.

195 - INT. CITY STATION - DAY

A bit later. The ambulance drivers take the girl's body away on a stretcher. Nemo is there and watches her go. He picks up his jacket. He looks at the time on the big clock. It is 9:21.

A gust of wind sets papers flying. Nemo sees Anna's silhouette coming toward him from the end of the hall. He can't believe his eyes. She comes closer. She is heading right toward him. Nemo and Anna look at each other... astounded. They walk toward each other. They fall into each other's arms, without saying a word. They hold each other tight, looking into each other's eyes.

NEMO
Anna...

ANNA
Nemo...

They embrace.

196 - INT. NEMO'S WAREHOUSE LOFT - DAY/NIGHT

Nemo and Anna embrace. They dance around Nemo's half-empty apartment. They fall onto the mattress on the ground. They look tirelessly into each other's eyes. They make love. Motionless, they hold tightly to each other, naked, each holding the other as if to keep from getting lost. Anna smells Nemo's skin, inch by inch. She smiles.

They are lying in the bath, close together. They make circles.

NEMO
There is no life without you.

*

Anna holds a finger to his lips.

ANNA
Shhh... Gently. I have to get used
to it. I talked to you so much
while you weren't there, it's
strange to talk to you for real.

*

They are lying on the bed.

197 - EXT. CITY - NIGHT/DAY

They are sitting on a bench. Holding tightly together, they watch.
It is night. Then the sun rises. Then there are a few cars. Then
the garbage men collect the garbage. Then children go to school.
Then people walk quickly on their way to work.

ANNA
I like it. I like watching time...

NEMO
... go by...

ANNA
... with you.

Then the trucks deliver their merchandise. Then the local laborers
eat lunch. Then the children get out of school. It rains.

NEMO
It's raining.

ANNA
We'll dry.

Then people walk quickly on their way home from work. It is no
longer raining. Then the restaurants light their signs. Then it is
evening. Anna and Nemo haven't moved an inch.

ANNA (CONT.)
It was the most beautiful day. And
the most beautiful night. Thank
you.

*
*

She kisses him.

ANNA (CONT.)
I need a little time. When we were
separated at fifteen, I said I
would never love anyone else, ever.
I would never become attached. I'd
never stay put anywhere. I'd have
nothing for myself. Then one day I
decided to pretend to live.

They look at each other.

ANNA (CONT.)

And this is what I've been waiting for, ever since we were separated: renouncing all possible lives for one only, with you. But I need a little time. I'm not used to it anymore...to loving. I'm afraid of losing you again. I'm afraid of having to do without you again. I'm terrified of that.

NEMO

But I want to see you again. When?

She smiles.

NEMO (CONT.)

You don't like it when you can read life like a book. *

She writes a number with a felt-tip marker on a scrap of paper. She hands it to him.

ANNA

Call me on this number in two days. You just have to say the word. I'll meet you near the lighthouse. I'll be with you forever. But if you're not sure, don't call. I'll understand. *

She kisses him. She gets up. Nemo hesitates. He looks at the slip of paper. He watches her leave. She turns a corner. A storm rumbles in the distance.

198 - EXT. SKY THEN CITY - DAY

High in the sky, a drop of water condenses out of a cloud and falls from several miles up. It nears the earth, the city.

198A - It falls between the buildings, approaches a man motionless on the sidewalk, Nemo, and lands on the small scrap of paper he is holding in his hand, erasing the phone number and leaving only a streak of ink in the rain. The ink runs over his fingers. The ink runs over his hand, down his arm. An exaggeratedly large puddle of ink flows around his feet, in the rain. It flows all the way to the gutter. The scrap of paper is drenched and blank.

199 - INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Old Nemo is laughing. He is playing chess by himself. The journalist is listening and recording.

OLD NEMO

You want me to tell you why I lost Anna? Because two months earlier, an unemployed Brazilian boiled an egg...

200 - INT. APARTMENT IN BRAZIL - DAY

A fifty-year-old Brazilian in his underwear in a small run-down apartment is sitting at his stove, a spoon in his hand. We see Rio through the window. He is cooking himself a soft-boiled egg. The water is boiling and giving off steam.

CHILD NEMO (OFF)

The heat will create a microclimate in the room, a slight difference of temperature...

The steam fills the room... It is extracted through the kitchen ventilator. We go through the tube, following the steam. At the end of the tube we see clouds.

201 - EXT. SKY THEN CITY - DAY

CHILD NEMO (OFF)

...and heavy rain two months later on the other side of the world.

*

A drop of water condenses out of a cloud and falls. It nears the earth, falls between the buildings, and lands on the small scrap of paper Nemo is holding in his hand, erasing the phone number.

202 - INT. APARTMENT IN BRAZIL - DAY

The Brazilian in front of his stove.

CHILD NEMO (OFF)

That Brazilian will be boiling an egg instead of being at work. He will have lost his job in a clothing factory because six months earlier...

203 - INT. NEMO'S LOFT - DAY

Nemo pulls the tag off a pair of pants and puts it in his closet.

CHILD NEMO (OFF)

...I will have compared the prices of jeans, and I will have bought the cheaper pair...

204 - EXT. BAMBOO FOREST - DAY

A bamboo leaf in the snow. A pile of snow forms on the leaf. A flake adds itself to the other flakes. The leaf bends and the pile of snow falls.

CHILD NEMO (OFF)
*As the Chinese proverb says, a
single snowflake can bend the leaf
of the bamboo.*

*
*
*

205 - INT. ASIAN FACTORY - DAY

A clothing factory in Asia. Rows of sewing machines, men and women and children assembling clothes.

CHILD NEMO (OFF)
*Jeans production will have moved to
other countries...*

*
*

206 - INT./EXT. MISC. - DAY

The Brazilian at his stove. The boiling egg.

206A - The drop of falling rain.

206B - Nemo in the rain looking at the blank paper.

207 - EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

OLD NEMO
I lost every trace of Anna. I
waited for her. Every day.

*

Nemo is sitting on the bench, near the lighthouse: the meeting place. His hair has grown longer. He is waiting. The beam from the lighthouse turns in the darkness. Flashes of light illuminate his face at regular intervals.

208 - INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The metal ball swings regularly.

209 - EXT. STREET - DAY

*

Nemo is in front of his house, the bottle of car polish in his hand.

(...) He rubs the chrome painstakingly.

(...) People go by in the street. He is still rubbing.

End of the day. He is rubbing still. The children come home from school and give him a kiss as they go inside.

Elise is at the window.

210 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - DAY

Nemo brings a dinner tray to Elise. Elise looks at him strangely.

NEMO
You're not hungry?

ELISE
I don't want anything. Nothing...
What are you doing tomorrow?

NEMO
I think I'll take the opportunity
to wash the car.

Elise looks at him with some apprehension.

ELISE
What's the deal with that car?

NEMO
What do you mean?

ELISE
Why do you take such good care of
that car while you leave me all
alone? What's the problem with that
car?

Nemo looks at her. He gets up and leaves very calmly.

211 - EXT. STREET - DAY

Nemo steps out of the garage carrying a can of gas. He walks very calmly to the car and pours gas all over it. He takes out a lighter and sets it on fire. He returns to the house without looking back. The car ignites.

212 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S ROOM - DAY

He goes into the room where Elise is looking dumbfounded out the window.

NEMO

So, there's no more problem with
the car.

Elise looks at him, somewhat frightened. She gets back into bed.
Nemo goes to look out the window. He is surprised.

212A - The car is in the street, intact. He can't believe it. The
street looks like a scale model.

212B - Workmen are rolling up a huge roll between the houses: the
street. Nemo turns back toward the bed.

212C - A woman is lying there. It is no longer Elise. It is Jean.
He looks at her, surprised. The bedroom is almost empty.

JEAN (ELISE'S VOICE)

What's wrong? Why are you looking
at me like that?

213 - INT. JEAN AND NEMO'S ROOM - DAY

Jean's face moves closer to Nemo's. They are both lying on the
bed. He looks around, lost.

JEAN

Nemo... Do I take sugar in my
coffee? Can you please answer me?

Nemo doesn't know what to say.

JEAN (CONT.)

You don't know me, Nemo. You've
never really looked at me. You've
always been elsewhere. Do you
realize how much you've hurt me?

*

*

Nemo's eyes are drawn to the television.

213A - The local news is broadcasting images of a fire on a
bridge, clearly labeled "ARCHIVES." Charred automobiles, including
a car of newlyweds bearing a "Just Married" sign, which now reads
"Just Fried."

JEAN (CONT.)

I got a call from the lawyer. He
says you've just put everything you
own in my name. Why, Nemo? What are
up to?... Nemo...

214 - INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Breathing sounds. Teenage Nemo is lying on a hospital bed, motionless, a prisoner of his body, hooked up to machines. Silence. We sense a silhouette moving near him.

TEENAGE NEMO (OFF)
...The ground doesn't vibrate the same way. It's a different perfume. How old might she be? Twenty-five? There are other people, too.

Nemo's father is sitting in the room, defeated. Nemo's mother comes in. The father looks at her, surprised. They are moved to see each other again. They sit in silence, next to each other, looking at Nemo. The nurse attends to Nemo.

TEENAGE NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)
Let's begin again. Fingers on the keyboard. Left hand A-S-D-F, right hand H-J-K-L.

*

215 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

In the little room in the house with Elise, adult Nemo places his fingers on a keyboard: A-S-D-F and J-K-L-M. The fingers begin typing.

216 - INT. SPACESHIP - NIGHT

Sound of typewriter keys. We see the surface of Mars approaching. The rocket begins making contact with Phobos. A deodorizing pine tree swings...

217 - INT./EXT. MISC. DAY/NIGHT

The swinging of the doctor's pendulum in front of old Nemo's eyes...

217A - Swaying branches...

217B - A swing...

217C - The three little girls...

217D - The deodorizing swinging...

217E - The lighthouse beam turning...

218 - EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Child Nemo is running after the train that is taking his mother away. He holds out his hand to her. The train gathers speed. Their hands grow further apart.

219 - INT. OFFICE IN NEMO AND JEAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Nemo's motionless hand above the candle flame. The sound of the TV has been muted.

219A - The local news is showing images of a fire on a bridge. Jean's picture sits on the desk. The cars are burning.

Indifferent, Nemo sits in the darkness, his hand over the flame. He keeps it there as long as he can. He pulls it back, looks at his hand, does not suffer. He has a burn in the hollow of his palm. Nemo turns toward the muted television.

219B - A presenter is spinning the wheel of fortune. The wheel stops at a number.

Nemo picks up a coin from the edge of the table. He studies it. He stabs it with the point of a knife, engraving "yes" on one side, "no" on the other.

219D - An ad for fishing rods is on TV. He writes "Buy fishing rod X..."

He tosses the coin in the air and catches it. "Yes." He takes his coat. He walks past the stairs. He hesitates, tosses heads or tails: "Yes."

NEMO

Jean! I'm off to buy a fishing rod.

*

219C - Nemo goes out of the house leaving the door open behind him. He walks away in the night. When Jean comes down the stairs, he is already gone.

220 - EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - NIGHT

Nemo is walking down some railroad tracks. It is dark. An arrow points in one direction. Nemo follows it. Nemo stops to take out a cigarette. In the distance, a locomotive is coming toward him. He lights the cigarette. He takes his coin and tosses it. Nemo puts the coin back in his pocket and watches the train come toward him. He hears a voice and turns to look.

CLARA

Got a light?

Nemo turns around. He sees a woman in the shadows, sitting on the gravel, semi-punk/semi-tramp her backpack next to her. It's Clara (the young woman who died in the station). She shows him her unlit cigarette. Nemo holds out his lighter to her, without taking a step. The train is coming right toward Nemo. Nemo doesn't budge. Clara holds out her cigarette. She waits for him to come over. Nemo steps off the tracks and lights her cigarette. The train passes behind them with a deafening roar.

CLARA (CONT.)

Thanks.

She starts walking. He follows her. After about ten yards:

CLARA (CONT.)

Why are you following me?

NEMO

I don't know.

CLARA

I've got nothing to do with you,
and you've got nothing to do with
me. I'm not interested. Get lost. *

She turns around. He doesn't leave. She comes toward him and kisses him.

CLARA (CONT.)

Follow me. *

Nemo tosses his coin. "Yes."

NEMO

Yes.

221 - INT. CLARA'S SQUAT - NIGHT

Clara and Nemo enter a tiny, messy apartment where she has been squatting. She kisses Nemo.

NEMO

Is there someone in your life?

CLARA

Not really.

She undresses him, pushes him onto the bed.

The music is blasting, distorted. Straddling Nemo, Clara is making love frenetically. It's almost an hysterical dance.

The sound of keys. The door opens, a man comes in. He is about thirty and is wearing a leather jacket.

CLARA (CONT.)

Shit.

The man, taken aback, looks at Nemo in bed with Clara. Nemo doesn't react.

JULIAN

Who's he? What the fuck's he doing here? *

CLARA

Julian, calm down.

The man starts smashing everything around him, overturning the furniture. Clara, naked, tries to control him. Nemo laughs, naked, on all fours. Julian breaks a chair over his back. Nemo collapses, laughing even harder. Julian leaves, leaving the door open behind him. Everything has been turned upside down. Nemo looks at the devastated apartment. Nemo has not moved from the bed. He laughs. Everything has happened very fast. Clara gets back in bed next to him.

CLARA

Do you love me?

Nemo flips his coin. "No." He hesitates.

NEMO

Yes.

CLARA

Why do you let a coin decide for you?

NEMO

It makes better decisions than I do.

222 - INT. CLARA'S SQUAT - NIGHT

Nemo is awake, Clara asleep. Nemo flips his coin. He takes his coat and leaves.

223 - INT. AIRPORT - DAY

Nemo is wandering around the airport. He walks the halls. At arrivals, people are waiting with signs.

Nemo sees a black man, dressed to the nines, holding a sign marked "MR. D. JONES." He watches him. He flips his coin. "Yes." Nemo goes toward the man.

MAN
Mr. Jones.

NEMO
Yes.

MAN
Welcome. We've already got your
luggage. Please, follow me.

224 - INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

The man and Nemo are in a limousine.

MAN
Did you have a nice trip?

NEMO
Yes, thank you.

MAN
I'll take you to your hotel, where
you can rest for a while. The
appointment is tomorrow at three.

*

Nemo says nothing.

225 - INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Nemo enters a luxurious hotel room. The bellboy puts down his suitcase and leaves. Nemo opens the suitcase. He takes out a sweater, feels it, puts it on, looks at himself in the mirror. It looks good on him. He studies some pictures. An unknown woman. He finds a planning calendar. He flips through it. He looks at the ID. He looks at the face in the picture. He reads the name: Daniel Jones.

NEMO
Daniel... Daniel Jones...

He looks at himself in the mirror. He combs his hair differently, like in the ID photo. The telephone rings. Nemo takes the coin from his pocket. Flips it. "Yes." He answers.

NEMO (CONT.)
Hello?

TELEPHONE VOICE
Daniel?

NEMO
Yes.

TELEPHONE VOICE

Are you insane? What are you doing?
Split!

*
*

NEMO

...

TELEPHONE VOICE

I told you not to go! They're
furious, they know it's you! Clear
out!

The man hangs up. Nemo lies down on the bed. He flips his coin. As it spins, the wind opens the window, catching the drapes and causing a gust of air that changes the way the coin turns. Nemo catches it. He runs himself a bath.

226 - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

JOURNALIST

Is your name Daniel Jones?

OLD NEMO

Of course not.

227 - INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Nemo is in his bath. His head is sticking out of the water. He is waiting, motionless. He closes his eyes. He falls asleep...

Nemo opens his eyes. There is a man sitting in front of him on a stool, a revolver in his hand. A plastic sheet is spread out on the floor. Nemo watches without moving. The man fires. Nemo collapses in the water, which turns red. The red blood mixes through the water in twisting swirls.

Another man comes into the bathroom. He is carrying two pairs of shoes.

SECOND THUG

That's weird. His shoes are
different sizes.

*
*

They close the plastic sheet around Nemo and wrap the body in the blanket.

228 - EXT. WOODS - DAY

A car with the two thugs on board stops in the woods. The two men remove the body from the trunk.

FIRST THUG

Maybe he shrunk. It happens when
you get older, you shrink.

*

SECOND THUG

No one shrinks. That's rubbish.
You've got the wrong bloke, that's
all.

*

*

FIRST THUG

Astronauts shrink two inches when
they come back to earth, 'cuz of
gravity or something.

*

SECOND THUG

You think this fella's an
astronaut?

*

They finish dumping the body in a thicket. Only Nemo's feet are visible, sticking out. He is missing a shoe. Insects climb over his foot.

229 - EXT./INT. BUS ON MARS - DAY

*

Rockets leave white trails in the pink sky. A bus full of tourists of every origin: Indians in saris, Africans, Asians. Nemo is among them, looking out the window, the urn on his knees. A red desert spreads out around them. We are on the planet Mars. A speaker plays Chinese music.

LOUDSPEAKER

To your left, the Valles Marineris
and the summit of the Tharsis Dome.
Above, we can see the two moons,
Phobos and Deimos. We'll be driving
through the canyon to avoid road
works.

*

*

*

We see two moons in the sky. One rocket and then another takes off. The rockets leave lines of white vapor in the pink sky. avoid the road work. A gigantic glass dome hangs over the desert. Four dromedaries wander in the distance. Billboards for vacuum cleaners. Nemo takes the urn from his bag and opens the window.

He removes the lid, holds the urn out the window, in the wind. Wisps of gray dust dissipate behind the bus.

230 - FLASH

On a bridge, an enormous fire. A gasoline truck explodes. A car bearing a "Just Married" sign is on fire. Elise, in a wedding dress, is caught in the flames. Nemo tries to get her out of the car.

231 - EXT. BUS ON MARS - DAY

Nemo is still looking out the bus window. Gray dust has stuck to his hand. He rubs it. He has dust under his fingernails.

PERSON IN THE NEXT SEAT
Do you need a tissue? *

232 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A typewriter. On the paper appear the letters "Do you need a tissue?" Adult Nemo is in his small office at his typewriter. *

232A - It is the middle of the night. Nemo opens the door a crack and checks on his sleeping children.

232B - He goes into the bedroom and sits down on the bed. He watches Elise sleep. He gently strokes her cheek. She opens her eyes and sees him. She starts crying.

NEMO
What's wrong?

ELISE
I was dreaming about Stefano.

NEMO
That made you cry?

She breaks down sobbing.

ELISE
He never answers my messages. He doesn't give a damn about me...

NEMO
Stefano?

ELISE
I love him!

Nemo registers the blow. Elise keeps sobbing.

ELISE (CONT.)
I don't see any other explanation...for being in this state. That's the only thing it can be. I love him.

NEMO
Did he say he loved you? *

ELISE

He never said he didn't love me.

Nemo is stunned. He doesn't understand anything anymore.

ELISE (CONT.)

I know, I'm crazy. Every morning,
when I wake up and open my eyes and
I see you, I start crying... I
realize I'm with you, and my life
is passing by.

*

She looks at him and slaps him.

ELISE (CONT.)

How can you be so calm? How can you
bear that? You...you're not human!

Nemo starts crying. She touches his hand. He grabs hers, takes it,
holds it to him.

ELISE (CONT.)

Everything's all wrong... I'm a
complete wreck... I don't know what
to do... It's not my fault, right?
You're not going to leave me, are
you?

*

He holds her in his arms.

NEMO

I couldn't live without you.

ELISE

I hurt everyone. You, the children.
It can't go on.

*

NEMO

Together we can make it work.

ELISE

If I stay, you'll all end up
drowning in my mess.

*

NEMO

We'll learn to swim.

Elise closes her eyes. They lie down next to each other. Nemo
takes her in his arms. She holds his hand.

NEMO (CONT.)

I love you...

ELISE

I love you...

233 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Nemo is asleep. Elise watches him sleep. She gets up slowly, without making a sound. She opens the closet, takes out some clothes, and packs a suitcase.

234 - EXT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Without a sound, Elise leaves the house carrying her suitcase. She walks away on the sidewalk. The neighborhood is deserted and silent.

235 - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

The journalist is sitting next to old Nemo, who is playing chess by himself.

JOURNALIST

But... Did Elise die... or didn't she? I don't get it. You can't have had children and not have had them.

*
*

OLD NEMO

She left. No matter how long it takes, things work out in the end, finally. Even unhappily.

*
*
*

236 - INT. THEATER/BEAUTY PARLOR - DAY

The curtain goes up on a theater stage. The set is a beauty parlor. Child Nemo (age seven) sits alone. On stage, Elise is sitting, prostrate on a chair. She is in her forties.

236A - We move toward her until we see cars driving by through a window. We are no longer on a theater stage. Elise is looking at the picture of Stefano. Two other hairdressers are working. A man comes in. She doesn't even glance at him.

ELISE

Hi.

*

We don't see his face right away. His hair is gray.

STEFANO

Not too short on top, please.

*

Elise is lost in her thoughts, a bit sad. She doesn't really look at her client, only sees his hair. She shampoos him. She cuts his hair, pulling it between her fingers. She runs the trimmer over his neck. The hair falls to the ground. Elise trims around his ears. She cuts a clean line at the neck. We see his face.

It is Stefano. He has changed a lot, gotten fat. Only his eyes are the same. They haven't recognized each other. Stefano checks out the hairdresser working at the next chair. She is younger, prettier. Stefano looks at her legs. Elise massages his head. Stefano has closed his eyes. Her movements are studied, efficient. Stefano is enjoying it. He closes his eyes. She takes off the cape, brushes his neck and shoulders.

STEFANO
How much'll that b...?

ELISE
Tw...nty dollars, pl...as... Good-
by..., sir. *

STEFANO
H...r... you ar... By... And hav... a
nic... aft...rnoon. *

237 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The "e" is sticking on the old typewriter. Adult Nemo unsticks it. The machine types an "e" on the paper.

238 - INT. THEATER/BEAUTY PARLOR - DAY

We return to the stage.

ELISE
Twenty dollars, please... Good-bye,
sir. *

STEFANO
Here you are. Bye, and have a nice
afternoon. *

Stefano leaves. They have not recognized each other. Elise goes to sit down and returns to her thoughts. She looks at the picture of young Stefano. She smokes a cigarette. The swirls of smoke dance in the air.. We move back.

238A - The stage curtain comes down.

239 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Nemo finishes typing. He looks at the wall. Water runs down it slowly. Nemo looks at his shoes. His feet are in the water. Nemo goes to the hall door and opens it. A rush of water pours through the door and pushes him back. The room is underwater. Nemo cannot breathe. He struggles.

240 - EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY

The car sinks under the water... Water pours in through the half-open window. There is no more air. Nemo struggles. Bubbles come out of his mouth. He strikes at the door in vain... His gestures slow...

NEMO (OFF)
*Shit... I've got to go back...
Start from the beginning... Start
over again...*

*

241 - INT. TV STUDIO - DAY

Nemo is facing the camera. He is presenting a science program. He has a burn scar on his face.

NEMO
Why does cigarette smoke never go
back into the cigarette? Why do
molecules spread away from each
other? Why does a spilt drop of ink
never reform?

*

*

241A - In the background, swirling smoke filmed in slow motion. A drop of ink dissolving in water. A vase breaking in slow motion. A superimposed title: "ENTROPY."

NEMO (CONT.)
Because the universe moves toward
dissipation. That is the principle
of entropy, the tendency of the
universe to evolve toward a state
of increasing disorder.

241B - Images of the Big Bang. Galaxies, constellations.

NEMO (CONT.)
The principle of entropy is related
to the "arrow of time," a result of
the expansion of the universe. But
what will happen when gravitational
forces counterbalance the forces of
expansion? Or if the energy of the
quantum void proves too weak?

*

An image of galaxies ceasing to expand and contracting upon themselves. The solar system comes to a halt in order to start moving in the opposite direction.

NEMO (CONT.)

At that moment, the universe might enter its phase of contraction: the BIG CRUNCH. What will become of time? Will it reverse?

*

241B1 - An image of a vase breaking on the ground, then, in reverse, the pieces coming back together.

241A2 - Raindrops rise back into the sky.

241C - A baby returns to its mother's womb.

241D - Images of a clock, cogs, a metronome.

NEMO (CONT.)

No one knows the answer. Perhaps what we call the universe is only a miniscule part of a much vaster cosmos. In that case, our universe would not be unique: it would be part of a MULTIVERSE. Different universes dispersed throughout the cosmos would have experienced their own expansion, each bubble of the multiverse having different properties, including the number of dimensions, spatial and temporal. But how can we imagine it? How can we understand the implications? "The most comprehensible thing about the universe" said Einstein "is that it's incomprehensible."

*

*

Music over the credits. The images stop moving behind Nemo. The tape is rewound. The background goes blank, leaving a blue screen. We are in a TV studio.

VOICE IN THE SPEAKERS

Okay, that's good for today.

NEMO

Where's Peter?

CONTINUITY GIRL

Peter? He left an hour ago. I'm replacing him. I have selected take three and take four.

*

*

NEMO

I prefer it when he does it. I don't mean you're not good enough...but...

CONTINUITY GIRL

Drop it, buddy. In life, you get
one take. If it's bad, you just
deal with it.

*
*
*

242 - EXT. TV STUDIO - DAY

Nemo leaves the studio in no hurry. He takes his keys from his pocket and looks at them, puzzled. He doesn't recognize the keychain: there's a coin on it, with "yes" engraved on one side, "no" on the other. Nemo gets into a car and drives away. He passes the cyclist. He brakes and lets the cyclist go past. He starts off again. The car clock advances one minute.

243 - EXT. WOODS - DAY

When Nemo's car appears in the distance, the birds have already flown away. The car continues on the way. Nemo reaches the river and slows down. Police cars and fire trucks are blocking the road. Nemo sees a crane pulling a car from the water. A car that looks like his.

Nemo gets out of his car. A police officer keeps him from approaching any further. Behind the wheel, he sees the lifeless body of the assistant, Peter.

NEMO

Oh, no!

POLICE OFFICER

Did you know him?

NEMO

Yes, he worked with me...

244 - INT. CHURCH - DAY

Nemo, dressed in black, goes into a church. It is a funeral service. A coffin is in front of the altar, upon which is set a picture of Peter. Nemo walks discreetly up the side aisle. He sees the family of the deceased. He is upset. He advances a bit more. Nemo sees the wife of the deceased, dressed in black. Nemo is troubled. It is Anna. Her hair is longer than in the other life. There are two children next to her.

245 - INT. CHURCH - DAY

People are emerging from the church, presenting their condolences to the family. Nemo shakes Anna's hand. They look each other in the eye, feeling somewhat unsettled.

NEMO
My sincerest condolences. Peter was
a colleague...

ANNA
Yes, of course. I've seen your
show.

Nemo walks away. He sees Anna's puzzled expression once more.

246 - EXT. UNDER WATER - DAY

Nemo is underwater, in the car. Algae are floating around him. He is struggling. He is suffocating, screaming underwater... Bubbles emerge from his mouth...

247 - EXT. NEMO AND ELISE'S STREET - DAY

Nemo parks in front of the house we know from his life with Elise. A surprised neighbor stops to watch him enter his house.

248 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - EVENING

Nemo goes into the house.

NEMO
It's me.

No answer. The house is decorated differently. There is no trace of Elise or the children. On the mantel, a picture of young Elise sits next to the urn.

NEMO (CONT.)
Did you have a nice day?

Nemo looks at goldfish swimming in an aquarium. He watches the bubbles float to the surface.

249 - FLASH UNDER WATER

Bubbles floating to the surface.

250 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Nemo goes into a kind of laboratory in his garage. There is equipment everywhere. A camera is filming an apple as it rots, frame by frame. Nemo checks it. The light goes on once a minute. He starts the camera, projecting the image onto a screen. We see a wilted flower return to freshness... We see rotten fruit take on its original color...

We see a pile of dust expand into a swarming of insects, then the teeming pile slowly becomes the body of a dead mouse that comes back to life...

251 - INT. NEMO AND ELISE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Nemo is eating by himself. Across the table, he has set a place for a second person who is not there.

251A - Nemo slips into a big bed all alone. He turns out the light.

NEMO
Goodnight.

He goes to sleep.

252 - FLASH - DREAM

A few brief flashes. Nemo and Elise are twenty. They are getting married. They drive off in a car marked "Just Married."

252A - They come to a bridge. A tanker truck blows up. Nemo runs in circles, carrying Elise's dead body, in her wedding dress. His face is burned.

253 - EXT./INT. BUS ON MARS/MEGALOPOLIS - NIGHT

On Mars, Adult Nemo is looking pensively through the bus window, holding the urn on his knees. He bus drives into a city under the dome. All around, all we see are lights that look like high-rise apartment buildings and factories.

The bus stops at the foot of a space elevator. Nemo picks up his bag.

254 - INT. SPACE ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Nemo and the tourists are in a glass elevator rising through the air. We pass through the city, leave the dome, overhanging Mars. We pass other elevators carrying loads of bicycles.

NEMO
What are we doing with all these
bikes ?

*
*

It is Anna, next to him, who answers.

ANNA
They're for export. Labor is
cheaper here. China has become way
too expensive.

*

255 - INT. SPACESHIP - NIGHT

Nemo is seated facing the big windows as other passengers come on board. He looks at Anna sitting next to him. Nemo is unsettled. So is Anna. They shake hands.

NEMO
Hi. I'm Nemo.

ANNA
Anna. Pleased to meet you.

NEMO
What's brought you here?

ANNA
I'm measuring the distance between Earth and Mars at its greatest. I study time. You know, the thing that makes it so that everything doesn't happen at once.

NEMO
And?

ANNA
The Big Crunch'll start in 2092. People who can hang on that long will get a free run. And you?

Nemo looks at the urn tied to his bag.

NEMO
Just keeping an old promise.

256 - EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Nemo, long hair in a ponytail, is asleep on a bench near the lighthouse. Adult Anna comes toward him. Nemo is levitating ten inches above the bench. Anna touches his shoulder.

Nemo wakes with a start. He is no longer levitating. He is lying on the bench. Anna isn't there. He sits up slowly. He looks to where he saw Anna in his dream. He takes a stump of chalk from his pocket and draws a circle on the ground. He opens a paper bag: he hesitates between a Danish and a chocolate éclair. Nemo sits back down and looks at the circle. He closes his eyes, concentrating.

NEMO (OFF)
(calling)
Anna! ... Anna! ...

257 - INT. BUS - DAY

ANNA

NEMO!

Anna startles. She is sitting in the bus. Slowly, she smiles, completely happy.

ANNA (CONT.)

Nemo...

258 - EXT. ANNA'S STREET - DAY

Nemo - the widow - is behind the wheel of his car. He slows as he reaches Anna's house. It is number "12358." He stops. He sees Anna leave her house with her children. He gets out of his car.

NEMO

Hi...

ANNA

Hello...

*

NEMO

We met at your husband's funeral.

ANNA

Yes, that's right...

*

NEMO (CONT.)

I had a strange feeling when I saw you... As if I had met you before...

ANNA

That's called déjà vu. You should know what that is. They say that there's a small zone in the brain, the "rhinal cortex", that registers new objects in the environment. If for a moment that zone is inactive, everything new seems familiar to you.

*

*

*

*

NEMO

No, that's not it... It's as if... As if all this wasn't real... I'm sorry, you must think I'm crazy. I'm not trying to flirt with you... I'm a widower myself...

*

*

*

*

ANNA

Please excuse me... some other
time, perhaps. I... I have to go...

Anna gets into her car and drives away. Nemo hears a voice.

ANNA'S NEIGHBOR

Nemo?!

Nemo turns around. He sees someone he doesn't recognize. The
stranger seems to be in shock.

ANNA'S NEIGHBOR (CONT.)

Wow, I heard that you were dead!
... That you drowned...

NEMO

Drowned?

Nemo looks, intrigued, at a fish flopping on the ground at
his feet.

259 - EXT. UNDER WATER - DAY

Nemo is underwater, imprisoned in his car. He is losing his
strength. A fish swims past him and looks at him. Nemo is about to
lose consciousness... With the last of his strength, he manages to
pull himself through the window. He slips outside, swims
underwater. He sees a light above him, a luminous oval-shaped
spot. He ascends. The zone of light is the shape of a bathtub.
Nemo rises as fast as he can...

260 - INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - DAY

... Nemo suddenly sits up. He is in his bath, naked, soaked. He
coughs and tries to catch his breath.

A man is seated in front of him on a stool, a revolver in his
hand. There is a plastic sheet stretched out on the floor. The man
fires. Nemo collapses in the water, which becomes red. The red
blood spreads through the water in circular swirls.

261 - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM (1988) - DAY

Young Nemo's electrocardiogram as he lies paralyzed on his bed, a
prisoner of his body. The needles are going wild, moving in every
direction. The nurses rush to his bedside. An alarm goes off.

262 - INT. SPACESHIP - NIGHT

Nemo is looking at Anna. An alarm suddenly goes off. Warning lights start flashing.

LOUDSPEAKERS
Meteorites.

Meteorites suddenly rain down on the vessel. The tourists run away from the windows. Nemo clutches Anna's hand. An explosion. The big window bursts. The rocket explodes, liberating the bicycles, which float through space.

Hundreds of black bicycles with chrome handlebars spin in slow motion in the void, dispersing toward infinity, toward the stars, to an accompaniment of classical music. Among the bicycles, Elise's urn.

263 - EXT. UNDER WATER - DAY

A picture of Anna and the children, in a "Think of us" frame, is floating in the water. Nemo is struggling underwater, imprisoned in his car. We move away, see the car at the bottom of the river. Algae floats gently around it and the fish look on, curious. The radio is still on, crackling with classical music. We hear a heartbeat slowing down. All of a sudden, the airbag opens, displaying the inscription: GAME OVER.

264 - INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

The needles on the electrocardiogram are going crazy. The nurses are bustling about. Motionless, paralyzed on his bed, we hear young Nemo howling. His lips don't move.

NEMO (OFF)
(howling)
LET ME OUT...

265 - EXT. BUSHES - DAY

Nemo's dead feet sticking out of the thicket. Insects are crawling on him.

NEMO (OFF)
I WANT TO WAKE UP!

266 - EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - NIGHT

Nemo is standing immobile on the train tracks, watching a train come toward him without budging.

NEMO (OFF)
I WANT TO WAKE UP!

267 - INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

The doctor's pendulum is swinging evenly in front of us. We can make out the blurry doctor in the background. Old Nemo is overcome by the shakes. He panics.

DOCTOR (OFF)
Are you alright? When I say three,
you'll be awake. One...two...

268 - INT. SHOWROOM - DAY

DOCTOR (OFF)
Three...

Adult Nemo wakes with a start. He notices a price tag attached to the bedside lamp. We are in an immense furniture store, in the bedroom section.

269 - EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF THE SHOWROOM - DAY

Nemo leaves the showroom. The street is deserted, not a single car or pedestrian. Nemo looks at the ground at his feet. His body is casting two shadows. He looks up: there are two suns in the sky. There is also a small airplane pulling an advertising banner: "WAKE UP." Nemo runs.

270 - EXT. NEMO AND ELISE'S STREET - DAY

Nemo is running down the street where he lived with Elise. He stops and looks around. The house is no longer there. The sound track becomes more present. Nemo sees a bus go by. On board, an orchestra is playing the sound track. He watches it pass, stunned.

271 - EXT. CARWASH - DAY

He runs to a car wash. Jean-Claude Van Damme is wiping car windows dry with a chamois. Nemo goes up to him, amazed.

NEMO
Aren't you Jean-Claude Van Damme,
the actor?

Jean-Claude Van Damme stops working, taken aback.

JEAN-CLAUDE VAN DAMME
Are you joking?

NEMO
What are you doing here?

JEAN-CLAUDE VAN DAMME
What do you think, I'm doing my
job. *

NEMO
But... you're a movie star.

JEAN-CLAUDE VAN DAMME
I wanted to be an actor, but I
always failed the auditions. These
days I do amateur theater one night
a week, maybe you saw me there. *
*
*

He runs away.

272 - INT. NEMO'S MOTHER'S APARTMENT - DAY

Nemo comes to the apartment where his mother lived. He rings the bell. His mother opens the door. She has aged. She looks at Nemo without recognizing him.

MOTHER
Yes?

NEMO
Mum...

MOTHER
Do I know you? *

NEMO
It's me!

She tries to close the door. Nemo puts his foot in the door and pushes it back open.

MOTHER
What do you want?
(yelling)
Henry! HENRY!

NEMO
Mum, it's me! Your son, Nemo!

MOTHER
My son is right here.

The door opens wider, revealing a somewhat hefty man the same age as Nemo: HENRY.

HENRY
What's goin' on? *

MOTHER
This man says he's my son. *

NEMO
You couldn't possibly have
forgotten.

MOTHER
I don't know you. You're crazy. Go
away or I'll call the police.

Henry pushes Nemo toward the door. Nemo and Henry fight, rolling around on the floor while the mother picks up the phone.

273 - INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Nemo is wearing a straitjacket. He is sitting across from a doctor who looks at him kindly. It is the same hospital where old Nemo is. The doctor shows him a series of Rorschach blots, symmetrical ink stains on sheets of paper.

CHILD NEMO (OFF)
He asks me what I see. I say it's
an "ink stain."

Adult Nemo's lip movement is perfectly synchronized the child's voice.

CHILD NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)
He says I have to say more. I say
it's an ink stain on a sheet of
paper. He says no, I have to say
what goes through my mind. *

The doctor's lip movements correspond perfectly with the voice of child Nemo. Nemo looks at an ink well on the table.

CHILD NEMO (OFF) (CONT.)
I say it makes me think of an ink
well. So then he says, okay, that's
fine. *

274 - TELEVISION

Television images of old Nemo in his hospital bed.

274A - In the street, people crowd around TV screens.

274Abis - On the side of the screen runs an ad for Big Crunch breakfast cereal.

COMMENTARY

You have until tomorrow noon to vote: Should the last mortal be allowed to die a natural death? Or should he be kept alive? Vote and win a vacation on the Moon for the whole family.

*

Images of a family in a recreation center on the Moon.

275 - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

The journalist is with old Nemo.

JOURNALIST

They've announced the results of the voting. I'm sorry...

OLD NEMO

At my age, the candles cost more than the cake. I'm not afraid of dying. I'm afraid I haven't been alive enough. They should write it on every schoolroom blackboard: "Life is a playground. Or nothing."

*
*
*
*

276 - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Adult Nemo is in a hospital room. He is finishing his meal. On the corner of his tray is a fortune cookie. He bites off a corner and takes out the little slip of paper is something indecipherable. Nemo studies it carefully. He gets up and goes to the window. He holds the paper up to the windowpane. The inscription is written from right to left. In the reflection we can read: NEMO. LEAVE. He looks out the window.

276A - On the other side of the street, a man is posting a sign - in reverse time - that reads: NOW. The reflection of his fortune cookie paper is superimposed, forming a full sentence: NEMO, LEAVE NOW. Nemo gets dressed.

277 - EXT. HOSPITAL EXIT AND STREET - DAY

Nemo leaves the hospital. He walks down the almost deserted street. All of the cars are red. The clouds look like they are hand-painted.

277A - On top of a building an electric sign with running text: READ THE NEWPORT NEWS. Then the SWEN TROPWEN EHT DAER, OMEN (backwards lettering). Nemo reads the reflection in the window: NEMO, READ THE NEWPORT NEWS.

A man wearing a hat gets up from a bench in reverse time, leaving his newspaper: The Newport News. Nemo opens it. His eyes are drawn to an article about a car accident. We see a picture of a crane pulling a car from a river. Nemo skims the article... He stops at an ordinary sentence in the middle of the text: "NEMO, turn to page 5." He opens to page five. Written there is "turn around." He turns around.

277B - On the outskirts of town stands a cliff, overlooking the whole landscape. Enormous letters are carved: "NEMO, CALL 123-581-1321."

Nemo goes to a phone booth. He drops in a coin, dials the number. A voice answers. His own voice.

NEMO (OFF)

Hello?

NEMO

Hello? ... Who is this?

NEMO (OFF)

Hello? Who's calling?

NEMO

I was told to call this number. My name is Nemo. Nemo Nobody.

NEMO (OFF)

Is this some kind of joke?

NEMO

No, I...

The other end hangs up. Nemo remains in the booth, dumbfounded. He dials another number.

NEMO (CONT.)

Yes, please, I'd like to know the address corresponding to 123-581-1321.

OPERATOR

One moment, please... 12358 Alois Street.

278 - EXT. STREET WITH ANNA'S ABANDONED HOUSE - DAY

Nemo reaches number 12358 at a run, sweating. He looks at the house. It is Anna's house. It is abandoned. Planks are nailed over the doors and windows. It is surrounded by piles of garbage. Nemo pulls off one of the planks and goes inside.

279 - INT. ANNA'S ABANDONED HOUSE - DAY

The interior is a mess of dust and stray cats. Light filters in through the planks. Nemo comes to the living room, in which there is only one chair, a television set, and a coffee table. Nemo goes to the table. He sees the psychiatrist's futuristic video recording equipment. He blows off the dust and presses a button. An image appears.

279A - It is old Nemo, against a neutral background, sitting at a table, a sheet of paper in front of him. He is looking at the camera. Next to the TV set, a small camera begins recording. For a moment, the image runs backwards, then stops, and starts again on forward.

OLD NEMO
(on the screen)
Hello, Nemo. I'm glad you found me. *

Adult Nemo can't believe his eyes. He sits down in the chair, flabbergasted, and watches the screen.

OLD NEMO (CONT.)
All of this must seem very complicated to you. But it's simpler than you think.
(he looks at his notes)
Be careful, the chair is damaged.

The old chair breaks under Nemo, who falls to the ground.

OLD NEMO (CONT.)
Are you all right?

NEMO
(to himself)
Fine. *

OLD NEMO
I should have warned you earlier.
But I couldn't, because of the transcript. *

Old Nemo points to the typewritten pages spread out in front of him.

NEMO
(to himself)
The transcript? *

OLD NEMO
The text of our conversation.

Nemo's amazement. He looks at the screen, moves closer, looks all around.

OLD NEMO (CONT.)

Go ahead, say it. You're dying to ask me. *

NEMO

You... you can hear me?

Old Nemo looks at the papers in front of him, then answers:

OLD NEMO

Of course I hear you.

NEMO

You... It's a...recording...

OLD NEMO

What you are living now is the past, at least for me. I am you, seventy years older. Everything you say, I said myself when I was young. I went into that house, I saw what you see. I only had to transcribe our conversation. It's all written right here, you see. Each word you think you are inventing is here on this paper. *

He holds up the sheets of paper. The dialogue is written on them. The small camera films the scene.

NEMO

I can't...

OLD NEMO

(reading)
"believe it." I can't communicate with you any differently. For me, time is inverted. I start from the end of the story and I go toward the beginning. *

NEMO

I don't understand anything.

OLD NEMO

You're wondering what life you're in. In this life here, you were never born. I don't know why. Only the architect knows.

NEMO

The architect?

OLD NEMO

The child. The one running after
the train. Maybe your parents never
met.

279B - Flash: The father walking down the sidewalk, the mother
coming toward him. A gust of wind blows his umbrella up the wrong
way. They pass without noticing each other.

OLD NEMO (CONT.)

Maybe your father died aged five in
a sledding accident. *

279C - Flash: Snow. A child in the 1930s racing toward a tree on a
sled, who then remains inanimate.

OLD NEMO (CONT.)

Maybe you are one of the vast
majority of those whose genetic
code did not reach their
destination... *

279D - Flash: We see a sperm stop moving and die slowly among
thousands of others.

280 - EXT. PREHISTORY - DAY

A pregnant prehistoric woman trembling with fever, lying in the
snow. Her belly protrudes; she is six-months pregnant. Slowly, the
snow covers her.

281 - INT. ANNA'S ABANDONED HOUSE - DAY

Nemo is watching the screen. Old Nemo is talking to him.

OLD NEMO

Maybe when she died, a prehistoric
woman killed off the line of humans
to which you belong. So for this
world, you don't exist. *

Nemo steps back, dumbfounded.

OLD NEMO (CONT.)

If Anna's calculations are correct,
and you want to find her, you must
stay alive until 2092, February 12,
at 05:50. *

The image on the television screen goes fuzzy. Nemo knocks over
everything around him. He runs away.

282 - EXT. STREET OF ANNA'S ABANDONED HOUSE - DAY

Nemo emerges from the house. He looks at it. He sees himself, standing behind the window, waving good-bye. A shadow appears above him, enormous.

282A - Nemo sees a gigantic foot descend from the sky and crush the house, which shatters. It is only a model. Nemo runs toward the hills.

283 - EXT. HILLSIDE - EVENING

Nemo is climbing the hill, out of breath. The city is behind him, in the low-angled light of the setting sun. He goes past the giant letters spelling out: "NEMO, CALL 123-581-1321." When he reaches the summit, Nemo sees the sun.

283A - It is hanging from enormous cables connected to a gigantic winch that hundreds of stagehands are turning to produce the sunset. Two nurses in smocks catch up to Nemo and grab him.

284 - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM (2092) - NIGHT

The journalist is looking at old Nemo in silence. He is stunned. Nemo has finished. We hear a repeating sound: the tape reached the end of the reel a while back, but it is still turning, flapping. The journalist finally notices.

JOURNALIST

I'm sorry, I don't know how long we haven't been recording. I... I have to submit my story tomorrow morning. Everything you say is contradictory. You can't have been in one place and another at the same time. You can't have had children and not have had them.

*

OLD NEMO

You mean to say we have to make choices? That we can't simultaneously be a train conductor in the Andes cordillera, a trapper in Alaska, and an astronaut?

*

*

JOURNALIST

Of all those lives, which one is the right one?

OLD NEMO

Each of those lives is the right one. Every path is the right path.
(MORE)

OLD NEMO (cont'd)
"Everything could have been
anything else and it would have
just as much meaning." Tennessee
Williams. You're too young for
that.

*

JOURNALIST
That's impossible. You can't be
dead and still be here. You can't
not exist.
(he sighs)
Or...is there life after death?

Nemo laughs.

OLD NEMO
After death? ... How can you be so
sure you're alive? You still don't
understand?

The journalist doesn't.

OLD NEMO (CONT.)
You don't exist. Neither do I.

The journalist still doesn't understand.

OLD NEMO (CONT.)
We only live in the imagination of
a nine-year-old child.

*
*

284A - FLASH: Child Nemo running after the train.

Child Nemo's voice takes the place of old Nemo's voice,
synchronized with the old man's lips.

OLD NEMO (CONT.)
(with the voice of child Nemo)
We are imagined by a nine-year-old
child faced with an impossible
choice.

*

The journalist turns around.

284B - He is at the train window and sees:

285 - EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Child Nemo is running after the train carrying his mother away. He
turns around, looks at his father, hesitates. He looks at his
mother, hesitates. He wets his pants. His eyes go wide. A series
of flashes appear to him, lots of quick scenes, each one
containing the others:

He looks toward his mother:... **A** - The three little girls... **B** - the train trip with his mother... **C** - an electric train in his mother's apartment... **D** - We leave the apartment through the window and find ourselves on the beach with teenage Anna... **E** - A picture of the beach hanging in Nemo's room as he lies sleeping with Anna... **F** - We approach Anna's face, who is no longer in the bed but in a car carrying her away... **G** - Adult Nemo meeting Anna again... **H** - The drop of rain erasing the phone number... **I** - Nemo in the studio recording the science program... **J** - Adult Anna on the phone, surrounded by children... **K** - Adult Nemo driving in a car... **L** - The accident... **M** - Nemo prisoner in his car, underwater, drowning...

On the station platform, child Nemo turns toward his father: Another series of flashes appears to him... **N** - The three little girls... **O** - Child Nemo leaving the station with his father... **P** - The paraplegic father who teenage Nemo bathes... **Q** - The meeting with teenage Elise... **R** - The motorcycle accident... **S** - Teenage Nemo in a coma in the hospital... **T** - Adult Nemo taking care of bedridden adult Elise... **U** - Elise packing her bag and leaving... **V** - Nemo living with Jean... **W** - The hand over the candle... **X** - The train racing toward Nemo... **Y** - The meeting with Clara... **Z** - Widowed Nemo, alone in his bed... **A1** - Widowed Anna... **B1** - Astronaut Nemo in the spaceship... **C1** - The exploding rocket, the bicycles in space... **D1** - Nemo in his bath, the shot... **E1** - Nemo's body thrown into the bushes...

Child Nemo, overwhelmed by these visions, stares wide-eyed.

286 - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM (2092) - DAWN

Old Nemo pushes his chess game away and gets up.

OLD NEMO
(with the child's voice)
In chess, it's called "Zugzwang"
when the only viable move is not to
move. Come see...

They move toward the window.

286A - Around the hospital, the city is being dismantled into blocks that in turn dissipate in the air.

OLD NEMO (CONT.)
(with the child's voice)
What's that called again?

The journalist and the old man look out the window. Behind the buildings, now gone, the sea stretches out before them. Helicopters are removing huge blocks of sea. They are taking the sea apart.

JOURNALIST

The sea...

OLD NEMO

(with the child's voice)

That's right, the sea... The child
is taking it apart. He doesn't need
it anymore. Before, he was unable
to make a choice because he didn't
know what would happen. And now
that he knows what will happen, he
is unable to make a choice.

*
*
*
*

Nemo gets back into bed. He looks more tired. The heartbeat monitor slows. An alarm goes off.

287 - EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Child Nemo sees the train moving away with his mother on board. He stands there, dazed. He turns back toward his father, then toward his mother, not knowing which of the two directions to choose. Then throws himself perpendicularly in a third direction: he crosses the tracks and runs through the nearby woods, far from his father and mother.

288 - EXT. WOODS - DAY

Child Nemo is running breathlessly through the trees. He stops. Rays of light penetrate the branches. Nemo picks up a dead leaf from the ground and blows on it. The leaf flies away, dancing in the air. A gust of wind blows through the trees, carrying the dead leaf toward the clouds...

289 - EXT. ATMOSPHERIC LAYERS - DAY

...The clouds change form, blown by the wind. Dense clouds are moved and stretched through the layers of the atmosphere...

290 - EXT./INT. MISC. - DAY/NIGHT

The dead leaf, lying on the road before the accident, right where teenage Nemo's motorcycle will pass, blows away, pushed by a burst of wind. The motorcycle continues its path.

290A - Teenage Nemo at the beach with teenage Anna. Nemo does what he never dared do: he kisses her on the lips.

290B - Nemo, Jean's husband, opens the door of their house, home from work. Jean and the children look at him in surprise. He holds out his fishing rod and takes off his coat.

290C - A drop of rain forms in the clouds and falls to the ground. Adult Anna writes her number on a scrap of paper and gives it to Nemo. The drop lands on Nemo's shoe.

290D - Adult Nemo is waiting for Anna. He looks at the chalk circle on the ground. Anna is arriving in the distance. They walk toward each other, then run until they meet in the chalk circle. They embrace. They cry for joy. We circle around them.

NEMO
THANK YOU! THANK YOU WIND! THANK
YOU RAIN! THANK YOU CARS, THANK YOU
PASSERSBY, THANK YOU CHILDREN,
THANK YOU DOGS, THANK YOU!

291 - INT. HOSPITAL (2092) - DAY

The heart monitor slows. Old Nemo is lying on his bed. The city around the hospital has disappeared. Nemo is dying. Nurses bustle around him. He looks at the digital calendar that reads "February 12, 2092. 05:16." He smiles. Miniature cameras hover on the other side of the window. *

291A - His image is retransmitted on a giant TV screen above the hospital. In SUPERIMPOSTION: "LAST WORDS." A microphone is placed at his lips. He murmurs.

OLD NEMO
This is... the most beautiful
day... of my life.

Nemo stiffens, his breathing weakening. His heartbeat slows even more.

OLD NEMO (CONT.)
Anna... Anna...

Nemo stiffens. The heart monitor shows only a flat line.

The clock turns to 5:17. The second slow, then stop... The clock freezes...

292 - EXT. SPACE

The planets slow their progress around the sun. They freeze... The "universe" ceases to expand. The universe freezes.

293 - EXT. STREET - DAY

On Earth, in the streets, everything has stopped moving: a dog frozen in mid leap, passersby immobilize, feet in the air, water in a fountain...

294 - EXT. SPACE

Then, slowly, the universe reverses its movement. It folds back in on itself. The planets start moving again, in the opposite direction. The Big Crunch.

295 - INT./EXT. MISC. - DAY

On the hospital clock, the seconds start moving in the opposite direction.

A - In the street, people walk backwards down the sidewalks. **B** - Dead leaves go back up into the trees and reattach themselves. **C** - Rain goes back up into the sky. **D** - The broken vase on the floor becomes whole again and returns to the hands of Nemo's father. **E** - Smoke from a cigarette goes back into the cigarette. **F** - The swirls of a drop of ink diluted in a glass of water come back together. **G** - The mashed potatoes and gravy separate in baby Nemo's plate. **H** - In the cookie factory, the piece of egg shell reattaches to the shell, now whole. **I** - A typewriter erases the letters from a page, leaving only a white sheet of paper. **J** - In a maternity ward, a baby goes back into its mother's belly.

296 - INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Old Nemo's heart begins beating again. He opens his eyes, surprised. The nurses, stunned, walk backwards out of the room. Nemo laughs. He gets up and leaves the room, backwards.

297 - EXT. STREET - DAY

Nemo is walking backwards down the street, smiling.

297A - He has grown young again.

298 - EXT. STREET - DAY

Adult Nemo looking at Anna's phone number, which is no longer visible. The rain pulls itself from puddles on the ground in order to go back up into the sky. A drop of water leaves the scrap of paper and the ink reforms the digits of the telephone number. Nemo sees Anna arriving, walking backwards. They embrace and leave together, backwards.

299 - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM (1988) - DAY

Nemo is motionless, in a coma. Suddenly, a finger moves, then two...

300 - EXT. UNDER WATER - DAY

A bubble of water descends through the water and slips between Nemo's lips as he is motionless in his car. Nemo begins breathing again.

301 - EXT. CITY - DAY

Adult Nemo, in reverse, hangs the "NOW" poster across from the hospital.

302 - EXT. NEMO AND ELISE'S STREET - DAY

Adult Nemo, dressed as a mail carrier, in reverse, slips the envelope containing the picture of Nemo and Jean under the door of Nemo and Elise's house.

303 - INT. MOTHER'S APARTMENT - DAY

Teenage Nemo is at the foot of Anna's bed. Nemo's body is lifted from the floor and slips back into Anna's bed, into her arms. They roll together, embracing.

304 - EXT. YARD OF THE FATHER'S HOUSE - DAY

Nemo's father is painting the clouds. The colors come off the canvas and go back onto the brush. The father finishes. He admires the blank canvas.

305 - EXT. BESIDE A LAKE - DAY

Child Anna is sitting beside a lake, on a dock. Stones emerge from the water to land in her hand. Suddenly, a stone emerges from the water right next to her. She turns around, smiling. Child Nemo comes toward her. They play together by the water, laughing.

THE END

*