

"THE DOORS OF PERCEPTION"

by

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2000

EXT. AMAZONIA - SUNSET

Subtitle: Amazonia 1960.

A Ceremonial House in the upper reaches of the Amazon basin, "ceremonial house" being a euphemism for a raised platform covered by a thatched roof. In the distance, the sun slants low over an unending expanse of verdant jungle.

A half dozen HIPPIE EXPATS sit around a low rough-hewn table. Atop the table of Heaven an earthen bowl, decorated with multi-colored scenes and fantastic creatures, is circled by drinking cups.

ETHAN RANKIN, 20, and VINCE GARWOOD, 19, the two American expats, wear jeans, sandals, T-shirts and long hair. Their skin has a dull bluish color, the result of residue of a purification bath. Trance music, constant, evolving, ripples below the surface.

The expats look one to the other as the SHAMAN, an elderly mestizo, ladles a brownish brew from the bowl into the individual cups. His assistant, DON MACITA, 36, helps him.

Ethan and Vince's expressions fluctuate from nervous to expectant.

Each cradles his cup in his hands as the Shaman, dispensing the "tea," starts to sing an ancient icaros, a ritual chant, the melody which will accompany them on their journey.

On a pre-arranged signal, each of the ceremonialists drinks the brew in one sustained swallow.

TIMECUT. NIGHT: the hippie expats are scattered to the far reaches of the Ceremonial House, each barfing and shitting (off camera, hopefully) their insides out.

Vince, wobbly, crawls to where Ethan lies:

VINCE

Ethan...

(no answer)

Rankin?

ETHAN
Vince?

VINCE
How are you?

ETHAN
You?

VINCE
Weak, spacey.

Ethan's countenance changes: his face becomes placid, his eyes widen.

VINCE
Ethan?

ETHAN
Oh, Jesus, oh my God...

INSIDE ETHAN'S MIND'S EYE: he shoots at sling-shot speed across the jungle canopy, trailing stars and clouds to his right and left; then, rapidly approaching from the horizon, a giant iridescent speckled SERPENT zooms into view, its jaws open.

Inside we fly, whirling through the serpent like passengers on an animistic roller coaster, until, twisting and turning, the light grows bright and bursts into a kaleidoscope of color--

Subtitle: Mexico City, 2001.

CUT TO:

CREDITS

INT. RAVE CLUB - NIGHT

The rainbow of colored light comes from dozens of flashing bulbs reflecting off a disco ball. Trance music cross-dissolves into techno with a Latin beat.

Below, a throbbing mass of kids gyrate and thrash.

Amid the mass of sweating ecstatic Mexicanos, RUSSELL RANKIN,

26, hops from one partner to the next. Russ' unkempt hair and club clothes can't disguise what he is: American, intellectual, middle class--a student on permanent foreign leave.

The music grows discordant, off. Russell looks around: something seems wrong.

He stops dancing, stares, anxious.

Definitely wrong.

He's growing paranoid. Is it the drugs? No, is it the music, an earthquake? No.

He pushes his way toward the "Salida." A FRIEND, noticing the expression of Russ' face, calls to him:

FRIEND

Russ, where you going?

RUSSELL

I've got to go! Something's wrong!

FRIEND

Where?

RUSSELL

I don't know.

FRIEND

Chill, come on, we'll go someplace.

RUSSELL

No, I've got to go home.

FRIEND

Home?

Russ elbows his way outside.

CUT TO:

INT. MEXICO CITY - NIGHT

Russ, in a panic, throws clothes into a duffel bag in his hostel like residence.

The walls are decorated with third world agit-prop, psychedelic posters and Pre-Raphaelite prints.

CUT TO:

INT. MEXICO CITY AIRPORT - NIGHT

Just a few stranded travelers; otherwise, empty rows of geometric chairs. Russ leans over the counter of the only airline still open:

RUSSELL

I need to get to Portland, Oregon,
US, on the next flight possible, the
next connection.

CLERK

There wouldn't be anything until
morning. Six o'clock.

RUSSELL

Put me on it. I have cash.

Russell pulls all the money he has out of his pocket.

CLERK

(suspicious)

Do you have a passport?

RUSSELL

(pulls it out)

Right here.

(explaining)

Family emergency.

END CREDITS

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Subtitle: Portland.

An institutionally plain classroom. HUME (HUGH) RANKIN, 30, stands before a mixed audience: male, female, older, younger, mostly white.

Rankin, angular, clean cut, wears a white shirt with a silk

tie. If he and his brother Russell could be put in boxes, he would be "straight," and Russ would be "hip," although, in fact, neither can be so simply defined.

In the back sits Vince Garwood, now 60, wearing professorial jacket and tie.

It's not a class per se, as indicated by the fact that some listeners drink coffee, some are dressed in soiled work clothes, others business outfits. Hume speaks:

HUME

...I've been through this with each of you individually, but now, collectively, we have the joint opportunity to air any concerns or anxieties. This DMT-- dimethyltryptamine--trial is the first such study to be approved by the FDA, so forgive us if we err on the side of caution. We have chosen DMT as the pioneer psychotropic compound for several reasons: it naturally occurs in the body, evident in such states as schizophrenia and manic depression. To the extent that we can understand why Serotonin is affected by DMT, we might unlock some of the mysteries for such disabling disorders. Second, it is an intense drug. The visions will be strong. Third, it's short acting. It's in and out fast. Should anyone have an unpleasant experience, at least it will be over quickly. All of you have previous experiences with psychedelic drugs, some extensive experience. This will be a much more controlled environment. 1.0 mg/kg of dimethyltryptamine will be injected intramuscularly, not smoked as is the usual practice. This retards the speed at which the drug becomes effective, but it's the only way to be sure everyone receives the same dosage. You've all signed the informed

(MORE)

HUME (CONT'D)

consent forms, but I wanted to take this opportunity to invite your friends and relatives to an open forum. If anyone has any questions, please ask. If anyone has second thoughts about being a trial subject, you may withdraw your consent at any time. Questions?

An awkward seat-shifting. No one wants to appear unhip. The GIRLFRIEND of one of the trial participants half-raises her hand.

HUME (CONT'D)

Yes?

GIRLFRIEND

Dr. Rankin...

HUME

Hugh.

GIRLFRIEND

Have you taken
dimetheltrimethitripo...
(awkward communal
laugh)
...DMT?

HUME

Since 1970 dimethyltryptamine, along with virtually every other hallucinogen, has been a Schedule I drug, meaning that any unauthorized use is a crime. I do not break the law. But yes, I have taken DMT, inhaled and intramuscular, outside the country and in legally approved situations. Is it dangerous? Only if you fear death by astonishment.

(scattered laughter)

Because you will be astonished. I have zero qualms about administering or using this substance.

An OLDER MAN raises his hand:

OLDER MAN

There are those, and I'm not one of them, who say this program is just an excuse for recreational drug use.

Nervous laughter. The audience is predominantly and unabashedly pro-drug.

HUME

I don't like the word "recreational." It implies something trivial. Vision-inducing plants are functional, and have been for hundreds, maybe thousands of years. They teach us about ourselves. A DMT voyage, like any trip, is instructional. You will return knowing more about the world around you and the world inside you.

(beat)

The purpose of the trial is not recreational, it is scientific.

CUT TO:

INT. CORRIDOR/OFFICE - DAY

Hume and Vince Garwood walk along the hallway leading from the classroom. Participants small talk in the background.

HUME

What do you think?

VINCE

You mean were there any "spies," members of Fifth Estate? No, it was cool. You did good.

HUME

Thanks, Vince.

VINCE

It's such a delicate balance. You want to be open and candid--we have nothing to hide; on the other hand, we all know the devastating

(MORE)

VINCE (CONT'D)
effects too much publicity have had
on this type of research.
(beat)
I particularly liked the line about
not breaking the law.

Hume chuckles as Garwood stops at his office, opens the door.
Inside it's a rat's nest of books, papers and ethnographic
souvenirs. Framed pictures of Emmanuel Swedenborg, William
Blake and Aldous Huxley hang between the windows.

VINCE (CONT'D)
When do you start?

HUME
Monday. You going to be there for
the first trials?

VINCE
What time?

HUME
Ten a.m. At the clinic.

VINCE
Okay. Again, good work.

They nod goodbye as Garwood closes the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. HUME HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Hume drives his green Camry through the leafy South Park
streets surrounding the university.

He slows, turns into the driveway of his 20's "California
cottage" house. Portland, the Martha Stewart of American
cities, enforces zoning regulations to preserve the quaint
nature of its older neighborhoods.

On the front steps sits Russell Rankin, unshaven, duffel bag
at his side.

It takes Hume, getting out of the car, a moment to recognize
his brother:

HUME

Russ, is that you? Russell?

Russ gets up, sheepishly slouches over to his brother who embraces him.

HUME (CONT'D)

Jeez, six months without a boo or a bah, now--it's great to see you. What's going on?

RUSSELL

I just felt... I wanted to come home.

HUME

Well, come in. Meet Allison...

(looks around)

I guess she's not home yet. Come on in. You want a beer or a soda or anything?

Hugh pulls out his house keys as they walk up the steps.

RUSSELL

Water. I'm thirsty from the plane.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Russ looks around the room: sofa, mismatched chairs, dining table stacked high with books--furnishings familiar to anyone who has spent an extended period in grad school. A Haitian painting depicting a voodoo ceremony hangs in the dining room.

One corner of the room has been sectioned off. A wooden Buddha in the Padmasana position sits on a covered pedestal, before it, a meditation mat and between the mat and Buddha, incense censers and joss sticks.

Hume returns from the kitchen bearing a glass of water. Russ gulps the water, sighs. There's something on his mind.

HUME

Okay, brother, come on, out with it.
What happened?

RUSSELL

It's hard to explain.

HUME

Are you in trouble?

RUSSELL

No. I was in a club the other night,
well, last night, in Mexico City,
that's where I've been living, getting
into Indian culture and all that and
I got this feeling, this very strong
feeling, that something was wrong.
That someone was in danger--

HUME

You had a panic attack.

RUSSELL

I had a premonition.

(beat)

Is Mom all right?

HUME

You should have called.

RUSSELL

I wanted to see her. Is she all right?

HUME

You all right?

Russ nods. Hugh sighs, confirms his brother's fears:

HUME (CONT'D)

There may be a reoccurrence of the
cancer. In her lungs.

Russell emits a noise; he knew it:

RUSSELL

Let's go see her.

HUME

I'll call. We'll drop by tomorrow.

RUSSELL

We could go now.

HUME

(firm)

Tomorrow afternoon. I've got to have some time to prepare her. You two didn't exactly leave on the best of terms.

(beat)

You need some rest. And a shave.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Freshly cut flowers in a vase; the boys' gift to their mother.

EVANGELINE RANKIN, 59, Russell and Hume's mother, cradles a cup of coffee. The decor is middle-brow, but not cheesy (tansu chest, prints by local artists, etc.).

Evangeline, a bit gaunt, exhibits the healthy glow associated with the Northwest's outdoor culture. She wears a shiny gold cross.

Hume and Russell, also holding cups of coffee, sit on the edges of their matching upholstered chairs. The mood is more formal than one would expect of a family "reunion."

EVANGELINE

More coffee?

HUME

No, Mom, I'm fine.

RUSSELL

Me too.

EVANGELINE

It's from Kona.

(off their reactions)

The coffee.

RUSSELL

Delicious.

HUME

Were you out this morning, power-walking?

EVANGELINE

Yes, with Judy, but these days it's more walk than power. In fact, we turned back after fifteen minutes.

Awkward beat: no one wants to bring up her failing medical condition.

EVANGELINE

(to Russell)

Are you planning to stay long?

RUSSELL

A couple of days at least. We'll see what happens. It's good to see you.

Hume sets his coffee down, gets up:

HUME

I gotta go see a man about a dog.

He heads for the bathroom. Evangeline and Russ smile; this is an old family expression.

EVANGELINE

(to Russ)

You were in Mexico City?

(he nods)

The American University?

RUSSELL

Well, it isn't a school in the formal sense. It's a group of young scholars with sympathetic interests--

EVANGELINE

Like a commune?

RUSSELL

We wouldn't use that term.

EVANGELINE

And these sympathetic interests,
what are they?

RUSSELL

Indigenous American cultures. Pre-
Columbian societies. Tribal
organizations, tribal rites--

EVANGELINE

You mean peyote. You're talking about
peyote, right?

(no reply)

Oh my God.

RUSSELL

It's nothing to be ashamed of. What
do you think Hume does at the
University, at the clinic?

Her reply is sharp, censorious--and full of denial:

EVANGELINE

He's a bio-chemist.

RUSSELL

He does drug research.

EVANGELINE

He has a Ph.D.

Russ rolls his eyes. Her tone turns angry:

EVANGELINE (CONT'D)

Everything that has gone wrong with
this family can be traced directly
back to drugs.

RUSSELL

Mom, stop. Just stop.

EVANGELINE

Drugs have been the death of this
family.

Russ, already on tender hooks, reaches the end of his proper

behavior:

RUSSELL

No wonder Dad left you. Jesus Christ.
Tell me, has he ever been in touch
with you in, what, twenty years?

She starts to cry. Hume, returning, overhearing Russ'
conversation, groans: he should have never left them alone.
Evangeline turns to Hume:

EVANGELINE

He hasn't changed. He's always looking
for trouble, he goes to jail--

HUME

Mom, it was petty larceny--

EVANGELINE

And drugs.

HUME

He was never in jail. He was on
probation.

EVANGELINE

Every time I see him I see his father.

Russ, fed up, stands up:

RUSSELL

That's it.
(to mother)
I don't blame him.

Hume grabs his brother by the arm and, shooting his mother a
hard look, escorts Russ to the front door.

RUSSELL

(to Hume)

She lives in worst case scenario-
land.

HUME

(looking back)

Mom, I'll call you.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY

They emerge from the proper middle-class home. Hume, keeping Russell moving, heads toward the Camry.

RUSSELL

I don't know why I came back. What was I thinking? It was a bad idea.

HUME

(reproachful)

Russ.

BAM! They run smack into a thirtiesh GARDENER:

RUSSELL

Asshole! Why don't you look were the fuck you're going?

Hume throws an apologetic look at the Gardener ("It's nothing"), continues toward the car.

CUT TO:

INT. HUME DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Hume, Russ, and ALLISON sit around the empty dinner plates, sip tea, wine. Allison, 25, is the model of intelligent hipness: attractive, long-hair tied in a ponytail, wearing a loose plaid shirt.

ALLISON

...I was trying to teach my students about life. I said to them, "The only way you can be sure you are loved for yourself and not for money or sex, is if you are unattractive and poor." But then I explained it's very hard to be loved if you are like that.

RUSSELL

That makes love practically impossible.

ALLISON

They need to know what they're up
against.

They laugh. Allison turns to Russ:

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Hume's talked about you a lot, and I
have to say, I haven't been
disappointed.

RUSSELL

(chuckles)

Yeah, I really fucked up today.

ALLISON

You should go back, not tomorrow,
but soon, and apologize.

RUSSELL

(hard, edgy)

That's one point of view.

ALLISON

Yes. Mine.

Allison shakes a cigarette from a pack, lights up. Russ looks
to Hume; she explains:

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Hume doesn't approve of artificially
enhanced nicotine.

HUME

One makes certain concessions for
love.

ALLISON

(to Russ)

You want one?

RUSSELL

Nah. But you know, of course,
marijuana is also carcinogenic.

HUME

Well...

Allison starts to stack the plates.

HUME (CONT'D)
Here, let us help you.

Russ reaches over to assist his brother.

CUT TO:

EXT. HUME FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Hume and Russell sit on the front steps sipping Chardonnay. Night crickets are interrupted by the sound of the occasional passing car.

RUSSELL
To be honest, I'd sort of come to
the end of my interest in mescaline.
Mostly just getting stoned.

HUME
That's what you were doing in that
club? When you had the panic attack?

RUSSELL
(sheepish)
Not really.

HUME
MDMA.

RUSSELL
Yep.

HUME
It's an interesting drug. There's
important work being done on Ecstasy
at John Hopkins, in Barcelona:
neuroendocrine effects, vasopressin
secretion...

RUSSELL
What are you into?

HUME
We're starting a trial on DMT.

RUSSELL

The harmalines? Hoo boy. The heavy stuff. How you get away with that?

HUME

Cause I'm a good boy.

RUSSELL

How can you put up with it? All the shit you have to deal with in this country?

HUME

Somebody's got to stay and fight the good fight. The best labs are here, the best scientists are here--you do work in this country and the scientific community has to take it seriously. Besides, with the internet, everybody is connected now. You know the organization MAPS?

(Russ nods)

Through MAPS now we're in constant contact with research all around the world: Spain, Finland, Brazil. It's not like it used to be.

RUSSELL

Good old Hume Rankin.

HUME

Don't mock me bro.

RUSSELL

(lifts glass)

Excuse-moi.

HUME

(click glasses)

Things are going to change. It's too important not to change.

RUSSELL

Psilocybin, that's where I realized I wanted to be, but I just wasn't...

(MORE)

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

well, I just I was scared. The big drugs, the See God drugs, that's what it's all about.

HUME

This extraordinary imagery we all have within us. These things, unworldly things, that just appear. Where do they come from? What are they trying to say?

RUSSELL

The old dilemma. You open those doors of perception, what happens? Do you see this world more clearly or do you come in contact with another world?

HUME

Does the inside come out or does the Outside come in?

RUSSELL

The Freud/Jung dilemma.

HUME

It's not politically correct, and I'll deny I've said this if you repeat it, but I believe there's a parallel world of awareness that these plants give us access to. It may be the way primitive man first became aware of the spiritual world.

RUSSELL

(joking)

"Jesus was a plant."

HUME

(responding in kind)

I deny it. I never said that.

RUSSELL

So, this DMT trial, you got everyone signed up?

(MORE)

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(Hume nods)

You can't fit one more in?

HUME

Why?

RUSSELL

You got a bunch of Portland Deadheads signed up for this trial and you're going to interview them silly. Wouldn't it be better to have one subject who has studied psychotropic affect, who's personal history is intimately conjoined with your own, someone with whom you can truly discuss the results of the trip?

HUME

You want in?

RUSSELL

Can you swing it?

HUME

(thinks)

Yeah. If you don't advertise.

RUSSELL

Yes sir.

(beat)

Tell me one thing, Professor Rankin.

HUME

What?

RUSSELL

Do you, ah, offer Mileage Plus?

CUT TO:

INT. HAMBURGER KING - DAY

Russell fills out a form under the MANAGER'S watchful eye. The Manager can't help but notice Russ' over-qualifications.

MANAGER

We have an Advancement Program.

RUSSELL

Not really, I'm between situations.
I need short term employment. I don't
want to be a burden on my friends.

MANAGER

We have an investment in training
you.

RUSSELL

(quizzical look)
It's a counter position.

MANAGER

This is a service-intensive
occupation.

RUSSELL

Mr. Banks, I've worked in the fast
food business. I seek only to be a
diligent employee. I understand
customers.

CUT TO:

EXT. HEAD SHOP - DAY

The local drug paraphernalia, radical press, vinyl oldies,
Heavy Metal store.

CUT TO:

INT. HEAD SHOP - DAY

Russ steps over to the counter, approaches an eighteen year-
old head in a KORN T-SHIRT.

RUSSELL

Chuck around?

KORN SHIRT

Chuck who?

RUSSELL

Wistelm. "Chuckie Wisdom."

KORN SHIRT

Oh yeah, Chuckie. No, nah, I don't know.

RUSSELL

I used to hang here.

KORN SHIRT

He got busted--or maybe not, I'm not sure. That was before my time.

RUSSELL

How long you been here?

KORN SHIRT

Six weeks.

(recognizing him)

You're Russ Rankin, right?

(Russ shrugs)

I'm Joe. I came here, like before I had this, like job--you're heavy, you were like a major dope dude huh?

(calls to unseen

employee)

Hey, this is Russ Rankin.

Russ changes his mind about coming here:

RUSSELL

My name's Bob.

A TEENAGE FEMALE EMPLOYEE, tattooed, huge breasted under a Marley shirt, walks over.

FEMALE EMPLOYEE

Yeah?

RUSSELL

I was just looking for Chuckie Wisdom.

FEMALE EMPLOYEE

Chuckie who?

RUSSELL

Hey, it's nothing. Groove on.

He walks off.

FEMALE EMPLOYEE

You find him, tell him I got some crabs of his.

CUT TO:

INT. CLINIC - DAY

Russell, with three other trial participants, walks down a severe hospital corridor with Hume and two ASSISTANTS.

Russ, looking at the patient rooms, the white walls, the brutal machinery of modern medicine, turns to Hume:

RUSSELL

And they wonder why people have bad trips?

HUME

The setting isn't what it should be, but it's important to operate in a clinical environment. Anyway, the "set," the mind-set, is more important than the physical setting.

RUSSELL

No problem.

CUT TO:

INT. TRIAL CLINICAL LAB - DAY

Russ and the other volunteers sit in leisure chairs in a white-walled room. Each, sleeves rolled up, has a blood pressure cuff and IV attached to one arm, a double-valve blood needle to the other. EKG wires extend from under their smocks.

The Assistant draws blood from each of the participants as Hume, wearing a blue button down collar shirt with a dark tie, lowers the lights on a rheostat.

HUME

We will, during the duration of the trial, approximately twenty minutes, draw blood at regular intervals as well as check pupil diameters--none of which will affect your experience. If anything, it will provide a comforting connection to the real world of the clinic. Are there any questions?

No questions. The volunteers are prepared, even eager. Hume steps back to five video cameras, one trained on each of the participants, checks if they are running: all red lights glow.

Hume steps away, looks as the door opens: Garwood enters the darkened room.

HUME (CONT'D)

Relax your muscles, let the tension flow from your bodies and: pay attention.

Hume gives the signal: the Assistants move from one participant to the next, opening the IV valves, letting the saline/DMT mix flow into the tubes. The Assistants withdraw, pick up their clipboards, sit on folding chairs, one against each wall.

EKG machines: heart rates slow.

Trance music, first a faint echo, grows louder; the drug starts to take effect: Russell's eyes slowly close as the camera goes through the eyelid, into his mydriatic (dilated) eyeball.

Author's Note: There are several extended trip sequences in the script. Although I will sketch the rudimentary stages of each trip, words are inadequate to describe a multi-layered constantly morphing hallucinogenic experience. Although the trip descriptions necessarily fall into linear, logical patterns, the final screen images should be much more free-flowing and imagistic. A better reference would be by the computer graphic "trip" videos put out by Sony Music Video (with titles like "Odyssey Into the Mind's Eye," "Luminous Visions" and "Ancient Alien"). The effects that can be created

by cutting edge computer graphics are, as the saying goes, "mind blowing."

IN RUSS' MIND'S EYE: the geometric lines of the room collide, fall away as we tumble, into the vortex, through the twisting tube to the other side.

RUSSELL'S VOICE

It's falling away...

The sound of crinkling cellphone, a rising tone, then, suddenly, out of the tunnel the world explodes in splintering mandalas of pink, red, and orange. It is as Mircea Eliade wrote about the religious experience, "a complete rupture of the mundane plain."

The kaleidoscope of splintered colors trails like a fleeting firebird giving way to an undulating SEA OF SERENITY.

Off to the left, in the distance, lies the Ice Country, but we're not going there. A flock of strangely colored birds glide below, their trills merging with the music like a choir.

We pass the waterfall where dead souls bathe.

The effect is not unlike that of a child observing a three-ring circus: so much is happening, so much that we've never seen before, all of it simultaneous--and all of it so astonishing. There's no way to absorb it all. One only watches with slack-jawed wonder.

IN THE CLINIC: Hume watches as an Assistant takes Russ' blood pressure. Russell sits unmoving, lost in time and space.

IN HIS MIND'S EYE: a HIGH PLAIN appears in the distance; approaching, it's green and welcoming. On the horizon, an eerie light glows.

Small creatures scramble across the plain as we land. As they approach we realize these are the ELVES, miniature mutating folk radiating joy and playfulness. They're all smiling.

The grass grows tall, soon we're in an ancient overgrown FORREST. The elves lead us through the darkening wood.

A panther watches from a tree limb, his eyes piercing trees.

The music darkens, an ominous mood wells from the Earth's core.

But the elves still seem happy and we follow, moving quicker now.

Out of the forest, on the valley floor, sits the SAUCER, the source of the eerie glow. The silver skin pulsates like a living being. This is where the elves have been leading us-- but now, suddenly they're gone.

The door to the saucer opens; a blue warmth radiates from within. A human silhouette appears in the doorway. We draw nearer.

The silhouette is Evangeline, her arms across her stomach. She pulls back her hands, revealing an open wound. Her hands are red with blood.

IN THE CLINIC: Russ shifts in his chair anxiously. It's as if he's trying to get out of his body without standing up.

Hume checks the EKG monitor; Russ' heart rate increases.

RUSSELL

Mom.

IN HIS MIND'S EYE: Evangeline extends her hand, leads us inside. The music, still hypnotic, has taken on a frightening Nine Inch Nails quality.

Inside the saucer we're led from room to room. Shifting planes of shades of blue surround us. The floors seem liquid at our feet. He hears a TV show, "Jeopardy." Alex Trebek says "The Taj Mahal, Solomon's Palace and Billy Joel's beach house all have this in common."

Evangeline takes us to where a thirty year-old man stands wearing dark old jeans and a T-shirt. Hanging from one hand is a blood dripping butcher knife. This is the MURDERER.

IN THE CLINIC: Russ squirms. Hume checks his watch; it's been eighteen minutes. One of the other participants opens his eyes, says something to one of the Assistants.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

Stop, stop.

IN RUSS' MIND'S EYE: The murderer lifts his other hand. From his fingers tangles Evangeline's gold cross. He presses the cross into our palm.

We fall into the WHIRLPOOL.

IN THE CLINIC: Russell awakens, frightened, trembling, his face beaded with sweat. Hume kneels beside him. Russ attempts to speak, but cannot.

HUME

Russ?

He looks at the EKG monitor, double-checks with the Assistant who is taking Russ' pulse, checking his pupil dilation. She indicates Russ is fine.

RUSSELL

(groggy)

We have to go to mother's house.

HUME

We can't do that. You're not fully down yet. We'll go in a while.

RUSSELL

(soft, urgent)

No, we've got to go now.

Hume attempts to calm him, but now Russ is on his feet, pulling the EKG sensors from his chest, blood pressure cuff from his arm. He starts for the exit.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

I'll go on my own.

Russ breaks free from the Assistant's attempt to restrain him, heads for the exit. Hume calls after:

HUME

No, no, I'll take you. Let's get your shirt.

Hume throws a perplexed backward glance to Garwood as he follows.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. HUME'S CAR - DAY

Russ, wearing his street shirt, rides shotgun as Hume negotiates the Camry through a Portland suburban subdivision. Russ' eyes are focused on the road ahead. Classic rock plays on the FM.

RUSSELL

Turn it off.

It takes Hume a moment to understand what his brother means. He clicks off the stereo.

HUME

What happened? What's this all about?

(no reply)

You're just going to sit there? I mean, what can be so bad? You're not going to create a scene are you?

They turn a corner: the house appears. Russ tenses.

Hume pulls into the drive, parks behind their mother's van. They get out, walk to the front door.

At the door: Hume rings the chimes. No answer. Rings again. The brothers look to each other. Hume turns the knob: it's unlocked.

The door swings open. They step inside--

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY

Everything appears normal, everything as it was the day before. Russ and Hume walk into the living room.

Day old cut flowers in their vase.

Russell relaxes. Maybe it's nothing after all. Then, from the TV room, he HEARS A SOUND which sends a chill up his spine: "Jeopardy."

Alex Trebek's voice echoes from the den: "The Taj Mahal,

Solomon's Palace and Billy Joel's beach house have this in common." Buzzer sound. "Yes, Mike." Russ turns his head, catching TV Mike as he replies: "They were all built for love."

Russ, now fearful, notices red stains on the carpet as they proceed. The bedroom door is ajar. It hits Hume: something is very wrong:

HUME

Mom?

Russell pushes the bedroom door open, revealing a horrific tableau.

Evangeline, her stomach sliced open, her hands cut with defensive wounds, her breast repeatedly punctured, lies beside the bed. Everywhere, the room shows signs of a struggle: a lamp knocked over, chair askew, coverlet half off the mattress.

Hume resists the impulse to rush to his mother's side. Russ, his head in his hands, sobs.

HUME (CONT'D)

(quiet)

Don't touch anything. It's a crime scene. Mother, Mom, Mom...

Hume steps closer.

RUSSELL

She's dead.

HUME

(voice cracks)

Yes.

(beat)

I'm going to another room, call 911. Are you all right? I mean, to deal with the police and whatever. I could drive you home, come back and call.

RUSSELL

No, I'm all right. I'm down. Go ahead and call.

(MORE)

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

(beat)

Hume?

HUME

Yeah?

(no reply)

Russell?

RUSSELL

I saw it.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY

Paramedics wheel the gurney carrying Evangeline's body bag to an awaiting EMS vehicle. Police cars are parked at every which angle. Crime scene tape fences off the front yard as officers hold back curious onlookers and media crew.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Hume and Russ sit on the chairs they occupied the day before. Across from them is Homicide Detective LAWRENCE, 40, a veteran of such situations.

Police and M.E. technicians go through the house with orderly precision, collecting evidence. Glancing time to time at the victim's sons, the technicians work as silently as possible.

LAWRENCE

...I'll be in touch tomorrow, Dr.
Rankin, but you touched nothing?

HUME

The front door, we walked here, here,
there--otherwise, nothing. I used
the phone in the den.

RUSSELL

We were here yesterday. That's why
we came back. We had an argument.

HUME

(explains)

We came to see Mom and, well, you know, the usual parent-child stuff. We wanted to patch it up.

LAWRENCE

That's why you were together?

HUME

Yes.

LAWRENCE

And your father?

HUME

My father and my mother broke up twenty... one years ago. She hasn't seen him since.

LAWRENCE

Where is he now?

HUME

I don't know.

LAWRENCE

Is there anything, you can think about it, was there anything unusual, anything that might give us a direction to pursue?

Hume shrugs.

RUSSELL

She was sick. She had lung cancer. She had a mastectomy, but the cancer returned.

LAWRENCE

How is this relevant?

RUSSELL

It isn't. But, I mean, what kind of person kills a dying woman?

CUT TO:

EXT. HUME'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Incense burns at the foot of the shrine. Blue TV light flickers from a TV across the room.

Hume, Russell and Allison, somber, sit watching the videotape of Russ' trip. Hume holds a stapled EKG of Russ' minute-by-minute progress.

ON SCREEN: Russell, EKG wires under his smock, IV and cuff on his arm, lies quiescent on the Clinic lounge chair.

RUSSELL

(watching the video)

The grass grew and it was like a forest, a jungle, there was a panther...

HUME

(turning pages)

Minute fourteen.

RUSSELL

...the elves lead me out of the wood...

HUME

There's a lot of literature on elves. Terry McKenna had a thing about them. Spirit escorts to the Other World.

RUSSELL

(watching himself on screen)

There, there, it's starting. I see the saucer. I see the light. Blue light. She's there.

ON SCREEN: Russ, turning his seat, says: "Mom."

RUSSELL

(back in house)

My God.

HUME

(reading)

Heart rate elevating. Blood pressure
up.

RUSSELL

She takes me to him. I can see him
clearly. I see him in every detail.

Allison reaches over, touches Russ.

ON SCREEN: Russ, squirming, saying: "Stop, stop."

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

He places her cross in my hand.

ON SCREEN: Hume kneels beside Russ. The trip is over. Russell,
sweating, opens his eyes.

HUME

Twenty-one minutes, EKG, blood
pressure returning to normal.

ON SCREEN: Hume and Russell exit frame. The screen returns
to static. Allison, using the remote, clicks off the TV.
Russ sighs deeply. Silence.

ALLISON

(quiet)

Wow.

RUSSELL

I... do you believe me?

ALLISON

Yes.

Russ turns to a reluctant Hume. He extends his right arm,
holds out his hand, which he has kept balled up, both here
and in his mother's house, opens his hand, uncurls the
fingers, reveals his palm: there, on the tender part of his
palm, is a BURN MARK of a cross, the exact size of his
mother's gold cross.

They stare without response.

Russ, wiping his wet eyes, stands:

RUSSELL
I'm going to bed.

He walks away. Allison waits until Russ' door closes.

ALLISON
Do you believe him?

HUME
(hesitant)
Yes, I do, but...

ALLISON
But what?

HUME
I don't know what it means.

CUT TO:

INT. LAWRENCE'S CUBICLE - DAY

Russell sits beside Detective Lawrence.

RUSSELL
What do you mean, no new developments?

LAWRENCE
Mr. Rankin, your mother's murder...
(checks watch)
occurred thirty-four hours ago.
Believe me, this is a high profile
crime. We are employing every resource
at our disposal-the forensic results,
a lot of it is still coming through.

RUSSELL
But the evidence, witnesses, somebody
must have seen something...

Russ' intensity can't help but pique the Detective's interest.

LAWRENCE
We've canvassed the neighborhood,
we're going back, re-interviewing--
(MORE)

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)
gone out on the news shows, I'm sure
you've seen them. When's the funeral?

RUSSELL
(corrects him)
Memorial service.
(beat)
Day after tomorrow.

LAWRENCE
I spoke with your father.

RUSSELL
Huh?

LAWRENCE
In England. That's where he lives. I
was going to have him interviewed
there, but he's decided to return
for the funeral.

Russell falls silent, not knowing what to say or feel.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)
You mean he didn't tell you?

CUT TO:

INT. GARWOOD'S OFFICE - DAY

Vince Garwood, wearing a tweed jacket and tie, turning a
small Incan god in his hands, sits at his desk across from
Hume Rankin.

The desk is stacked with research papers; the shelves lined
with books on chemistry and psychedelic experience. A chart
on one wall shows the chemical structure of various drugs:
TMA, MDMA, Mescaline, LSD, etc. A framed photo of Garwood
and Ethan Rankin as young men sits on the bookshelf.

VINCE
I've heard and read a thousand trip
stories, I've been to a hundred
conferences, but I've never heard
anything like this. Glossolalia,
(MORE)

VINCE (CONT'D)

time and space travel, hyperspace healing, eschatological hysteria, material transformation, phone calls to the dead, being devoured by giant cats--but not this. Are you going to write it up?

HUME

I haven't decided what to do. You're the first one I've told.

VINCE

How's Russ?

HUME

This whole thing has freaked him. Apart from that, he's fine. Hell, it's freaked me. It's hard to grieve properly with this other stuff hanging over our heads.

VINCE

I understand. I wish I could put it in context for you.

HUME

I know this is not something we discuss, but have you been in contact with my father?

VINCE

No, why?

HUME

The police located him. He's going to come back for the memorial service. Doesn't that strike you as odd?

VINCE

Yes.

(refers to Incan God)

These were once high-tech.

HUME

And you've never heard from him, about him?

VINCE

No, but thinking back, everything about your father was odd. There are two paradigms for work in this field. There are Huxleyites, who believe psychotropic drugs are for the prepared few. There are those like Tim Leary who are popularizers, who want everyone to turn on. I'm a Huxleyite, Ethan was a Learyist and he got terribly burned for it. Leary didn't mind when they turned him into a clown, in fact, he got off on it; but not Ethan. He couldn't stand the ridicule, the rejection, the cheapening of his ideas. He turned his back on the whole thing. I don't know what your mother told you, but I think this was underneath the problems Ethan and Evangeline were having.

CUT TO:

EXT. FT. STEVENS STATE PARK - DAY

Fort Stevens State Park, formerly a military reservation, sits on a picturesque finger of land between the Columbia River and the Pacific Ocean.

Friends and family of Evangeline Rankin stand under an open tent. Her smiling photograph rests on a stand to one side of the tent; opposite is a table for refreshments.

The conservatively dressed mourners stand in ranks as a nondenominational MINISTER releases her ashes to the wind and sea. The words "Evangeline Rankin" permeate the fog of repression.

A lone trumpeter plays "I Shall be Lifted Up."

Hume, Russ, and Allison watch beside Ethan Rankin, now 61, wearing what can best be described as "gentleman farmer" attire. Vince Garwood and his WIFE stands a row back.

Russ glances at his palm: the cross burn mark is faint, almost

gone.

TIMECUT: The bar is open. Friends and family mill about, chat quietly, sip wine, coffee and Perrier.

Ethan, avoiding Garwood, joins Hume and Russ. Allison watches as they step away from the others, view the great confluence of waters.

ETHAN

That was very moving. She was a good woman. Better than I deserved. I'm glad I came.

HUME

I'm glad you did too. Dad.

Ethan reacts with a self-deprecatory smile:

ETHAN

I can't say I've been much of a parent.

(beat)

I'm going back to Britain tonight.

This takes the boys by surprise.

RUSSELL

Can't you stay a bit longer?

ETHAN

(shakes head)

I almost came back five, six years ago, but I did some checking.

(to Hume)

You're involved in psychedelics, aren't you?

HUME

Um-hmm.

ETHAN

I went to the library, looked you up. Read some of the articles you've written. How in God's name did you end up in that field? Tell me.

HUME

(halting)

Well, I was pre-med. I wanted to be a doctor, just like you. I got interested in brain function, how neurotransmitters react, why certain alkaloids effect the brain as they do, which then of course led to psychotropic drugs which led me here. Just like you.

ETHAN

Psychedelics ruined my life and they'll ruin yours too. Ruined my reputation, ruined my marriage, ruined my self-esteem. I have a new life now and I want no contact with this one.

(hard: to Hume)

Get out, Hume. Get out before it ruins your life.

(to both: voice
cracking)

Maybe we'll meet again. We'll see.

Russ and Hume watch as their father, fighting back emotions, walks a half dozen steps away, stares out at the ocean.

Hume turns to his brother, stunned:

HUME

Wow.

RUSSELL

(lighter)

Yeah, well, what do you expect from a man who names his sons after British philosophers?

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. HUME'S CAR - DAY

Hume drives his brother and Allison back to Portland.

Russell thinking, then:

RUSSELL

I still see him. I can see him as clear as I see you.

HUME

Who?

RUSSELL

The murderer.

ALLISON

The one inside the saucer?

RUSSELL

Yeah.

Hume starts to reply, stops.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

I think we have to do something about it. What if he's a known psychopath? What if he's killing someone else in some other city right now?

HUME

What do you propose?

RUSSELL

Well, since I have the image so clear in my mind, we could go to the police, to Detective Lawrence. I'm sure they have a sketch artist, you know, a sketch kit, then they could take the murder's face, see if anybody recognizes him.

ALLISON

But what if he's not the murderer? What if it's just somebody you saw somewhere and incorporated into your unconscious?

RUSSELL

Well, then he'll have an alibi, right?

(Hume looks unconvinced)

Hume, I think this is a real person.

(MORE)

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

We have a moral obligation to help catch him. We have an obligation to our mother.

CUT TO:

INT. HUME DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Russ and Hume, in the darkened room, lean across the table facing each other. The conversation continues from the previous scene:

HUME

Okay, we'll do it. We'll call Lawrence in the morning. But we've got to have the story straight. Russ states the "official" version:

RUSSELL

During the DMT trial I had a vision. I saw Mom bloody, I saw the murderer standing beside her, holding a bloody butcher knife. Afterwards, we went over to her house and found her dead.

HUME

Don't tell him about the elves.

RUSSELL

No.

HUME

Whatever you do, don't tell him about the flying saucer.

RUSSELL

No way.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE LAB - DAY

Russ leans beside a female POLICE SKETCH ARTIST working on a computer.

On the screen a face emerges from the many possibilities.

RUSSELL

I would say the eyes... show me some additional eye choices.

She brings up a screen full of white male eye matches; he picks one. She adds the new eyes--much better. Almost an exact replication of the Murderer's face. Spooky. And frightening.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

Now the skin color...

CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

A utilitarian space: four walls, three chairs and a metal table. Lawrence, in a casual mood, sits across from the brothers. In front of him is the open case file, Russ' statement and the computer-generated sketch of the Murderer.

LAWRENCE

You know that expression, "I've seen it all?" Remind me not to use it again.

(to Hume)

Thanks for coming by. I thought it would be good to go over it with both of you.

(indicates photo sketch)

Is this a good resemblance?

He is, of course, trying to catch Hume unawares.

HUME

I would have no idea. I was not "there."

RUSSELL

It's very good. Almost exact.

LAWRENCE

I'll pass it around, very discretely, of course, given the circumstances. See if it gets a hit. I don't think

(MORE)

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

broad dissemination is well-advised. I checked with your department at the University. Everything about the drug trial is apparently on the up and up. There won't be any negative repercussions.

RUSSELL

I think this is him. This is the killer. And he's real. I believe that, I can't tell you why.

LAWRENCE

Why can't you tell me?

RUSSELL

It's not that I won't tell you, it's just that my reasons are more intuitive than rational.

Lawrence's beeper goes off. He checks it, turns to Russ:

LAWRENCE

I hope you're not planning on participating in any additional trials.

RUSSELL

No, sir, I'm not.

It's not that Lawrence is dense or insensitive, but he's from another mindset. The Detective pages through Russ' statement:

LAWRENCE

Okay, let me go through this again. This DMT trip. Let's back up to the point where you encounter the "self-transforming machine elves."

Hume looks at Russ incredulously:

HUME

You told him about the elves?

Russell, defensive, replies to Hume:

RUSSELL
I had to. Otherwise it wouldn't make
any sense. How else could I explain
how I got to the saucer?

HUME
(even more incredulous)
You told him about the flying saucer?

CUT TO:

EXT. HUME HOUSE - NIGHT

Hume's Camry, his mother's van parked in the driveway.

CUT TO:

INT. HUME HOUSE - NIGHT

A single light burns. Hume, his legs folded in the lotus
position, meditates before the shrine. He repeats softly,
"Om mani pene hung, om mani pene hung..."

CUT TO:

INT. HAMBURGER KING - DAY

Russ, wearing his Hamburger King shirt, his Hamburger King
cap, his "Russell" name tag, takes orders from a gaggle of
high school students.

CUT TO:

INT. CLINIC - DAY

Hume, Garwood and the Assistants collect EKG data, videotapes
and notes after another DMT trial. A few participants linger,
talking amongst themselves.

Russ steps silently in, raps his knuckles on the door jam:

RUSSELL
Hume?

HUME
Yeah?

RUSSELL
You about done?

HUME
(looks around)
Give me twenty minutes. I'll meet
you downstairs in the snack shop.

Russ nods, waves to Garwood, walks away.

CUT TO:

INT. CLINIC SNACK SHOP - DAY

They share coffee and soda water at a table in the upscale
snack shop: designer coffee selection, croissants and scones,
vegetarian wraps and snacks.

HUME
The police have unsealed Mom's house.
We have to arrange the disposition
of her possessions.

RUSSELL
How's the trial going?

HUME
Good.

RUSSELL
No more freak-outs?

HUME
No.

RUSSELL
I've been thinking.

HUME
No kidding. Me too.

RUSSELL
The police aren't doing anything. I
can't say I blame them, not after
that fiasco with Detective Lawrence.
(MORE)

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

I mean, we came off like a comedy team.

HUME

You've spoken with Lawrence?

RUSSELL

I don't have to. Murders like this are solved in seventy-two hours-- or not at all. Or at least not until the killer makes a mistake. It's been over a week. There's nothing in the papers, on the news.

HUME

What makes me think you have something in mind? You want me to get a copy of the sketch? You want to circulate it privately?

RUSSELL

No, not that.

HUME

What then?

RUSSELL

The murderer exists up here.

(points to his head)

So does, I imagine, his identity-- or at least, clues to his identity. There's only one way to access that information. That is to return to the scene of the identification. Learn more about him.

(beat)

To take another trip.

HUME

There's no way Garwood would let you back into the trial.

RUSSELL

I know. Besides, I don't want to trip at the Clinic. That setting is

(MORE)

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

not good--I'll do it at your place.
I'll smoke the DMT, not inject it.
Mix a little Syrian rue to extend
it. That way the experience will be
stronger, sharper.

HUME

It's illegal.

RUSSELL

Drug use is based on loss of control.
Drug laws are created by those who
are terrified by loss of control--

HUME

You're preaching to the choir.

RUSSELL

You're telling me you can't get DMT
crystals? This is the Pacific
Northwest, man. We're in the fucking
epicenter of drug consciousness. You
don't even have to go through the
Clinic.

(no response)

Or I should get it on my own?

HUME

What do you think will happen?

(Russ doesn't
understand)

When you trip?

RUSSELL

I'm going back, Hume. He won't avoid
me. You know how the hallucinatory
mind works: you say the word "blue"
and you see more shades of blue than
you ever imagined. I'll call him,
he'll appear--and when I meet him,
I'll find out more about him.
Something we can use.

Hume exhales, sips his water.

RUSSELL

There's no other way.

HUME

If you do it--

RUSSELL

I am.

HUME

I don't think you should do it alone.

(beat)

I'd have to come with you.

RUSSELL

You want to meet him?

HUME

I wouldn't mind.

RUSSELL

Is that a yes?

HUME

No.

RUSSELL

But you'll think about it?

HUME

I'll think about it.

CUT TO:

INT. HUME HOUSE - NIGHT

The "setting" has been prepared: two mats, low indirect lighting, a mounted camcorder.

Russ, wearing shorts and a baggy T-shirt, sits on one of the mats. Hume, similarly dressed, places a Goa Trance CD in the stereo as Allison labels a video tape, puts it in the camcorder.

Hume takes the Haitian voodoo ceremony painting off the dining room wall, turns it, places it on the floor, face to the wall:

HUME

(explains)

I'd hate to look at that and up in that trip.

(to Russ)

I opted to go without any carrier. That way the effect will be strongest and shortest. I think twenty minutes is more than enough.

Hume carries a box containing a glass pipe, a small vial of pale pink powder, herbs, a strainer and a small kitchen knife to where Russ sits, places it on the floor, sits beside Russ.

Trance music--mantra undulations laid over a gentle techno throb--plays softly.

HUME (CONT'D)

(to Allison)

Is the designated driver ready?

ALLISON

(nods)

Why is it the boys get to have all the fun?

Allison checks through the camcorder--the wide-angle lens encompasses both brothers--presses "record." The red light glows. She sits beside the brothers as Hume places DMT powder in the bowl of the glass pipe.

HUME

(to Russ)

If you make an object, you say it first, then I'll repeat it.

(to Allison)

Everything okay?

(to Russ)

Relaxed?

Russ nods.

HUME

Pay attention.

Hume strikes a match, lights the powder, inhaling deeply.

Hume reacts to the harsh chemical smoke as he passes the pipe to Russell. Russ inhales, sets the pipe down, closes his eyes.

Hume, feeling the onrush of drug effect, looks over to Allison...

The crackling, the rising tone AND THEY'RE OFF. Alan Watts described the DMT experience as "being fired out of the muzzle of an atomic cannon."

Note: although this is primarily Russ' trip, at times we'll see both visions simultaneously on a split-screen.

The camera snap zooms into each of their foreheads, throwing out, in diptych, three time/space tunnels as they tumble into the multi-colored VORTEX.

The two simultaneously tumbling tunnels grow progressively white until they merge, the entire screen luminescent, Russ' face double exposed beneath: this is his vision.

We fly across water, jewel-like crystals reflecting off its surface. To our right the promontory at Ft. Stevens State Park approaches, its earth heaving up, morphing into rolling humps in a DESERT, which now surrounds us.

Except it's liquid. The hump continues to grow, morphing snake-like across the surface below.

No, penis-like. In fact everything is SEXUALIZED. The trailing clouds are breasts, buttocks, crotches, nipples.

The screen caught between male and female imagery, separate yet intermixing. Vagina, penis; flower, serpent; yin, yang.

THROUGH THE CAMCORDER: Russ and Hume lying side by side. Russ, left hand feeling his erection, reaches with the other hand, touches Allison's leg, which protrudes into frame. She removes his hand, places it on his side.

IN RUSS' MIND: traveling through a world composed of moving body parts: hands, fingers, eyes, arms, yet human like some multi-limbed Hindu deity. Angel wings flap past, as, somewhere, a woman speaks to herself.

Ganesh and the angel, now embracing, break off into a separate

screen, vanish in the distance as the screens reemerge. A hand waves goodbye.

Russ has forgotten the purpose of his voyage. He says:

RUSSELL (O.S.)

Elves.

(more forceful)

Transforming machine elves.

And they appear, at first in the far distance, tiny specks on a VAST PLAIN of green.

We approach. The topography feels familiar: we've been here before. It's the high plain from the clinic trip. Below mutating elves, bouncing colored balls, wave and smile.

To our left, the waterfall where dead souls bathe, ahead: a recognizable glow.

THROUGH THE CAMCORDER: Russ and Hume, side by side. Russell, focused, says:

RUSSELL

The saucer.

(beat)

Open the door.

IN RUSS' MIND: the elves, at our sides, fall away as the music grows more troubling, the SAUCER more imminent.

Evangeline is at the door, bleeding, but we have no time for her. Inside the saucer we wander through a maze of multilayered blue light. Alex Trebek's voice echoes from a TV speaker: "The Taj Mahal, Solomon's Palace and Billy Joel's beach house have this in common."

Russell's voice trails across the screen in colored patterns:

RUSSELL (CONT'D, O.S.)

Show yourself. I want to see you.

(beat)

Murderer.

(beat)

Murderer!

Suddenly, as if from vapor, the Murderer materializes, wearing

old jeans and a T-shirt. In one hand is the bloody butcher knife, in the other is Evangeline's cross.

THROUGH THE CAMCORDER:

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

What is your name?

Hume, recognizing Russ' voice, repeats the incantation:

HUME

Murderer, what is your name?

IN RUSS' MIND: the Murderer prepares to raise his hand, but it is not the hand bearing the cross--it is the hand holding the knife.

The Murderer steps forward, SLASHING THE KNIFE repeatedly toward us, into us. We hear a scream.

THROUGH THE CAMCORDER: Hume screams as Russ, straddling him, STABS his stomach and sides, with the kitchen knife.

IN THE LIVING ROOM: Allison bolts across frame in a blur, screams as she pushes Russ off Hume, onto the floor beside.

Confusion, panic.

Allison takes Russ' T-shirt, presses it on Hume's stomach, attempting to help him. Hume, groggy, watches.

Russ, becoming aware of what's happened--seeing Hume, seeing his hands, seeing the knife--retreats, frightened, across the floor.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. CAR - NIGHT

The Camry swerves wildly as it careens around a corner, regains control, speeds down a residential street.

Allison, at the wheel, drives as best she can, given her frightened condition.

In the back seat, Russ cradles Hume in his arms. Hume's side and stomach are wrapped in bath towels; here and there blood

seeps through.

CUT TO:

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Allison, Hume and Russell burst through the door as one:
Hume, his towels nearly soaked through with blood, supported
by Russ and Allison.

RUSSELL

We need help. Somebody, please!

Heads turn. An ORDERLY rushes over to help Hume while a NURSE
fetches a gurney.

ORDERLY

Everything is going to be all right.

The Orderly and Nurse place Hume on the gurney as ANOTHER
NURSE says to Allison:

NURSE

We need some information about him.

A uniformed OFFICER and a print JOURNALIST, standing together,
watch from the waiting room. The Journalist has his note pad
out.

JOURNALIST

(to Officer)

Isn't that... isn't that the Rankin
boys, the ones whose mother was
killed?

Allison speaks to the Nurse as Russ watches the Orderly remove
the bloody towels:

ALLISON

...not allergic to any medications,
Hume, Hume Rankin...

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

FADE IN: a "below the fold" newspaper headline reads: "Sons

of Murder Victim Involved in Stabbing" and, in smaller typeface, "Acid Trip Alleged." The newspaper lies on a small table beside a vase of flowers and hospital pamphlet ("When Emergency Strikes").

Hume rests in a private room, an IV connected to the back of his hand. Allison, wearing a Fair Isle sweater, sits on a chair beside, reading.

Hume opens his eyes. Allison, noticing this, stands beside the bed.

ALLISON

Hi.

HUME

I didn't hear you come in.

ALLISON

How are you feeling?

HUME

Sore.

ALLISON

A few more days and you'll be able to go home.

HUME

Non-life threatening wounds, but, Jesus, they hurt.

(beat)

Garwood visited yesterday.

ALLISON

That was nice. What did he say?

HUME

It was what he didn't say.

ALLISON

What didn't he say?

HUME

He's under pressure. The whole department is under scrutiny. I

(MORE)

HUME (CONT'D)
offered to resign but he turned me
down.

ALLISON
That's good.

HUME
No, what it means is that it will
look better for the University if
they fire me.

She touches his head, straightens his hair.

ALLISON
I visited Russell in jail.

HUME
You hid the videotapes?
(she nods)
How's he?

ALLISON
Not good.

HUME
God, what a mess.

ALLISON
He's fallen inside himself. He's
absolutely mortified.

HUME
You told him I don't blame him?

ALLISON
(nods)
But that's not the problem. The
problem is that he blames himself.

CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Russell, wearing a blue prison jumpsuit, sits across from
Detective Lawrence and District Attorney VANTIL.

Russ' hands rest on the table. He can hardly bear to look them in the eyes.

VANTIL

We in the DA's office have been back and forth about this whole thing. I know I said some pretty strong things before, but we've reconsidered.

Russell speaks in a small, broken voice:

RUSSELL

I haven't asked for leniency.

VANTIL

I don't know if the District Attorney's office wants to prosecute the son of a recently murdered woman who's killer is still on the loose.

(looks at Lawrence)

Especially when there is no complainant, no reliable witnesses. No hard evidence.

(beat)

I've spoken with the judge. I'm going to propose community service and probation, providing you enter a court-administered program of therapy.

LAWRENCE

Any infraction, any contact with illegal drugs, and you'll be right back in here.

RUSSELL

(contrite)

My drug taking days are over. No more tripping for Russ Rankin.

LAWRENCE

You were trying to catch your mother's murderer in hyperspace--do you realize how crazy that sounds?

RUSSELL

Yeah.

VANTIL

We're going to get you some help.

RUSSELL

Any developments in the murder investigation?

LAWRENCE

No.

RUSSELL

Nothing from the sketch?

LAWRENCE

No.

RUSSELL

You know what scares me the most,
even more than stabbing my brother?
(they listen)

It's the fear that this murderer is
a product of my own projection. That
I created him out of my own anger at
my mother, that I took on his form
and I killed her.

VanTil looks at Lawrence: this boy does need help.

LAWRENCE

It's fortunate you have such a good
alibi at the time of her death.

CUT TO:

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Hume, Allison and Russell exit the station, walk to the
parking lot. Hume, still sore, gets behind the wheel.

Allison and Russ squeeze in; they drive off.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. CAR - DAY

Hume and Allison are up front, Russ in back. Hume relaxes,
happy to be out of the hospital.

RUSSELL

Allison told me about the University.
I'm so--

HUME

Please, Russ, I said no more
apologies. Just stop apologizing.

RUSSELL

(apologetic)

I can't.

HUME

I can find another job, even if it's
sorting specimens somewhere. Or real
estate. What do you think? Think I'd
make a good realtor?

(Allison laughs)

I know these guys who have started
up a medical web site.

ALLISON

That sounds good.

HUME

Yeah, from hyperspace to cyberspace.

CUT TO:

EXT. HUME HOUSE - NIGHT

Camry on the drive. Trance music plays from inside.

CUT TO:

INT. HUME HOUSE - NIGHT

Insert of TV, the trip video: Russ, Allison and Hume lie on
the mats. Goa Trance plays over.

Hume, coming in the back door, hears the TV, walks into the
living room where Russ sits watching the trip video.

On screen: Allison removes Russ' hand from her leg, places
it at his side.

Hume walks over to the video player, ejects the tape. The screen goes to static.

HUME

Where did you find this? I'm going to lock it up.

Hume turns off the TV.

HUME (CONT'D)

You're not going to get better watching that.

He starts to walk away.

RUSSELL

How am I going to get better?

CUT TO:

EXT. HUME HOUSE - NIGHT

Russell sits on the front steps, lost in thought. Allison opens the door, steps out on the porch, sits beside him. She takes out a cigarette, lights it. She offers:

RUSSELL

Thanks, no.

For a moment they just sit looking straight ahead, enjoying the evening.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

This is where we were sitting.

ALLISON

Who?

RUSSELL

Me and Hume. We were sitting here, just like this, listening to the crickets, sipping wine. That's when I convinced him to let me in on the DMT trial. That's how it all started. If we could only go back...

(she doesn't respond)

Look, ah during the trip?

ALLISON

Yes?

RUSSELL

Did you and I, did I... was there anything sexual?

ALLISON

You were aroused. You touched me.

RUSSELL

But?

ALLISON

No. You thought we did?

RUSSELL

The trip was very... sensual. You were part of it. Did you tell Hume? I wouldn't want him to think, you know, his brother and his girlfriend--

ALLISON

Psychedelics have a strong sexual component. You know that.

RUSSELL

I didn't have a sister. I've never understood women, what makes them tick.

(beat)

I don't even know what makes them shop.

ALLISON

(chuckles)

But it was good, right? It felt good?

RUSSELL

This is supposed to help me?

ALLISON

There's so much denial going on around here, I think somebody ought to tell the truth. I've never heard of therapy

(MORE)

ALLISON (CONT'D)
that claimed that denial was the
doorway to health.

RUSSELL
(reluctant, sheepish)
Yeah, it felt good. I took a puff,
my arms and legs fell off, the floor
gave way and the world opened up.
Until, of course, the very end. That
wasn't good at all.

ALLISON
Well then, think about the good. Not
the other.

RUSSELL
Ally, I like you. I think you're
fabulous, but I don't want you to
think...

ALLISON
I like you too. I love you. But it's
Hume I want to give my life to. Why
can't both things be true?

He lets this sink in.

RUSSELL
I was wondering...

ALLISON
What?

RUSSELL
(a smile)
Do you have any sisters?

She laughs, responds with a mock drawl:

ALLISON
No, I'm the only one.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE: Life goes on as usual, over music, something by a
contemporary psychedelic group, such as Flying Saucer Attack

or Shamen.

INT. HAMBURGER KING - DAY

Russell, wearing his uniform, yaks it up with a couple of old timers.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Allison lectures her high school students. On the blackboard behind her in bold capitals: "Nineteenth Century Literature--why is it relevant?" and I killed her.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE HIGH RISE - DAY

Hume works at a computer cubicle, open texts stacked on his desk. A wall logo behind reads: "medicalanalysts.com."

CUT TO:

INT. CLINIC - DAY

Garwood and the Assistants prepare participants for a drug trial.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Community service: Russ, strung alongside the roadway with a half dozen other orange-suited miscreants, picks up litter, stuffs it into a sack.

CUT TO:

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Russell, seated, listens while JUDITH SALBERG, the court-appointed therapist, speaks.

CUT TO:

INT. HUME HOUSE - NIGHT

Hume meditates: "Om mani..."

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hume, Allison and Russell pack Evangeline's possessions into cardboard boxes, saving some items, discarding others.

Hume comes across photos of the young Ethan and Evangeline Rankin standing in front of their modest home, some alone, some proudly displaying newborn sons.

Hume passes the photos to Russ, who, after looking, hands them to Allison.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE CUBICLE - DAY

Detective Lawrence, on the phone, answers a question from a fellow worker.

CUT TO:

EXT. FT. STEVENS POINT - DAY

Russell stands on the escarpment where his mother's ashes were strewn, where his father turned away to watch the confluence of waters.

END MONTAGE

INT. HUME HOUSE - EVENING

The doorbell rings. Hume walks to the door, opens it: there, standing in the failing light, is MIGUEL CHINDOY, an aging hippie, long braided hair, wearing a ruana, the short blanket favored by South American peasants.

CHINDOY

Dr. Rankin?

HUME

Yes.

CHINDOY
(extends hand)
I'm Miguel Chindoy.

HUME
(declines handshake)
Okay.

CHINDOY
I've read about the events surrounding
you and your brother. I've come to
help. I have had twenty years of
shamanic experience. I believe I can
help.

HUME
Excuse me, who told you to come here?

CHINDOY
I am a shaman.

HUME
I'm a scholar. What do you want?

CHINDOY
I've come to offer my services. To
help your brother through this
difficult and necessary passage.

HUME
Mr. Chindoy, thank you and fuck you.
Or is that Senor Chindoy?
(checks car in driveway)
So, Senor, get your ass back in your
rental car and leave us alone.

CHINDOY
Dr. Rankin.

Hume closes the door on Chindoy.

CUT TO:

EXT. COLLEGE BAR - DAY

A beer and TV sports joint on the University strip.

CUT TO:

INT. COLLEGE BAR - DAY

University rowdies cheer a sporting event on wall-mounted televisions as Hume and Garwood, tucked into a quiet corner, sip draft beer.

VINCE

"Miguel Chindoy." His real name is Michael Kamen. Born in Brooklyn, 1946. Poster child for burnout. Brilliant student, apparently, but then, arrested, discredited, etcetera. Eight fries short of a Happy Meal. We all talk the psychedelic talk, spiel the psychedelic evangelism, but there are people who are lost, destroyed. We don't like to admit it, but it's true.

HUME

They keep trying to contact me. I've sent back my University mail, I changed my mail address, but this is the first time someone's tried to track me down.

VINCE

I'm sorry about the way it came down. It was improper, inhumane, and I was part of it--

HUME

You had to do what you had to do. I don't judge you.

VINCE

Don't play the saint.

HUME

I'm not. I probably would have done the same thing if I were in your shoes.

VINCE

I just hate having to be the one,
the proprietor of conservative
government sanctioned values.

HUME

I'm working for an internet company,
I'm making some money for a change.
Maybe it was meant to be.

VINCE

The trial is going to be great.

HUME

I wanted to ask about that.

VINCE

We've enough test subjects to start
collating the results. The final
paper--that's a year off--could
be quite important. I want to submit
it to Lancet. I know that sounds
like a fantasy...

HUME

I'm glad.

VINCE

How is he?

HUME

Russ?

(Garwood nods)

Everyone says he's getting better,
but I don't think so. He's in therapy.

VINCE

Court therapy.

(Hume nods)

The blind leading the mind.

HUME

I've spent a lot of time with him.

VINCE

You've spoken with the therapist?

HUME

Dr. Salberg? She says he's had a
"psychotic break."

VINCE

You believe that?

HUME

(pause)

I don't know.

CUT TO:

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - LATE DAY

Russell sits across from Dr. Salberg, 45, sincere. A Jungian mandala hangs on the wall behind her--right next to the photo of Sigmund Freud.

RUSSELL

...it's hard to put into words.

SALBERG

It seems to me that at every turn,
you seek to avoid the underlying
issues.

RUSSELL

Which underlying issues? Okay, let
me put it in terms you can understand.
I assumed another form and killed my
mother. I fucked my brother's
girlfriend, then tried to kill him.
Is that Oedipal enough for you? That's
just what I mean. Whenever this comes
up, you automatically assume this
metaphysical weight, strap it on
your shoulders like some Herculean
backpack with the implication that
you're guilty and there's nothing
you can do about it. You did not
fuck your brother's sister. You did
not kill your mother.

Russell falls silent.

SALBERG

Did you?

RUSSELL

(quiet)

Somebody killed her.

SALBERG

But not you.

RUSSELL

No, I guess not.

SALBERG

Have you been taking your medication?

RUSSELL

Yeah.

SALBERG

It's been three weeks. You should feel something. Can you detect any change?

RUSSELL

No.

SALBERG

You still have suicidal feelings?

(no answer)

I would like to change your medication. It's an exploratory process.

She picks up a script pad, starts to write:

SALBERG (CONT'D)

Prozac is a relatively mild drug. A friend of mine calls it the penicillin of psychiatry. It's not working and, frankly, I only hoped it would. I want to try something else...

CUT TO:

INT. HUME HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Hume, followed by Allison, opens the front door and, setting down his keys, reacts with shock at what he sees: the house has been trashed, burglarized.

He looks around: furniture tossed this way and that. The Buddha toppled over, the shrine desecrated.

ALLISON

My God, Hume...

She picks up the video player which has been tossed to the floor. They stand in a sea of discarded books.

Hume goes into the KITCHEN.

The refrigerator door is open, the cabinets exposed. There he sees, amid the maliciously discarded food supplies and dining utensils, a once locked cabinet, now chopped open, its lock ripped out.

Hume examines the cabinet--its contents tossed hither and yon.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

What is it?

HUME

I locked it here.

ALLISON

What?

HUME

The video tape. The trip tape.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. VAN - NIGHT

Russell, driving home, listens to rap on the car radio.

The music distorts. Russell feels something strange. He looks side to side. It suddenly feels like he's driving too fast. He slows his mother's van to a crawl, turns off the radio.

He sees something darting in the distance, something in the trees between one house and the next.

Russ pulls the van to the curb, stops. Shuts off the engine. Silence.

He gets out of the van, closes the door.

Looking apprehensively, he steps forward...

Then he sees him: THE MURDERER, the Murderer from the blue light saucer, tucked behind a distant tree. The Murderer scans the landscape.

Russ devises a method of escape. If he dashes to the right, hides behind a tree, then slips between two houses, he can avoid the Murderer.

He runs. He escapes.

Ahead: Hume's house. He's home.

CUT TO:

EXT. HUME HOUSE - NIGHT

Russ, composing himself, walks up the steps.

CUT TO:

INT. HUME HOUSE - NIGHT

Russell enters to find Hume and Allison cleaning up the living room mess. Russ attempts to appear the voice of reason:

RUSSELL
Jesus, what happened?

HUME
We were burglarized.

RUSSELL
How?

ALLISON
Some creep broke in. That's how.

RUSSELL

What'd he take?

HUME

I don't know. We're still looking.

Russ looks at the toppled Buddha:

RUSSELL

Why would he do that?

HUME

I don't know what's missing. Nothing valuable. We didn't have anything fucking valuable.

RUSSELL

It's my fault. Ever since--

HUME

Would you fucking get off that!

Hume replaces the Buddha on its pedestal as Russ drifts into the kitchen. He calls out:

RUSSELL

What's with this guy? He's got a thing for Special K and Wheat Thins?

Hume and Allison join him in the KITCHEN. Russ, suddenly pale, points to the splintered kitchen cabinet.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

What was taken?

HUME

What do you mean?

RUSSELL

From the cabinet. The locked cabinet.

They are reluctant to answer.

RUSSELL

What?

HUME

That's where I'd put the tape.

(Russ: huh?)

From the trip.

Russ starts manically pacing:

RUSSELL

He's found us, he knows we're onto him.

ALLISON

Who?

RUSSELL

The murderer!

HUME

Russ, stop it!

RUSSELL

You think it's some sort of joke, right? Well, fuck both of you! He knows about all of us, he knows about the police sketch, he knows everything! It's evidence. Lock the doors! We've got to get some guns, protect ourselves. He wants to kill us, because we know who he is!

Allison goes over to Russ, attempts to hold him:

ALLISON

We'll sort it out in the morning.

HUME

I'll call the police.

RUSSELL

(disdainful)

Right, like they're going to do anything.

HUME

There's been no real damage.

ALLISON

You're exhausted. You look fried.
Now is not the time to jump to
decisions.

Her embrace calms him.

RUSSELL

Yeah, I suppose.
(beat: weepy)
I don't know what gets into me.

HUME

Are you all right? We can take you
somewhere.

RUSSELL

No, no, I'm just tired, worn to the
bone. Every little thing, I don't
know why, sets me off.

HUME

You need sleep.

RUSSELL

I know, I know.

Hume looks out the window, toward the driveway and street.

HUME

Where's Mom's van?

RUSSELL

It ran out of gas. I left it several
blocks back.
(off Hume's puzzled
reaction)
I walked. I'll get it in the morning.

ALLISON

You're going to be all right?

RUSSELL

I'm fine. I just need some sleep.

He starts for his room.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

You want me to help clean up?

HUME

We got it under control.

Russ nods, staggers away. Hume and Allison look at each other as he walks off.

CUT TO:

EXT. HUME HOUSE - MORNING

Allison, outside, waits at the curb as a friend stops her car. She gets in, the car drives off.

CUT TO:

INT. HUME HOUSE - MORNING

Hume and Russ, at the kitchen table, finish morning coffee, peruse a scattered newspaper. Russ, resigned, sets down his cup:

RUSSELL

Well, I guess I better go track down
the car, pick up some gas.

Hume, checking his watch, watches Russ exit. The door slams.

Assured he is in the house alone, Hume stands and--checking the window--walks to his brother's guest room.

Hume looks around his BROTHER'S ROOM. Where to start?

Everything seems normal: Russ' dirty clothes thrown into a corner, bed sheets unmade, a book (Stephen Wright's Non Zero) overturned on the bed table beside an empty glass.

Recently recovered photos of his mother, father, himself and Russell on the bureau. These cause Hume to hesitate, but he continues: opening drawers, going through the closet, looking under the bed.

And there, under the bed, hidden, he finds it: the trip video tape.

His fears confirmed: it was Russ who "broke in," trashed the house, desecrated the shrine, stole the video from the kitchen cabinet.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

Hume watches, waits as high-schoolers stream from the two story building.

Then Allison appears, walking beside a fellow teacher, joking. She sees Hume beside the Camry, walks over, embraces him:

ALLISON

What a surprise. You're my "crossing guard" now?

HUME

I love you.

ALLISON

Oh, that feels good. I love you too.

HUME

Get in the car.

She, sensing something of import, opens the passenger door, gets in.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - DAY

They sit in the Camry. Hume makes no attempt to start the car. She waits apprehensively.

HUME

I searched Russ' room. I found the video tape.

(beat)

There can be no other explanation. It was Russ. He broke into the house, he trashed everything.

ALLISON

He claimed it was the murderer.

HUME

You know what this means.

ALLISON

He's no longer in control.

HUME

He's my brother. I love him.

ALLISON

He needs help.

HUME

Fuck help. I know about the help
he's getting.

ALLISON

Is he in danger?

HUME

What should I do?

ALLISON

No, that wasn't like a casual
question. That was a real question.
Is he in danger? Are we in danger
from him? Can he hurt us?

HUME

(pause)

I don't know.

CUT TO:

EXT. HAMBURGER KING - DAY

A fast food joint in a row of fast food joints.

CUT TO:

INT. HAMBURGER KING - DAY

Slow day: a few workers, moms and kids.

Russell, cap and name tag in place, flirts with a pretty,
intellectual COED. He holds up a french-fry:

RUSSELL

The french-fry. My occipital lobe
sees it, my temporal lobe says "yum,"
my parietal lobe says, "I'll eat
it," my prefrontal lobe says, "I'll
bite it," my motor cortex does so...

(takes bite of french-
fry)

...my somesthetic cortex supervises
and my brain is thrilled.

(Coed laughs)

My brother taught me that.

COED

But I don't eat fried food.

RUSSELL

To each her own.

COED

You're a strange sort of guy to be
working at a place like this.

RUSSELL

Well, I'm working my way up to middle
management.

COED

(laughs again)

I'm working my way up to a grilled
chicken sandwich and a diet coke.

RUSSELL

That we can do.

Russ turns to order a grilled chicken sandwich, turns and
smiles at the Coed. Then he sees: past the Coed, past the
brightly colored tables, moms and kids, through the window,
lurking outside, wearing old jeans and clean T-shirt, the
MURDERER beside a four-wheel drive pickup. It's a face he
knows well, one he can't forget.

The Murderer walks toward the entrance, turning his head, as
if looking for someone.

Russ turns his head away, says "I'll be right back" to a

fellow worker as he scoots into the kitchen area. The Coed, baffled, watches.

He ducks out a side door, circles surreptitiously along the SIDE OF THE BUILDING. Peeking around the corner, he sees the Murderer just standing there by the concrete table and chairs, hands on hips, looking around.

The Murderer, turning his back to Russ, decides to go inside.

Russ inches closer, following him.

The Murderer ENTERS Hamburger King. Russ slips through the door behind him.

The Murderer scans the room: he's looking for someone.

Russell makes his move. Taking a running start, he charges toward the Murderer, tackles him at the waist, drives him against a chair, then onto the floor.

Russ is now atop the Murderer, turning him over. Patrons stop mid-sentence, mid meal, look speechlessly--as if in a slow motion dream.

Russell pummels the Murderer's face, blow after blow after blow.

A child screams.

A male employee and two patrons rush over. They pull Russ off the Murderer.

The Murderer's face is bruised, starting to bleed. He is terrified, BUT: he is not the Murderer.

In fact, it's not even a man. It's a woman.

Commotion, chaos. Someone calls out, "Call the police."

Russ, restrained by the employee and patrons, looks at the "Murderer." He can't understand how his face transformed into this bloodied female visage.

CUT TO:

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Hume and Allison sit across from Salberg.

SALBERG

They initially gave him haloperidol--

HUME

Haldol?

SALBERG

Yes.

HUME

My God.

SALBERG

It's out of my hands, Dr. Rankin.
It's not my case. It's up to the
staff at the psychiatric hospital.
But I would imagine they would
prescribe orally administered
Thorazine, at least until they can
be sure he's not a danger to himself
or others.

(beat)

I'm sorry I wasn't of more help. I
knew he was delusional but I didn't
think he was hallucinational. He
sees things.

HUME

Of course he sees things. Just because
they put him in an institution doesn't
mean he's going to stop seeing things.

SALBERG

He has deeply unresolved issues
concerning his father--and his
mother. And you.

HUME

(derisive exhale)

And Thorazine is going to fix that?

SALBERG

Thorazine will block the hallucinations, but, in all the literature, it's never proven effective against delusions.

ALLISON

In other words, he'll still believe in his delusions, he just won't see them?

SALBERG

Yes. But, as I said, it's no longer my case.

HUME

Have you ever considered this: Russ, because of his use of psychedelics, has passed through the doors of perception, gained access to another reality and for one reason or another is unable to integrate this reality with his present state?

Allison gives Hume a look, places her hand on his arm--now he's sounding crazy.

SALBERG

That's called schizophrenia. And it's not treatable.

CUT TO:

EXT. PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE - DAY

A bucolic campus setting belied by a sign reading, "Glenview Psychiatric Institute."

CUT TO:

INT. VISITING ROOM - DAY

A day has passed. Allison and Hume visit Russell, wearing institutional whites, in an artificially "homey" room.

Russ struggles to have a normal conversation, counteracting the effects of the Thorazine like a wrestler in a hold. He

sips from a glass of water:

RUSSELL

(to Allison)

You can smoke here, you know. It's ironic. In all of Portland, there's no place you can have a smoke, but here it's all right. I guess they figure we got nothing to lose.

ALLISON

No, I'm fine Russ.

HUME

I'm trying to help you, but unfortunately, you've fallen into the great maw of the legal system. We've hired a lawyer, a psychiatric advisor--

RUSSELL

He came.

HUME

It's all paperwork and bullshit. If I had a prayer, it would be, "God, let me never fall prey to the US criminal justice system."

ALLISON

You must not lose faith. We're here for you. You are loved.

Russ' hands tremble. He restrains them.

RUSSELL

It's just these side effects, these-- what's the word?

HUME

Extrapyramidal disorders.

RUSSELL

Yeah, that and the dry mouth.

(beat)

I want to be normal.

ALLISON

We know.

RUSSELL

I'm worried.

HUME

Why?

RUSSELL

Him.

(no response)

The murderer. I can't get out of here. He must have figured out by now where I am. I'm not exactly protected in here. He could slip in, you know, wearing a uniform, find me, kill me.

HUME

I don't know if it's possible, but you need to make an effort. The mind is an extraordinarily powerful organ. You can, Russ, if you apply your mind, wipe all the events surrounding Mom's murder out of your mind. You can make the murderer disappear.

Russell, not responding to his brother's plea, sips water, shifts subjects:

RUSSELL

I think time is a thing. It's not an abstraction. Time not only changes, but there are different kinds of time--

HUME

Russ, this is interesting but it is not where we should be concentrating our efforts.

An INSTITUTIONAL AID sticks his head into the room, withdraws.

HUME

I guess that's a hint.

RUSSELL
(looks at bare wrist)
If I had a watch, I could tell you.
They must have some exciting activity
planned.

Russ motions Hume close, speaks into his ear:

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
(urgent)
Get me out of here. He's going to
find me. He's going to kill me.

Hume kisses his brother on the cheek, stands.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
(to Allison)
Ally, when you get outside and into
the car, do me a favor.

ALLISON
What?

RUSSELL
Smoke a cigarette for me. That's
what's nice about being crazy. You
smoke out there, I can taste it in
here.

She smiles, nods.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARWOOD'S HOUSE - DAY

Hume and Vince Garwood stand outside a pleasant post-war
home in South Park. Garwood's wife works in a bricked-off
flower garden.

VINCE
Let's take a walk. There's a little
park up the way. I find that when
something really heavy is weighing
on you, it's good to walk.

They nod to Vince's wife, head down the sidewalk.

HUME

I'm losing my brother. They got him on Thorazine. It's all maintenance crap. His mind is melting.

VINCE

I know.

HUME

Huh?

VINCE

I have contacts at Glenview, people I've consulted with over the years. I've asked about Russ.

HUME

You know you grow up with a brother, all that sibling shit, you don't think much about it. Of course we were close, not having a father, but I never realized how much I loved him until all this happened.

VINCE

I've been thinking about it too, in ways that probably go far and beyond what you're thinking. Ways that go back to your father, to the very reason I got involved in this discipline. You know how it is in this dreadful field. You get into psychedelic drugs, you have to be prepared to give everything else up. The medical establishment turns its back on you, any hopes you had of wealth are gone; of the people who take you seriously, half are fucking crazy. You do it because you believe in it. You believe that this sad planet, if there is any hope for it all, its hope lies in some primal reconnection with psychotropic plants. Every religion, you trace it back, you find a bunch of primordial men sitting around a campfire chewing

(MORE)

VINCE (CONT'D)

leaves.

(beat)

I went to see your brother.

HUME

You did?

VINCE

Yeah. I mean, off the record. I feel responsible.

HUME

You're not.

They reach a small pocket park, sit on a bench.

HUME (CONT'D)

What do you think?

VINCE

Are you prepared to hear what I really believe?

HUME

At this point, I'm prepared for about anything.

VINCE

Your brother has had what others would call a "psychotic break," and it's not a condition that's going to be improved by conventional medication or therapy. I see no hope in that direction.

HUME

We're losing him.

VINCE

This has caused me to go back through the literature, tests, theories. I guess what I'm proposing is psycholytic therapy.

HUME

"Psychedelic therapy." No one's done that for years. It's been discredited.

VINCE

It was not discredited. It was criminalized. Extraordinary things were being accomplished, Stanislav Grof, Humphrey Osmond, but then came the anti-establishment movement, the popularization of LSD and the Big Crackdown. Psycholytic therapy just stopped. No one wanted to lose their license.

HUME

This is what happened to my father?

VINCE

(continues)

There is a Shaman down the Amazon from Iquitos, near the Peruvian/Columbian border, Don Macita. He works with the ayahuasca vine. Your father and I tripped with him many years ago. We correspond from time to time. His books of imagery are essentially the same as what Russ describes. He's been doing this all his life. He works in the jungle, using the old ways, which is the best way to experience these primal drugs. It's the only way to ingest heroic doses of psychedelics--in their natural context. It has the added benefit of being legal.

HUME

Define "heroic."

VINCE

If you're talking about ayahuasca, the mother of all harmala alkaloids, I'd say, oral dose, five, six hundred milligrams. I'd have to talk to Don Macita.

HUME

That's life threatening.

VINCE

There are different ways to mix the actual brew, which then affects the nature of the journey. I don't think we should wait. Much longer, it may be too late.

HUME

Wait a second. You're assuming I've already signed onto this "back to the jungle" scheme.

VINCE

I would need your support.

HUME

I'm sorry. You don't have it.

CUT TO:

INT. RUSSELL'S ROOM - NIGHT

Russ, shivering, sits squeezed into the corner of his room. Sweat beads his forehead, his pupils are dilated.

Every noise from outside, from the corridor, from the rooms above is magnified in his mind. He is struggling to hold on to his sanity.

CUT TO:

EXT. HUME HOME - NIGHT

Just a normal house on a normal block.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Light filters in from a street lamp. Hume and Allison lie in each other's arms. It's as if they must hold on to each other for dear life because they're all they have left.

HUME

There was an inmate at a prison for the criminally insane and he told an interviewer, "It's easy to make the cops think you're crazy. All you have to do is act crazy all the time."

She laughs. He kisses her.

HUME (CONT'D)

I wonder if the same is true about sanity. All you have to do is pretend you're sane all the time.

ALLISON

In that case, you've got me fooled.

HUME

There is such a thin tissue separating one reality from another, from here and now to somewhere else and some other time. Somewhere this is not happening to us, but we are here and it is now and it is happening.

(looks to ceiling)

When we had the wake, when we distributed my mother's ashes, my father came over and spoke to me. He said, "Psychedelics ruined my life and they'll ruin yours."

ALLISON

Father knows best.

Hume emits a short derisive snort.

ALLISON

What did Garwood want?

HUME

What do you mean?

ALLISON

He called, you went over.

HUME
(thinks)
It was nothing.

CUT TO:

EXT. PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE - DAY

Hume and Allison turn up the leafy drive. Several police cars are parked out front.

They park, pass the police cars, head inside.

CUT TO:

INT. PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE - DAY

Hume and Allison step up to the main reception desk, speak to a RECEPTIONIST in a white uniform.

HUME
I'm Dr. Rankin. We have a two o'clock
visitation with Russ Rankin.

RECEPTIONIST
Just a moment.

They wait as the Receptionist speaks into the phone. The entrance area is designed to be hospitable, but, looking closer, one realizes that beneath the benign surface is a high security institution: multiple locks, triple depth glass.

The corridor door opens with a buzz. A hospital ADMINISTRATOR and a uniformed POLICE OFFICER approach them.

They realize something is wrong with Russ. They greet:

ALLISON
What's happened? It's Russ, isn't
it?

ADMINISTRATOR
Dr. Rankin?
(Hume nods)
I'm Dr. Fielding.

POLICE OFFICER

We've been trying to reach you.

HUME

We were running errands.

ADMINISTRATOR

Don't you have a cell phone?

ALLISON

We don't like cell phones.

The Administrator lets this (her attitude) pass:

ADMINISTRATOR

I'm afraid, ah, we can't find your brother.

HUME

What do you mean, "can't find him?"
He's in a lock down ward.

ADMINISTRATOR

At morning call, the attendant brought him breakfast. The room was empty.

ALLISON

Could he be hiding in the building somewhere?

POLICE OFFICER

Security is going through every room, ward, office.

ADMINISTRATOR

We are interviewing the staff. Someone let him out. There's no other explanation. You haven't heard from him?

HUME

No.

ADMINISTRATOR

Any idea where he might be?

HUME

None.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARWOOD'S HOUSE - DAY

Hume rings the Garwood doorbell. Mrs. Garwood answers.

HUME

Mrs. Garwood.

MRS. GARWOOD

(smile)

Hume.

HUME

I need to speak to Vince. I tried at the University.

MRS. GARWOOD

He left.

HUME

I don't understand.

MRS. GARWOOD

There was a phone call. Somebody at a conference dropped out and they asked Vince to fill it. He packed, grabbed his passport and headed for the airport.

CUT TO:

INT. HUME HOUSE - NIGHT

Music plays over as Hume, pulling the curtains, looks out the front window at an unmarked police car across the street with two PLAINCLOTHESMAN sitting in front.

He turns back into the room, walks over to Allison. He speaks softly, telling her about Garwood.

CUT TO:

EXT. DETECTIVE AGENCY - DAY

The sign on the window reads: "Lennon's: We'll Find It" with a cartoon of a detective type holding an oversized magnifying glass.

Through the window: Hume and LENNON, 30, lean over a computer manned by a teenager computer NERD.

CUT TO:

INT. DETECTIVE AGENCY - DAY

Lennon speaks as they look at the screen:

LENNON

It took a bit of doing. Your friend didn't go direct. Portland to Mexico City, re-ticket to Bogota, to Quito, to Iquitos.

HUME

Any other passengers? I mean any passenger on the same flights with Garwood.

(to computer Nerd)

Can you do that?

(the Nerd goes to work)

Used to be, in the day, you had expenses, man hours, gumshoes, now it's just a computer and a teenager with a knack to hack.

NERD

Here's a reappearing name for the first two flights. "John Russell."

Garwood's voice starts over as the Nerd continues to work:

VINCE (V.O.)

To the people of the Amazon basin, all life is determined by countless spirits and beings who live "on the other side." It is essential for their own survival to be able to

(MORE)

VINCE (CONT'D)

enter that world and interact with
those spirits to secure well-being
for oneself and one's family...

CUT TO:

INT. IQUITOS COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Garwood and Russell sit in a coffee/snack shop in Iquitos, a frontier jungle city of 350,000 inhabitants in Southeastern Peru.

Outside, along the single-story streets, motokars (motorcycle taxis), emit clouds of pollutants as they pass. Inside, mestizo kids, wearing Nikes and NBA T-shirts, play X-men combat video games. Not exactly one's preconception of "Amazonia."

Garwood continues speaking as Russ sips coffee, bites from a bread roll.

VINCE

...They get this protection through
the ayahuasca ceremony. The
preparations, drinking the brew, the
visions, the assistance of an
ayahuasquero, a shaman. Huasca means
vine, aya means souls or dead people,
so it's the vine of the dead or the
vine of the spirits...

CUT TO:

EXT. HUME HOUSE - DAY

Hume and Allison, wearing jeans, nylon jackets, hiking boots and backpacks, exit, nod to the Plainclothesmen in the car across the street, get into the Camry and drive off.

Hume's voice over picks up where Garwood's left off:

HUME (V.O.)

...it's in the elite company of the
most powerful naturally occurring
psychotropic drugs, the harmaline
(MORE)

HUME (CONT'D, V.O.)
alkaloids: ayahuasca, psilocybin,
yage, iboga. DMT is the active
ingredient in ayahuasca. Chacruna, a
natural MAO inhibitor, makes it orally
active, extends the effect. It's
essentially a very long DMT trip...

CUT TO:

INT. PORTLAND AIRPORT - DAY

They stand at the American Airlines counter.

HUME (V.O.)
...nothing prepares you for it. It's
the great unknown. The drug looks
inside you and takes you there. The
Jungian maps don't apply. Your chakras
are of no use. It's a big forest and
there are no markers on the trees.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT WAITING AREA - DAY

Allison, sitting next to Hume, asks:

ALLISON
It's dangerous?

HUME
No. That's the reason I support
naturally occurring psychedelics. If
they were dangerous, their use
wouldn't have endured this long.

ALLISON
But is it dangerous for Russell?

CUT TO:

EXT. THE AMAZON - DAY

Vince and Russ sit in a canopied river boat as it putt-putts
down river. Around them sit mestizo peasants, a tourist couple
and a local business type.

Garwood's voice over resumes:

VINCE (V.O.)

Don Macita, the shaman we will meet, he's over seventy now, has a camp in the jungle. He believes the body is full of toxins and these toxins will emerge as demons unless purged. The preparations include four days of cleansing, external and internal, diet and meditation. It involves a sort of mud bath, drinking a diuretic tree sap, oye, eating yucca and rice.

Russ turns to Garwood, says:

RUSSELL

But I thought the ayahwasca brew is purgative.

VINCE

It is. The first couple hours, "la purga," is vomiting and shitting. The visions will start at this time.

RUSSELL

You're taking this?

VINCE

We both are.

CUT TO:

EXT. IQUITOS AIRPORT - DAY

Hume and Allison, tired, emerge into bright Amazonian sun. A line of motokars vie for their attention. Garwood's voice resumes:

VINCE (V.O.)

We will use this period to concentrate on our goals. We will define your areas of conflict, define the person you want to be when the journey ends...

CUT TO:

EXT. IQUITOS - DAY

Hume and Allison stand in Plaza de Armas, approach likely strangers, struggle with their Spanish, get replies.

VINCE (V.O.)

...At first you will feel like you're dying. You'll have to endure this. That's what the drug is about: dying and living...

CUT TO:

EXT. DON MACITA'S CAMP - DAY

Garwood and Russell approach the Amazonian encampment. It's virtually unchanged from forty years before. The Ceremonial House stands in the distance.

And, ahead, beside the river, the small figure of Don Macita.

VINCE (V.O.)

...You will enter the wholeness of being. You will feel a satisfaction like you've never known...

Don Macita turns, looks. Vince waves to him.

CUT TO:

EXT. LA BOULEVARD/IQUITOS - DAY

Hume and Allison negotiate with a guide on the riverside walk. Charter boats wait.

VINCE (V.O.)

...First come the patterns, then plants, then animals, then fantastic architecture, the little people, they are guides--and, at some point, the serpent. Don't be afraid. He is a passage...

CUT TO:

EXT. AMAZON - DAY

Hume and Allison ride down the river.

VINCE (V.O.)
...and the end, well, it will be
idiosyncratic. It will be what you
are...

CUT TO:

EXT. ENCAMPMENT - DAY

Vince and Russell stand, nude, as huito, a bluish fruit pulp mixed with clay, is poured, rubbed over their bodies by Don Macita and his native ASSISTANT. The same blue that caked Garwood years before.

VINCE (V.O.)
...The brew is made by mixing crushed
ayahuasca vine with alternating layers
of chacruna leaves and boiling them...

CUT TO:

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Garwood, Russ and others watch as Don Macita, 77, selects a section of the climbing ayahuasca vine, instructs his Assistant which portion to cut with his machete.

VINCE (V.O.)
...the duration, including the
purging, will last six to eight hours,
although the intensity will slack
off after four or five hours.

CUT TO:

EXT. ENCAMPMENT RIVERSIDE - DAY

Hume and Allison step off the river boat, look around. A path leads to the Ceremonial Hut, the open MAIN HOUSE hung with hammocks.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEREMONIAL HOUSE - DAY

Garwood and Russell watch as Don Macita and his Assistant prepare the ayahuasca brew: crushing strips of vine, laying them in an old metal pot.

Atop the small table, like forty years before, sits the ceremonial bowl, its sides painted and repainted over the years with fantastic imagery, rainbow bands of brightly colored unreal creatures.

Hume and Allison approach. Garwood greets them enthusiastically:

VINCE

Hume! Ally!

HUME

What are you doing here?

VINCE

Same thing you're doing here.

(to Don Macita)

Don Macita, this is Hume Rankin,
Russ' brother I told you about.

Hume exchanges greetings with Don Macita as Russ walks over, whom, he in turn greets. Hume turns to Vince, speaks softly, censorial:

HUME

We need to talk.

VINCE

Sure.

Allison, taking the hint, says to Russell:

ALLISON

Show me around.

CUT TO:

EXT. ENCAMPMENT RIVERSIDE - DAY

They stand at the edge of the Amazon, brown slow-flowing water, perhaps fifty meters wide. Around them, the jungle

vibrates with life.

HUME

What you've done is illegal. I could report you. You could go to jail.

VINCE

If that has to be, it has to be. Just wait until we've done what we can for Russ. There's a program.

HUME

You absolutely baffle me.

Garwood glances to the Main House where Allison and Russell walk, talk.

VINCE

I've done a lot of things I regret in my life, and a lot of the things I regret involve your family. When your father was vilified, when the witch hunt hit, he came to me for support and I turned my back on him. I protected my position. He left the country, left his family. I took the easy way when letting them fire you. Now this. I feel my life is defined by the sadness in your family. I believe I can help your brother. He was dying in there.

(a beat)

It's so good you're here.

HUME

Why?

VINCE

To help Don Macita.

HUME

You're tripping as well?

VINCE

(nods)

I wasn't sure before, but now I am.

(MORE)

VINCE (CONT'D)

I want to apologize to your father.
His spirit is all around here. Come,
you've got to talk to Don Macita.
We'll go over the counseling--

HUME

Don't you think I ought to talk to
Russ first?

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN HOUSE - DAY

Hume and Russell sit inside the hammock strung house.
Generations of visitors have left inscriptions and painted
mystic, hallucinatory symbols (the Third Eye, the Serpent)
on the beams and benches.

HUME

I brought along your meds, just in
case.

RUSSELL

You're kidding. That stuff is poison.
It's poison for the brain.

HUME

I know, I know, I just felt it would
be irresponsible not to. I didn't
know what condition you would be in.

RUSSELL

That last night in the sanitarium, I
was holding on, just barely,
concentrating every atom in my body
to remain sane, like those kids in
"Nightmare on Elm Street" trying not
to sleep. Then I heard the door open--
he had come for me, the murderer,
but it was Professor Garwood.

Pause.

HUME

How are you now?

RUSSELL

All this cleansing and my conversations with Don Macita have cleared my mind. Everything is now directed toward the journey. I am prepared. I want to do this.

Hume gives his brother a loving look, then a big embrace, which is returned and held.

HUME

You're not going in anger?

RUSSELL

No.

HUME

Remember this journey you're taking, this drug, what it's doing it's doing for your benefit. Pay attention. It wants to help you.

(Russ nods)

You know how I like to say they're not recreational drugs? That's not true. They are recreational. Recreational. You must re-create your life. Remake it, heal it.

(Russ nods again)

If you get lost, if you get frightened, if you're in danger, repeat the mantra. If you hear me saying, "Om mani pene hung," you'll know that I'm with you, you're not alone.

Hume reaches in his pocket and hands Russ a small souvenir replica of an elf-like Incan god, much like the one Garwood had in his office.

HUME

Russ, take this. I bought this in Iquitos. It didn't cost anything. It's supposed to bring good luck.

Russ tucks it into his pocket:

RUSSELL
If only it were that easy.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEREMONIAL HOUSE - SUNSET

Garwood and Russell, wearing white ceremonial ruanas, sit where Vince sat with Russ' father years before. Don Macita ladles out the ayauasca brew into two cups on the table. One cup contains almost twice as much brew as the other.

Don Macita blows purifying smoke on Garwood and Russell.

Allison and Hume sit to the side. He puts his arm around her shoulders.

Russ looks at his fingernails: they are rimmed blue from the purifying dye.

Don Macita places the cup with the larger dose in Russell's hands, the other in Vince's, then steps and begins to sing the soft, lilting icaros: "Maimandara shamuirimum, Yana puma chicunaca..."

TIMECUT. Night. Garwood and Russell both bent over a long basin, vomiting. "La Purga."

Russ watches his vomit as the camera zooms toward his eyeball, enters his myriatic pupil.

INSIDE RUSS' MIND: his vomit emerges as blood, covering the floor, liquefying it. In the blood swim thousands of vibrating worms.

The characteristic crackle, the rising hum (DMT particles crashing into the brain's synapses) as the worms, animated like sperm, jump bullet-like from the bloody below, pierce our skin.

The voyage has begun.

Russell's pupil expands, revealing the vast geography of hyperspace.

Space first appears as GEOMETRIC FORMS, revolving kaleidoscopically.

These quickly assume vegetable form, an inviting cardinal red CHRYSANTHEMUM, its petals beckoning, becoming a white LOTUS blossom.

Into the blossom we fly, its core opening onto the JUNGLE canopy.

We fly over the jungle, compelling images filling our field of vision: birds unlike any ever beheld, rippling trees and fauna, indistinguishable creatures in the undergrowth.

To our left: the waterfall where dead souls bathe.

We are the panther. We know this because we hear the panther's heart beating, hear its paws pounding the earth's surface, see its paws before us.

We dive toward the surface. Into the jungle the panther plunges.

But it is not a jungle, it is an OCEAN and we are under the water now, swimming shark-like alongside pink dolphins and glowing fish of the deep. Great primordial creatures, sea monsters extinct for eons, pass.

We burst from the ocean Atlantis-like into a realm of RUINED PALACES and LABYRINTHINE CITIES. Empty unpopulated empires rise and fall.

African mud cities become Palantine temples; pyramids become decayed skyscrapers.

Throughout melodies mix with the music, snippets of sound contemporary and archaic. A guitar riff from the Fifties, a bit of Beethoven, third world instruments.

Then, for a moment, above the ruins: a cascade of ADVERTISING IMAGERY: the pop culture of signs, slogans and logos rushing past.

In the ruined cities, we enter the HALL OF ANCESTORS. We see our shadow before us, morphing the history of earth's life forms: sea-going, reptilian, mammalian, ape-like, humanoid.

The ancestors are stacked in high-rise rows to our right and left. All of mankind's faces, Neanderthal, Homo-sapiens,

yellow, white, black--some surprised, some merely curious--morphing one to the other like falling dominos.

At the top level, we notice, are the gods--primitive, ancient unrecognizable divinities yielding to more familiar figures: the Egyptian hierarchy, the Greek pantheon, Nordic gods and goddesses, the manifestations of Buddha, the Hindu cosmology, Mohammed and his followers, Christ and the saints--yet, looking closer, we see they are in pain, all writhing like crucified Jesuses. Not gods, daemons.

We grow frightened:

RUSSELL (V.O.)

Hume, Hume... om mani...

IN THE CEREMONIAL HOUSE: Hume cradles his brother, repeating with Russ:

HUME AND RUSSELL

...pene hung, om mani pene hung...

INSIDE RUSS' MIND: we burst from the Hall of Ancestors, fly over a great SAVANNA.

There we see them, first as mottled dots, growing larger as we near: the self-transforming machine elves.

And they see us. Recognizing our approach, they emit a communal joyful "ahh." The sound's after-image sails across the savanna like a green shooting star, trailed by a chartreuse neon echo image.

The elves bounce brightly colored balls or are brightly colored balls. It's hard to tell, because they constantly transform into the balls, back into themselves. Garwood's voice echoes:

VINCE (V.O.)

They are guides.

Saucers fly in a flurry overhead like comets: oval shaped, then chrysanthemum, then lotus, then oval again.

Coming closer, walking amongst the elves, they offer us gifts: they toss their colored balls, which, as they touch us, turn into extraordinary objects: iridescent Faberge eggs, morphed

by the sound of their voices into essences whom, it seems, are ideas themselves.

It feels wonderful.

All of which distracts us from a distant specter approaching at warp speed: the great speckled serpent. Time motion clouds, speed overhead, transforming the savanna into an endless DESERT.

It's the rapacious serpent from Ethan Rankin's jungle trip. The serpent's jaws open wide, revealing rows of razor-sharp teeth, a crimson red mouth.

RUSSELL (V.O.)

Om mani pene hung...

We try to escape but cannot. We plunge past the teeth, down the esophagus, into the belly of the beast--the "animistic roller coaster ride."

IN THE CEREMONIAL HOUSE: Hume and Don Macita sit beside Russ.

HUME

Where are you?

INSIDE RUSS' MIND: down and down we tumble, past reptilian ribs and pulsing organs.

We suddenly emerge amidst a blaze of color, not in a Mexico City rave club, but in a blue throbbing room. We are in the SAUCER.

Multi-dimensional walls of mutating shades of blue surround us. Up, down, right, left, each indiscernible from the other.

Alex Trebek's voice: "The Taj Mahal, Solomon's Palace and Billy Joel's beach house all have this in common."

Growing, in the distance, a woman lying on a hospital bed--is she being operated on or giving birth? We know it's our mother, but do not say that word.

A heavy metal grate falls before us, keeping the woman out of reach.

The Murderer materializes through the grate, wearing, as

before, jeans and a T-shirt.

His face, however, seems different: cruel, mean, distorted. In his hands he tosses two balls: the miniature heads of Hume and Russell.

The Murderer's eyes ooze puss, blood drips from his ears and nostrils. His expression is demonic.

Behind him, through the grate, the hospital room, now red, is a torture chamber: a Boschian tableau of medieval pain and suffering.

The woman in the hospital bed lies next to wretched creatures on racks and wheels. Black hooded inquisitors lean over her chest, employ instruments of torture.

The Murderer squeezes the miniature heads as his own head swivels, Exorcist-like, on his base. He is now Ethan, insects crawling from every facial orifice.

In his hands the knife and cross.

We are terrified. The music is terrifying: discordant noise and a cacophony of angry indistinguishable voices. In the distance, Hume's voice struggles to be heard:

HUME (O.S.)
Om mani pene hung...

And also, somewhere in the music, a repeat of an earlier voice: "What is your name?" We try to repeat the mantra, but the words come out wrong.

Ethan's head swiveling again, revealing our own image, Russ' face, who is now, suddenly upon us, knife upraised, slashing, slashing.

Russ' chest opens, he is inside us.

We stand in a HALL OF MIRRORS, our image reflected over and over again. We are The Murderer, we are Ethan.

And behind us, in every duplicating reflection, behind the iron grate, the red chamber of horrors--and a woman's scream.

Our reflection stands at the door, preventing entry.

A tug at our side: it's one of the smiling elves. He offers us a colored ball. We look again, the elf is gone.

The brightly colored ball glows, continually morphing human and animal images, ancient and contemporary.

We throw the ball at our reflection, hitting first one reflection, then the others in a rippling chain effect.

Our image transforms into an angry mass of wasps, which, buzzing, fly away, diminishing in size until they are nothing more than faint gold crosses in the distance.

The cacophony subsides, a voice emerges from the chaos:

VOICE

They were all built for love.

The grate lifts with a Mozartian crescendo. The torture chamber is again shifting shades of blue.

We walk to the hospital bed, pull back the sheet which covers the woman on the bed.

Her chest is exposed X-ray-like: ribs, a beating heart and lungs. And, in one lung, a diseased black cancerous clump, crawling with maggots.

We reach in, forcefully yank out the clump, toss it heavenward where it bursts into brightly geometric forms, flies away.

The woman on the bed--she is our mother--smiles:

EVANGELINE

Russell.

A blue dot appears on her forehead like a Third Eye. Music welcomes us as we move toward the dot until it fills our field of vision.

We hyper-zoom into the blue dot, earth. Recognizable configurations appear, North America, the Pacific Northwest, Oregon, Portland, downtown...

Until the dot is nothing but a large human eye.

CUT TO:

INT. CLINIC - DAY

Lights come up on a rheostat. Hume, wearing a blue button down collar shirt with a dark tie, in the lounge chair.

An Assistant extracts the IV line from Russ' arm prepares to remove the EKG sensors.

Garwood steps over as the Assistant goes to help another participant in the DMT trial.

HUME

How do you feel?

It takes a moment for Russ to orient himself.

VINCE

How was it?

RUSSELL

(thinks)

Idiosyncratic.

VINCE

That's the amazing thing. Every experience is absolutely unique.

Russ, still somewhat stunned, stands, says to Hume:

RUSSELL

Let's go over to Mom's house. I want to apologize for that stunt I pulled the other day.

HUME

You're still groggy. And you've got to do the questionnaire.

RUSSELL

Yeah, but after.

HUME

Sure. Okay.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY

The Camry and van in the drive.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Day old cut flowers sit in a vase.

Evangeline, Hume and Russell sit across from each other,
cradling cups of Kona coffee.

"Jeopardy" plays on the TV in another room.

EVANGELINE

It's so amazing you came over. I was
just getting ready to call you.

HUME

What happened?

EVANGELINE

It's hard to explain.

(they wait)

Dr. Klein called. He had gotten the
latest x-rays. I didn't understand.
I called him back to be sure. He
repeated it.

(voice cracks)

The tumor is diminishing. It's
responding to treatment. It's almost
gone.

The boys stand, embrace her jointly.

HUME AND RUSSELL

Oh, Mom.

HUME

It's miraculous.

RUSSELL

I'm so happy.

EVANGELINE

I love you boys.

RUSSELL

Me too.

HUME

I can't wait to tell Ally.

Russ reacts to a particularly loud burst of applause from the TV:

RUSSELL

How can you stand to have that thing
on all the time?

EVANGELINE

It's just background noise. It's
comforting.

Russ steps into the DEN, turns off the TV, interrupting Alex Trebek mid-sentence.

Russ feels something in his jeans, reaches in his pocket, pulls out a small replica of an elf-like Incan god. He doesn't know quite what to make of it.

Then he looks at his fingernails: they are rimmed pale blue with a clay-like substance.

Hearing his mother's voice, he returns to the LIVING ROOM.

EVANGELINE

Come, boys, sit with me a while.
Just hold my hands.

They sit beside her, take her hands.

EVANGELINE

Let's enjoy what we have while we
have it. Reality is so fragile.

THE END

in memory of
Terence McKenna
1946-2000