

UNTITLED

BY
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**THIS SCRIPT CONTAINS ENCRYPTED, TRACEABLE TEXT
SPECIFIC TO EACH READER**

WE

are an eye looking at a CROWD OF PEOPLE looking back at us ... fashionable VIEWERS stand under bright sun ... some discuss us ... some come near ... none stay long as ... new PEOPLE stop ... CREDITS begin and ... sounds are heard ... *ELECTRONIC MUSIC* ... *DISEMBODIED SPOKEN PHRASES* drifting on the wind as

A YOUNG WOMAN (JOSEPHINA)

passes ... 20s ... black ... stylish ... carrying a Starbucks tray with four coffees and CUT TO

WE

are suspended 10 feet in the air ... CROWD looking up at us as ... JOSEPHINA passes below with the Starbucks tray and CUT TO

WE

are an unseen backdrop for PEOPLE taking selfies as ... JOSEPHINA steps in ... photographs herself ... her phone rings and ... we FOLLOW HER through the CROWD as she answers ...

JOSEPHINA/ON PHONE

Hey ... No, I'm just heading inside.

(slowing)

What?

JOSEPHINA listens as CAMERA WIDENS TO SHOW she stands outside

THE MIAMI CONVENTION CENTER

CROWDS ... cars ... palms ... a huge, pastel banner announces

Art Basel

UBS

JOSEPHINA/ON PHONE

Are you serious? ... When? ... *WHAT?* ...

What time? ... Right at the fucking bar?

Crushing news ... JOSEPHINA stops in front of an exhibit of *LIFE-SIZE FARM ANIMALS CREATED OUT OF OLD COMPUTER PARTS* ...

JOSEPHINA/ON PHONE

You're sure it was him? ... Who was she?

... Goddamn it! ... *FUCK* ... No I gotta

go ... No ... Thank you, seriously, bye.

JOSEPHINA hangs up ... *COMPUTER-PART FARM ANIMALS MAKING EERIE BLEATS AND MOOS AND BAAS* behind her as ... she dials and ...

JOSEPHINA/ON PHONE

What's up? ... Yeah I know what time it is, it's three hours earlier than here. You're tired huh? You go out last night?

(listening before--)

You're a fucking liar, Ricky! A liar! LIAR! Someone saw you last night! First night I'm away! Are you fucking kidding me!?! ... It was a FRIEND, a person who has my back, someone I trust unlike YOU!

PASSERSBY hear ... lowering her voice ...

JOSEPHINA

The girl from your gallery!? Deny it! DENY IT! ... I don't care what you--

A hand taps her shoulder and JOSEPHINA spins to SEE

A YOUTHFUL MAN

in his 30s ... metro-sexual ... short pants suit ... Prada man bag ... Persols ... bleached smile ... sees she's crying ...

MAN

(mouths)

Sorry -- I'll see you inside.

The MAN departs and

WE FOLLOW HIM

past lines of luxury CARS ... waving to PEOPLE ... nods of recognition ... he's known here as we trail the MAN INSIDE

ART BASEL MIAMI

where the most EXCLUSIVE ELEMENTS OF SOCIETY explode into exhibitionist view ... MAN skirting the line to go in ... confetti of languages ... reaching a PRESS BOOTH up front ...

MAN

Morf Vandewalt, Artnet.

MORF dons an ID marked **CRITIC** ... heads inside and we ENTER

A MAZE

of 500 CONTEMPORARY ART GALLERIES ... sensory overload ... VIPs milling about as if they, not the art, were on display as ... MORF switches sunglasses for eyeglasses ... navigates the MYRIAD EXHIBITS ... among the many displays he passes are

LARGE NEON SIGNS READING ...

THERE'S NO CONFUSION IN MY HOUSE

STEP LIVELY OVER MY BODY

A MEANINGLESS LIFE CHASES AFTER PLEASURES

MORF walks by MURALS OF MUSCLED BABIES WEARING AMERICAN FLAG
DIAPERS ... comes upon

A CROWD

grouped around A LIFE-SIZE, ANIMATRONIC MAN IN A BATMAN MASK
AND DIRTY TUXEDO ... WOBBLING ON CRUTCHES ... HOLDING A SIGN

will work for food

MORF stops to regard the human-like figure as ... an ASIAN
GALLERY OWNER quickly approaches ... high stakes here ...

GALLERY OWNER

Morf.

MORF

Cloudio.

CLOUDIO

It's Kenji, as you probably know. It's
titled "Hoboman." The response is
amazing. Arguably the hit of the show.

MORF moving side to side as ... THE CRIPPLED, TUXEDOED, BATMAN-
MASKED ROBOTIC VAGRANT UNNERVINGLY FOLLOWS WITH THE SIGN ...

MORF

Wolfson, Female Figure, four years ago.

CLOUDIO

No. It's new. Vastly different themes.

MORF

It's an iteration. No originality. No
courage. My opinion.

CLOUDIO

Well I absolutely respect the power of
your point of view but this encompasses a
global scale. There's just such a sense
of now and in-your-face that speaks to
pop and cinema and economics. I mean you
can feel the winds of the apocalypse.

MORF moves on ... CLOUDIO anxiously trailing ... voice low ...

CLOUDIO

We have a four-million dollar hold. A major buyer in Shanghai. Will you be running your review today?

MORF doesn't respond ... crest-fallen CLOUDIO left in his wake as ... MORF continues into the show and ... we follow him from

ABOVE as he threads the labyrinth of *CONTEMPORARY ART DISPLAYS* ... arriving at an exhibit marked

N32

DONDON GALLERY

Los Angeles

Murmur of big buying ... walls dominated by *LARGE PORTRAITS OF RAVE-GOERS MADE ENTIRELY FROM GLOW STICKS* ... MORF regards the work ... drifts to a chic, multi-ethnic MAN (JON DONDON) ...

MORF

Hello Jon.

JON DONDON

Ca va?

MORF

Intriguing. How does he keep the glow sticks going?

JON DONDON

I'm not honestly sure. I can tell you we're oversold by 600 percent.

MORF spies a *GROTESQUE ETCHING OF AN EMACIATED GIRL SURFING WITH A BODY BUILDER BALANCED ON HER SHOULDERS* ...

MORF

You're showing a Piers?

JON DONDON

Just the one.

MORF

Piers is leaving Rhodora for you?

JON DONDON

Oh I'm certain you'd have to ask him.

JON DONDON'S cell rings ... he steps away to answer as ... a SUITED, GAZELLE-LIKE WOMAN appears ... air-kisses ...

MORF

Gretchen.

WOMAN/GRETCHEN

Morf love.

(re: the *SURFING GROTESQUE*)

We bid on it for the museum. Jon wants 3.7. Rhodora won't sell a Piers for under five so this is an opportunity for us. I'm quite curious to know what you think.

MORF

I think sober hasn't been good for him.

GRETCHEN

This was done four years ago. Piers was in the full bloom of alcoholism here.

MORF

Exactly.

GRETCHEN

So you're saying this would be a good buy for the museum then?

MORF sees JOSEPHINA navigating the CROWD with her coffees ...

MORF

Excuse me.

(catching up to JOSEPHINA)

Hey, are you okay?

JOSEPHINA

Literally the worst fucking day.

MORF

(offers a tissue from his bag)

Your make-up.

JOSEPHINA

I'm late. They texted like 20 times.

MORF

I'm going there too.

JOSEPHINA

Fucking people.

MORF

Who?

JOSEPHINA

Everyone.

MORF

Is Piers switching galleries?

JOSEPHINA

I answer phones and get coffee, I'd
literally be like the last to know.

MORF and JOSEPHINA arrive at

N54

HAZE GALLERY

Los Angeles

Unlike the other sterile spaces ... gypsy wagon decor ... ART
hung by sashes ... propped on painted tables and plush chairs
... one wall devoted to *GROTESQUE ETCHINGS* by PIERS as ...
JOSEPHINA'S met by a muscled MAN (BRYSON) in a t-shirt ...

BRYSON

You're too late, Rhodora already got a
coffee. This is not the pace. Are you
where you want to be?

JOSEPHINA

I'm not taking shit from the *installer*.

MORF drawn to a GROUP surrounding A *BIG MIRRORED SPHERE WITH
DOZENS OF HOLES* ... a label reads

MY FURRY ANIMAL LIKES TO BE PET

A WOMAN

presides, drinking a coffee and ... RHODORA HAZE is a punker
become gallerist ... commerce cloaked as middle-aged bohemian
queen ... gate-keeper of eight-figure sales ...

MORF

(re: the exhibition/gallery)
Color. Life. I love it.

RHODORA

I'm sick of white spaces.

MORF

That's so strange. I've been completely
drawn to bohemian lately.

RHODORA

This adherence to showing in sterile,
monochrome cubes. It's just laziness. I
wanted to get some juxtaposition going.

MORF

I'm actually I mean right now writing something exactly about this.

(re: the MİRRORED SPHERE)

This wasn't in the catalogue.

RHODORA

It's Minkins.

MORF watches VIEWERS tentatively insert their hands and arms deep into the many holes dotting the large MİRRORED SPHERE ... some SMILE at what they feel ... some RECOIL ...

RHODORA

It creates a unique sensation depending on each person and whatever hole they decide to explore. Just like life. It uses all sorts of sensors and gizmos. It's about choice, desire, sex, the whole enchilada.

MORF

It's ground-breaking.

RHODORA

It's yours to break. It debuted 10 minutes ago.

MORF

I'm posting a review. How much is it?

RHODORA

It's so much easier to talk about money than art.

MORF

Funny. Speaking of, is Piers leaving you for Jon Dondon?

RHODORA

I've represented Piers for seventeen years.

MORF

That's not an answer.

RHODORA

Why don't you put your hand in and see what you feel.

RHODORA moves off to speak with several BUYERS ... MORF regarding PEOPLE laughing and freaking as they nervously put their arms inside the MİRRORED SPHERE and CUT TO

A GLITTER BALL

turning to TECHNO ... blood SUNSET in the BG and WIDER TO SHOW

MIAMI MANSION

ALPHA ARTISTS, BUYERS, SELLERS, SPECULATORS water up at a
lavish sea-side Art Basel happening ... crimson solstice
glinting off 100K-watches and jewels as we FIND

MORF and JOSEPHINA in a love seat shaped like lips ...

MORF

These endless art fairs and openings and
installations. Always the same faces.
It's like a wedding that never ends.

JOSEPHINA

(texting)

Ricky's still denying it. *"Please baby,
let me explain."* I swear to God I want
to hurt him.

MORF

Maybe it'll free you for new things.

JOSEPHINA

This was a new thing, he just moved in.

MORF

I have to say I'm having my own major
second thoughts about Ed. He actually
has some fantasy of us getting married.

JOSEPHINA

I'm through dating artists. They're
already in a relationship.

MORF

Louise Bourgeois wrote in her diary in
1980 and said: *"The only access we have
to our volcanic unconscious and our
motives is through the shocks of our
encounters with specific people."* I
believe that. Do you, Josephina?

WE

drift from them ... glide through an ecosystem of excess ...
arrive at GRETCHEN with the ASIAN GALLERY OWNER (CLOUDIO) ...

CLOUDIO

Hoboman's still available. It would be
absolutely perfect for your new wing.

GRETCHEN

We blew our budget buying the Piers.

CLOUDIO

In that case I have the perfect ad line for your next brochure. *Be prepared to see what you've seen before.*

GRETCHEN

Regarding what exactly?

CLOUDIO

You're taking a great museum and filling it with brands. Your job as curator is to challenge, not preserve status quo.

GRETCHEN

You're peddling a Wolfson knock-off and lecturing me on playing it safe?

WE'RE

moving again ... passing *THROUGH* designer drinks ... out to a

PATIO

pulsing with music ... RHODORA against the sunset ... speaking to a young, bearded, SIKH (DAMRISH) ...

RHODORA

Your website doesn't give a sense of scale or texture but seeing your work for the first time today at the new artists fair I had that oh-my-God moment. It charges. It mauls. It devours.

DAMRISH

Six months ago I was living on the street, showing on sidewalks. So that's where I'm coming from. Screw spectacle. I'm about asking tough questions.

RHODORA

Well lemme fill you in. All of this is just a safari to hunt the next new thing and eat it.

DAMRISH

I heard you're the one to watch out for.

RHODORA

Oh I'm easy-peasy and a pussy cat really. You're laughing. See, I'm funny too.

DAMRISH

I know all about you. Going back to your punk days.

RHODORA

That was many moons ago.

DAMRISH

Velvet Buzzsaw.

RHODORA

Well the name was catchy.

DAMRISH

The early stuff was great. Then it became what? Self-parody? I mean after Polly left.

RHODORA

You are informed. It was Polly and me writing the songs so it lost something when she went her own way.

DAMRISH

Why'd you split up?

RHODORA

Who remembers through all the booze and the pills? The point is I've gone from anarchist to purveyor of good taste, so I get the joke. None of this is new. It's all been done since someone charged a bone to see the first cave painting.

RHODORA takes two shots from a passing waiter ... hands one to
DAMRISH ... clinks ... both downing their drinks ...

RHODORA

So what cave are you showing in?

DAMRISH

Me and my dudes started a collective.

RHODORA

Good, you're staying in L.A. then.

DAMRISH

All the way.

RHODORA

Well hell knows I love loyalty but I'd kill to exhibit you. I can guide you through the bullshit and shennanigans, help you create your own art position.

DAMRISH

My position's anti-market.

RHODORA

Hey I put the r into risky shit. I live for art with some fucking soul.

DAMRISH

I just turned down an offer for a full show from Jon Dondon.

RHODORA

And on and on. He's inside right now trying to poach Piers. Know where I am, Damrish? I'm here doing shots with you.

WE

sink to floor level ... glide above white shag ... slalom expensive footwear ... overhear ART SPEAK ... arrive at a pair of paint-spattered work boots and purple smoking slippers ...

JON DONDON V.O.

The market only tiers up for you, Piers.

MAN V.O.

Listen my tolerance for your bullshit is zero.

RISE to find ... plumaged JON DONDON speaking to blue-collar attired PIERS ... world-class artist, feuder, provocateur ...

JON DONDON

Rhodora over-priced you. She's lost it, completely out of touch. I sold Surfer Girl today for 3.7 million, exactly what I said I'd get. If you come with me our gallery has cutting edge analytics to maximize deal flow and global demand.

PIERS

I'm fighting to get back to creation, to revelation, the billion years of energy sparking through our brains. I'm not jetting around hawking fucking tickets.

JON DONDON

In an attention economy celebrity is artform.

PIERS

You know I only give commission on my new work. The repros and prints and replicas are all marketed under my own brand.

JON DONDON

I and my team are more than ecstatic to partner exclusively on your future work.

PIERS

I hear Rhodora sold Sphere for 7 million.

JON DONDON

It's a carnival attraction.

PIERS

It's brilliant. I never should've quit drinking.

DARKNESS DESCENDS

as JOSEPHINA leaves the mansion ... MORF catching up ...

MORF

See you at S.L.S.?

JOSEPHINA

I'm going to a satellite show outside town.

MORF

Oh. I'll come.

MOVING BLACK UBER

silhouetted against a remote stretch of Florida panhandle ...
rising moon and CUT TO

INSIDE THE MOVING CAR

JOSEPHINA in back with MORF ... pulls her vape pipe ...

JOSEPHINA

What's going on with you?

MORF

What do you mean?

JOSEPHINA

You're Morf-fucking-Vandewalt, what are doing going to a grunge show with me?

MORF

I like being with you. We have a taste relationship. Is that tobacco?

JOSEPHINA

Hash oil.

MORF

Maybe I'll just have one little puff.

JOSEPHINA inhales ... hands it ... MORF takes a hit and CUT TO
SPARKS

rise into the sky as ... a bonfire lights a desolate PALM
GROVE ... HUMAN FORMS seen standing in the darkness and ...
the Uber arrives ... MORF emerges ... breaking waves heard ...

MORF

Is this it? Where are we right now?

The Uber leaves ... MORF approaches one of the HUMAN FORMS ...

MORF

Hi, we're looking for the installation.

The bonfire flickers ... REVEALS

THE MAN'S BURNED FACE and ... MORF stumbles ... falls as ...
JOSEPHINA walks up ... regards the DISFIGURED MANNEQUIN ...
other CHARRED PLASTIC FIGURES ... looks at MORF ...

JOSEPHINA

You're lit.

JOSEPHINA takes MORF'S hand ... leads him toward the outline
of a dark, abandoned INDUSTRIAL BUILDING and CUT TO

INSIDE THE INDUSTRIAL BUILDING

Candles ... flashlights ... flares illuminate EXHIBITS ... the
SOUND OF SURF AND HEART BEATS echo throughout the space as ...

MORF and JOSEPHINA step over rubble ... regard a CRYING JESUS
STATUE IN A SMASHED TANNING BED and ...

MORF stares at the piece ... clutching JOSEPHINA'S hand ... is
suddenly overwhelmed ...

MORF

I'm in crisis. Ever since Berlin I find
myself all the time thinking about you.

JOSEPHINA

We were wasted.

MORF

That's what I keep telling myself but
I've had years of drunk sex and I've
never felt anything even remotely like
this. And definitely not for a woman.

They move to A KIDDIE POOL WRITHING WITH LIVE CRABS ...
 PLASTIC DUCKS BOB ATOP A CHURNING MASS OF SHELLS ...

MORF

When I look at this I feel physically
 ill.

MORF suddenly shoved ... an OLD MAN in sunglasses glares ...

MORF

Hey!

OLD MAN

Get out.

JOSEPHINA

Go fuck yourself asshole.

OLD MAN

You don't belong. You're not invited.

MORF

You don't even know who I am.

OLD MAN

You're a fucking pimp.

MORF

In what context?

OLD MAN shoving MORF harder ...

MORF

Okay where's security?

DARK FIGURES emerging from the shadows ... ugly vibe ...

MORF

Are you the organizers? The artists?
 This is so tragically lower end. I was
 going to write this up for Artnet,
 favorably. That's gone out the window.
 My readership is not unsubstantial.

ROCK thrown from the shadows ... just missing MORF and CUT TO
 OUTSIDE

MORF and JOSEPHINA quickly exit the dim building ... into the
 night ... SURF AND HEART BEATS strangely echoing out here ...

MORF

What the hell was that?! Where are we?
 Are we by the ocean? Is that my heart?

JOSEPHINA

Oh fuck.

MORF turns ... silhouetted FIGURES materialize behind them ...

MORF

They're following us. Okay. Uber.

MORF pulls his phone ... texts for a car ...

JOSEPHINA

Don't stop.

MORF and JOSEPHINA

hustle into the DARKNESS as ... ANIMAL SOUNDS are heard from the black ... PREDATORY ... TERRIFYING ...

MORF

That's part of the installation right?
Full immersion?

JOSEPHINA breaks into a run ... MORF beside her ...

MORF holds up his phone ... flashlight function ...

CRASHES into a charred, disfigured MANNEQUIN and ...

MORF DROPS his cell ...

MORF

Fucking pop-up shows.

TWO SHADOW FIGURES

swiftly descend and MORF AND JOSEPHINA are

ATTACKED

GLIMPSED by the glow of the dropped phone ...

DESPERATE brawl ...

MORF grappling with a FORM ...

BROUGHT to ground ...

JOSEPHINA kicking and clawing as ...

MORF

grasps a piece of driftwood ... swinging wildly ... CRUSHING contact ... savage energy ... beating one FIGURE ... smashing the club on JOSEPHINA'S ATTACKER ... grabbing her hand and

THEY

dash through the darkness sudden bright light as

A STOPPED UBER

turns on its headlights ... MORF holding the club ... wild
look ... JOSEPHINA regarding him and CUT TO

MIAMI HOTEL ROOM

MORF washes blood from his hands ... takes a wet wash towel to
JOSEPHINA in the bedroom ... watches her wiping her leg ...

MORF

We should file a police report. I mean
shouldn't we? Isn't that what people do?

JOSEPHINA

I wouldn't know what to report. Some
scuzzball low-lives. I didn't even see
them. Grab two Titos from the fridge.

MORF pulls two shot-bottles of vodka from the mini-bar ...
hands JOSEPHINA one ... caps unscrewed ... shared look as ...
they down them ... JOSEPHINA cues music on an ipod speaker ...

JOSEPHINA

You were badass back there. Seriously.

MORF

Well I do a lot of Pilates and Pelaton.

JOSEPHINA

I remember your body.

MORF

I remember yours. Your skin. It's the
most beautiful cross between almond and
saddle brown.

JOSEPHINA toweling her thigh ... MORF staring ...

JOSEPHINA

I make you hard huh?

MORF

You make me confused.

JOSEPHINA

Tough headspace for a critic.

MORF motionless as ... JOSEPHINA takes his hand ... guiding it
between her legs and we DISSOLVE TO

A HAIRLESS CAT

sitting Sphinx-like on a white marble floor ... watching a school of KOI in an INDOOR REFLECTION POND and WIDEN TO SHOW

LOS ANGELES

at dawn through towering floor-to-ceiling windows ... sweeping views from downtown to the Pacific as

WE

move through a hilltop, ARCHITECTURAL GEM ... beneath A BIG MOBILE MADE OF ELECTRIC GUITARS suspended in a large foyer as we pass

A SERIES OF BIG LITHOS OF RHODORA IN HER PUNK DAYS hanging in her soaring living room and

WE

continue through large glass doors ... now OUTSIDE ... drift over a large LAWN toward

BIG OUTDOOR SCULPTURES MADE OF STEEL SLABS near which we FIND

RHODORA at a TABLE MADE OF A CRUSHED CAR ... old robe ... mane of mussed hair and CLOSE ON

A FADED TATTOO OF A VELVET BUZZSAW on her neck as ... she talks to her phone ... uses voice command to write a text ...

RHODORA/INTO PHONE

Aside from the peachy Minkins sale Miami was really not a very great thriving market. Brass tacks we didn't move one Rubek. I know the London office has a hard-on for him but to my mind the last thing we need to waste time on is trying to flog some pop art revival.

(reads text, speaks succinctly)

POP ART. POP ART. POP ART. Fuck me.

RHODORA spears a melon ball with a toothpick and CUT TO

MID-CITY APARTMENT

MORF in his ART-FILLED minimalist studio ... writing on his laptop as ... a muscled MAN (ED) passes naked in the BG ... drapes MORF from behind ... reading his in-progress review ...

ED

"Star of the Nova section was Mertilla Splude's Go-Pro Kindergarten, an inspired disquisition of early age experience."

ED walking off ...

ED

Get inspired and join me in the shower.

MORF regards ED naked from behind ... pulls a

CELL PHOTO OF HE AND JOSEPHINA

hugging in Miami ... resumes writing and CUT TO

A SUNNY LOS ANGELES STREET

as the CAMERA glides just above a cracked sidewalk ... ENTERS

A THREE-STORY MOORISH APARTMENT HOUSE

dating back decades and ... we travel *THROUGH* the glass door ... into a FOYER ... past a row of mailboxes as ... WE RISE UP

A shabby STAIRWELL to the

SECOND FLOOR

Ratty carpet and wallpaper lead down a hall where JOSEPHINA'S seen leaving her apartment ... locking it ... walking past in fashionable clothes as she talks on her cell ...

JOSEPHINA/INTO PHONE

Goddamn it Ricky get your shit out by tonight or I swear I'm throwing it out. I don't want to see it when I get home. And put the key under the mat when you leave you fucking piece of shit.

JOSEPHINA hangs up ... stops ... stares at a BLACK CANE on the stairs ... she looks around ... glances up to see

AN OLD, GNARLED HAND

poking through the third floor railing directly above her ... fingers talon-like in a fist ... unmoving and CUT TO

THE HAZE GALLERY

is a sprawling funhouse of *CONTEMPORARY ART* ... EMPLOYEES arriving for work ... heading to back rooms and cubicles as

THE RECEPTION DESK PHONE rings ... no one to answer ... BRYSON on a ladder ... repairing an air vent as RHODORA arrives ...

RHODORA
(to BRYSON, re: ringing phone)
Who's supposed to be here?

BRYSON
Josephina. She's late. Again.

RHODORA
(calls to a YOUNG GIRL in back)
You, Rococo. Take the reception desk.

YOUNG GIRL
(hurrying over)
It's Coco, actually.

RHODORA walking away ... COCO answers the ringing phone ...

COCO/INTO PHONE
Haze Gallery. Can I help you? Hello?

No one there ... BRYSON looking down from the ladder ...

BRYSON
Hung up, huh? The rich are impatient.
(COCO ignoring him)
I'm really an artist you know. I helped
Bandini do Fruit Loop Hippo. I glued all
the Fruit Loops on. It's at the Broad.
I can get us tickets.

COCO trapped ... BRYSON over her on the ladder and CUT TO

RHODORA'S OFFICE

RHODORA watches an ART VIDEO ... *GO-PRO POV OF KINDERGARTNERS
PLAYING ON A SCHOOLYARD* ... her cell rings ... answering ...

RHODORA/ON PHONE
When did you get back?

INTERCUT -- MORF DRIVING THE MIRACLE MILE IN A MINI-COOPER

MORF/ON PHONE
Last night, and I have solid confirmation
that Piers has left you for Jon Dondon.

RHODORA/OVER PHONE
I'm going to get bored now.

MORF/ON PHONE
This feels huge to me, why would he go?

RHODORA/OVER PHONE

Why? Why anything? Maybe I wanted him to leave. Meanwhile I'm signing new talent.

MORF/OVER PHONE

I heard you got Damrish. He's fierce.

RHODORA/OVER PHONE

And this morning Mertilla Splude.

MORF/OVER PHONE

We are on the same frequency, I swear. Kindergarten Go-Pro's gonna break big.

RHODORA/OVER PHONE

Your lips God's ear. Oh wait, in our world you are God. And I'm running late. Gotta go.

RHODORA hangs up ... goes out to the gallery as JOSEPHINA arrives ... follows RHODORA past *CONTEMPORARY ART* displays ...

JOSEPHINA

I'm sorry. Some random guy just like died in my building.

RHODORA

Ohmigod I really am so surprised.

JOSEPHINA

No a neighbor actually died and I found the body. The cops couldn't locate any relatives or friends or anyone so they made me stay while they did paperwork.

RHODORA

Bryson keeps me up to speed on what goes on around here. Your chronic lateness.

JOSEPHINA

Bryson's pissed because he came on to me and I shut him down. He's a flat-out creeper.

RHODORA

Well I can say the interest I had in you has waned. All our long talks about your struggles and grand ambitions and then you insult my intelligent mind.

JOSEPHINA

Some guy died on the stairs. It just happened. They made me stay.

RHODORA

I'm moving you back to the back. No client contact until you raise the quality bar on your performance.

RHODORA ENTERS A GLASS-WALLED CONFERENCE ROOM

where a dozen STAFF are gathered as ... JOSEPHINA remains outside and CUT TO

INSIDE THE CONFERENCE ROOM

RHODORA sits at the head of the table ... STAFF quieting ...

RHODORA

Do we have London, Berlin and Singapore?

A BIG SCREEN splits ... shows GALLERY REPS in other cities ...

RHODORA

So I know there's been some pretty unsubtle anxiety about Piers and what's happening and I can tell you where we are now is he's fled the coop for Dondon. We're not about status quo, we overthrow it. So I have two new favorite artists I'm all kinds of happy to tell you about.

JOSEPHINA seen walking off as ... we go *THROUGH* the glass wall ... catch up to her as she passes BRYSON on the ladder ...

JOSEPHINA

Fuck you you fuck.

JOSEPHINA grabs the ladder ... about to topple him ... stalks off and CUT TO

A WINE CAP

is unscrewed ... cup filled ... JOSEPHINA drinks ... again ... sits at night under a bare light bulb as we WIDEN TO SHOW

JOSEPHINA'S APARTMENT

is a two-room box ... Ikea pieces ... curtains breath in and out with the breeze as ... JOSEPHINA spies a pair of MEN'S BOXERS draped on a door ... she angrily retrieves them ... grabs a shopping bag ... collecting men's clothes and CUT TO

OUTSIDE JOSEPHINA'S APARTMENT

as she goes out to a BACK ALLEY ... throws the shopping bag of clothes in the garbage ... stops to see a truck positioning a DEMOLITION DUMPSTER nearby ... TRUCK DRIVER emerging ...

TRUCK DRIVER

Is this 1473?

JOSEPHINA

Yeah. They doing work on the building?

TRUCK DRIVER

Emptying an apartment. Hoarder died.
We're taking it all tomorrow.

INSIDE JOSEPHINA'S BUILDING

JOSEPHINA coming up the stairs ... reaching her landing ... regards where she saw the dropped cane ... looks up where she saw the dead hand ... curious ... climbing the stairs to the

THIRD FLOOR

and JOSEPHINA stares at the spot where the body was ... looks down the corridor to a DOOR at the end of the hall as

JOSEPHINA'S drawn to a paint-chipped portal marked 3F ...

JOSEPHINA sees its ajar ... grips the knob ... looks in and ... pitch-black ... JOSEPHINA flips a light switch to REVEAL

A DIMLY-LIT ROOM

shoulder-high in CLUTTER ... 75 YEARS OF HOARDING ... NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES ... mounds OF LOOSE STRING ... piles of PEPTO-BISMOL BOTTLES ... a narrow lane leads inside and

JOSEPHINA

enters ... dead moths outline a ceiling light as ... she threads past heaps of RAGS ... old, broken TOYS ... a light draws JOSEPHINA to the rear of the apartment and she enters

A BEDROOM

WHERE A LAMP ILLUMINATES A TABLE PILED WITH PENCIL NUBS AND CRACKED WATERCOLORS ... WALLS SEEN COVERED WITH ART ...

SHELVES FILLED WITH PICTURES AND ILLUSTRATIONS ...

MYRIAD HALF-FINISHED VISIONS ...

THE DOMINANT THEME OF THE IMAGERY IS FAMILY ... PARENTS AND CHILDREN ... PLAYING ... PROTECTING ... HOLDING ... LOVING ... PARENT-CHILD DOMESTICITY REPEATED IN INTRICATE PASTICHES MADE OF CLIPPINGS AND PAINTINGS ... DATING BACK MANY DECADES ...

JOSEPHINA sees a desk ... approaches ... spies DOZENS OF LARGE, HAND-BOUND LEATHER FOLIOS ... JOSEPHINA opens one and

WE

are looking at her looking at us ... expression of wonder and

JOSEPHINA'S POV

THE FOLIOS TRACE A FAMILY SAGA ...

BEAUTIFUL ... STUNNING ... SERENE ... REVELATORY AT TIMES ...

THREATENING AT OTHERS ...

DETAILED ... OBSESSIVE ...

SET AGAINST LOS ANGELES ...

FACES ALWAYS OBSCURED ...

HUMAN FAMILIES SOMETIMES MORPHING INTO ANIMAL FORM ...

AN EPIC FEVERED FANTASY FROM THE SUBCONSCIOUS REALM ...

JOSEPHINA

stunned ... turning pages ... unblinking gaze and CUT TO

A SMUDGE OF SUN

rising against a white-sheet sky ... a demolition truck is
parked outside JOSEPHINA'S BUILDING and CUT TO

JOSEPHINA'S BATHROOM

JOSEPHINA applying make-up ... SEES

WORKERS

outside lugging away arm-loads and wheelbarrows of hoarding
clutter and

JOSEPHINA

regards herself in the mirror, exits the bathroom ... passes

A LARGE PILE OF FOLIOS, SCROLLS AND PAINTINGS

she retrieved from the upstairs apartment ... JOSEPHINA tucks
a FOLIO under her arm, leaves, locks the door behind her and

WE

remain in the apartment with the ART WORK ... view outside as
workers discard a lifetime into the dumpster and CUT TO

JOSEPHINA'S APARTMENT BUILDING FOYER

JOSEPHINA regards a rusty mail box marked 3F ... scrawled on the yellowing label ...

vetril dease

MAN'S VOICE

Did you know him?

JOSEPHINA turns ... sees a sport-jacketed MAN behind her ...

JOSEPHINA

No.

MAN

I'm from Perlack, we own the building.
It's a health hazard up there.

MAN putting on a mask ... climbing the stairs and CUT TO

A YOGA CLASS

lets out ... sweat-sheened ANGELENOS leave with mats ... hard-body MORF among them ... JOSEPHINA outside with the folio ...

MORF

Hey! I'm so glad you called. I'd hug
but I'm all sweaty. Love the jumper.
Cornsilk's a great color for you.

JUICE BOOTH

MORF pays as they take their drinks ... sit by a BIG MİRRORED BANK WINDOW ... JOSEPHINA holding the large leather FOLIO ...

MORF

Miami was a revelation, let me just start with that. I don't know where I am with anything else in my life other than that I feel good with you. So much better and beyond good. I know it's subjective and not an article of faith but it's a myth that someone's strictly straight or gay or bisexual means being in denial. Person-based attraction can override gender. I've searched for clarity and after Miami I can now say with absolute certainty that Ed's a complete mistake and my emotional and physical feelings for you are congruent and unified. Wow. Hello. Good morning.

JOSEPHINA

I found something.

MORF

That's what I'm saying.

JOSEPHINA pulls the large, overflowing FOLIO ... MORF opening it ... staring at the IMAGES ... turning pages ...

MORF

Who did these?

JOSEPHINA

What do you think of them?

MORF

They're visionary. Mesmeric. Just an absolute incredible mix of mediums. I'm ensorcelled.

IN THE MIRRORED BANK WINDOW BEHIND THEM

THE REFLECTION OF A FAMILY IS SEEN ... SUITED FATHER ... WELL-DRESSED MOTHER AND SON ... THEIR FACES DOWN OR OBSCURED ...

JOSEPHINA

You think there's a market for it?

MORF

Massive. Beyond. Who represents them?

JOSEPHINA

I do.

IN THE MIRRORED WINDOW

THE FATHER IS SEEN SLAPPING HIS SON AND CUT TO

VIEW FROM INSIDE THE BANK

THERE'S NO FAMILY MAKING THE REFLECTION ... NO ONE'S THERE ...

MORF/HEARD THROUGH GLASS

I'm dying with suspense, who is it?

CAMERA pulling back through the bank lobby ... *THROUGH PEOPLE* ... MORF and JOSEPHINA talking ... world passing and CUT TO

A MOBILE HOME LIVING ROOM

where RHODORA stands staring at a TRAILER PARK FAMILY ... FATHER, MOTHER, THREE KIDS ... frozen in front of a tube TV and cartons of half-eaten fast-food ...

RHODORA

It seemed edgier at the Biennale. Was
this the exact lighting?

A LIGHTING TECH appears from behind a wall ... looks ...

TECH

I think so.

RHODORA

Go check the specs.

The TECH departs to SHOW ... it's an *INSTALLATION* in RHODORA'S
GALLERY ... RHODORA alone with the LIFELESS FAMILY as

A NATIVE AMERICAN MAN

silently appears behind her ... chain belt ... tatt-covered
arms ... imposing as ... RHODORA turns ... face-to-face ...

MAN

I run the collective Damrish belongs to.

RHODORA

I didn't think collectives had people in
charge. Doesn't that defeat the whole
purpose?

MAN

I represent him.

RHODORA

Used to.

MAN

We're building something apart from all
this. He's a crucial part of it.
Stealing Damrish away could end us.

RHODORA

He's not a child. It's his choice not
mine.

MAN staring before ... he leaves and ... COCO hurries in ...

COCO

I tried to stop him.

RHODORA

You FAILED.

COCO withers ... backs out ... RHODORA alone with the FAUX
MOBILE HOME FAMILY and CUT TO

RHODORA'S GALLERY

JOSEPHINA in a back area for gallery operations ... peering at a spread-sheet on her computer ... drudge work as ... she SEES COCO return to the reception desk, shaken and

JOSEPHINA gets up ... makes her way through a warren of cubicles ... pours a coffee ... comes back to find ... BRYSON in her cubicle ... looking through the large FOLIO ...

JOSEPHINA

What the fuck do you think you're doing?

BRYSON

What is this? Who is it?

JOSEPHINA

(grabbing the folio)

That was under my desk, under my bag.

BRYSON

(not letting go)

I was looking for tape and I saw it.

JOSEPHINA

This is harassment.

BRYSON

Tell me the artist's name.

JOSEPHINA

What the fuck is wrong with you?

BRYSON

I do more than just maintenance and packing. I'm not a man of primitive skills. This shit talks to me.

JOSEPHINA yanks the folio away ... BRYSON regarding her ... disturbed look ... wanders away and HOLD ON

A LARGE AERIAL PHOTO OF LOS ANGELES ON A WALL BEHIND HER ... TITLED "INFRASTRUCTURE" AS WE ZOOM IN ON

THE WEST SIDE OF THE CITY IN THE HIGH-RESOLUTION PHOTO ... ZOOMING CLOSER AND CLOSER ON VENICE AS THE PHOTO COMES TO LIFE ... MOVING TRAFFIC AND PEOPLE ... CAMERA ZEROING ON A CITROEN ... ONE CONTINUOUS SHOT AS WE DROP ALONGSIDE TO SEE ...

JON DONDON drives ...

ARRIVES at a SMALL VENICE BEACH WAREHOUSE ...

SECURITY CAMERA staring down ... pressing the intercom ...

JON DONDON

Hey-ho, it's Jon.

The gate opens ... reveals PIERS waiting outside with a GREAT DANE ... standing amid a collection of SPORTS CARS as ... JON pulls in ... emerges ...

JON

Studio visit. How exciting!

PIERS

I can't stomach cheery or upbeat. I'm not a idiot, remember that.

JON

I'm honored to be your new representative and see what you've been up to.

PIERS

I'll just bet you are. Aw fuck it.

PIERS walks to a building ... the GREAT DANE trails and CUT TO
INSIDE THE WAREHOUSE

it's a small factory ... a DOZEN ARTISANS toil at long tables
... pain-stakingly crafting *PIERS ART PRODUCTS* and CLOSE ON

*THE PIECES ARE REPRODUCTION FIGURES FROM PIERS'S ETCHINGS ...
MADE OF DIFFERENT MATERIALS ... RANGING IN SIZE FROM KEY-CHAIN
TO YARDS TALL ...*

JON DONDON

So this is where the magic happens.

PIERS

That a joke?

JON DONDON

I'm sorry?

PIERS

These are the repros and replicas. The studio's back here.

JON DONDON follows PIERS past the art assembly-line and CUT TO
PIERS'S STUDIO

is large ... nearly empty ... there's a big TV with the sound off ... a BASKETBALL HOOP and ... a bar stool facing an easel holding a *HALF-FINISHED ETCHING* ... PIERS goes to a barrel of basketballs ... starts shooting hoops as ... JON looks around ... approaches a TAPED-UP BALL OF PLASTIC on the floor ...

JON

Remarkable.

PIERS

That's NOT art.

JON backing away ... approaching the *HALF-FINISHED ETCHING* on the easel ... regarding it ... PIERS shooting baskets ...

PIERS

Well?

JON

I'm soaking it in. It's thrilling to see a work in progress.

PIERS

Give me a truthful goddamn opinion of what you're looking at.

JON

I see a line with your body of work.

PIERS

I'm copying myself.

JON

It's not copying if it's your canon. I thought your studio was downtown.

PIERS

Too many addiction triggers. I've worked here the last year.

JON

I'd love to see the new work you've done since moving. My team is geared up and ready to sell every new piece you have.

PIERS hurls a basketball ... GREAT DANE retreating as ...

JON looks around ... *REALIZATION* hitting ... this -- the half-finished etching on the easel -- is all PIERS has done ...

JON

I see. Right. You've been gestating.

PIERS

That's rich. No. That implies birth. Ideas come but they kill themselves as they appear. This is a slaughterhouse.

PIERS stalks out ... JON alone with the GREAT DANE and CUT TO

MOVING CITROEN

JON speeding on a wide L.A. BOULEVARD ... his cell rings ...

JON/ON PHONE

Gretchen, how are you?

INTERCUT -- GRETCHEN IN HER SLEEK L.A.C.M.A. CURATOR'S OFFICE

GRETCHEN/ON PHONE

Well? Tell me everything.

JON/ON PHONE

Revelatory.

GRETCHEN/ON PHONE

I don't know a soul who has a clue what Piers has been up to. Rhodora's been so secretive. What's he working on?

JON/ON PHONE

I can say he's utterly consumed.

MORF seen at GRETCHEN'S glass door ... waves hello ...

GRETCHEN/ON PHONE

You're a shark snatching him from Rhodora and a rat for not sharing more. Call the instant he has new work to show. Kisses.
(hangs up, waving MORF in)
I heard you were coming by.

MORF

I'm reviewing your Purlfoy exhibit.

GRETCHEN

Be kind, our membership's plummeting.

MORF

Tell me something, have you ever heard of an artist named Vetril Dease? D-E-A-S-E.

GRETCHEN

No.

MORF

Can you check?

GRETCHEN types on her computer ... scrolls a screen ...

GRETCHEN

Not in our records, and we have everyone. Morf honey I need to bend your ear.
(closing the office door)

GRETCHEN

I'm leaving to become an art advisor. I can't say for whom but I'll be making enough to afford a terribly lovely car and garden. I came to the museum because I wanted to change the world through art but the wealthy vacuum up everything. Except for crumbs the best work is only enjoyed by a tiny few and they buy what they're told. So why not join the party?

MORF and GRETCHEN at a window ... museum visitors outside ...

MORF

It's everywhere now, the money question.

GRETCHEN

In advance of my move I'm very actively looking for purchases for my new client. You might be interested to know I could provide to you a generous, untraceable reward for anything you steer me to in the realm of undervalued. Pre-review perhaps.

MORF

Why would you...? I don't do that.

GRETCHEN

What's your arrangement with Rhodora?

MORF

None.

GRETCHEN

Then her buys prior to your favorable notices are utterly prescient.

MORF

This is my life. How I connect with some sort of spirituality and actual present.

GRETCHEN

Of course.

MORF

I assess out of adoration. I further the realm I analyze.

GRETCHEN

Forgive me.

MORF

Fuck.

GRETCHEN

Kisses.

GRETCHEN air-kisses him and

MORF

leaves ... walks down a

STERILE HALL

lined with *CONTEMPORARY ART* as ... *CAMERA TRACKS AHEAD* of MORF
... moving fast ... directly toward a *PAINTING* and ...

WE

pass *THROUGH* the *FRAMED PIECE OF ART* ... instantly *EMERGE* into
JOSEPHINA'S APARTMENT

at night ... *DEASE ART* spread everywhere ... scale of the
PAINTINGS, SCROLLS and *POSTERS* overwhelming ... music plays as
... *JOSEPHINA* pours a glass of wine ... unrolls

A MURAL-SIZE PIECE OF A LOOMING COUPLE ... SEEN FROM A CHILD'S
VANTAGE ... PARENT FIGURES REACHING DOWN WITH LARGE HANDS AS

A WIND blows through the open windows ...

MURAL rolling closed ... *PARENTS' HANDS* seemingly encircle
JOSEPHINA as ... she pulls away to see

RHODORA

in the open doorway ... frozen by the *ART* filling the room ...

RHODORA

Hells bells.

JOSEPHINA

What are you doing here?

RHODORA spell-bound as ... *JOSEPHINA* realizes ...

JOSEPHINA

Bryson.

RHODORA

(the *ART*)
I'm a dish-rag.

JOSEPHINA

I have to ask you to go.

RHODORA

Not if you had a gun.

RHODORA sees in the bedroom ... DEASE ART laid everywhere ...

JOSEPHINA

It's none of your business.

RHODORA

Actually it is. You signed a non-compete clause, which if you read you might remember is very much quite a lot broader than that.

(peers at a painting signature)

Tell me all about Vetril Dease. His name is the tinsel on the tree.

JOSEPHINA silent ...

RHODORA

Don't make me pull some sort of heavy interrogation. Right now it's just you and me with all our active friendship and love for each other. Now how did you get all these?

JOSEPHINA

He lived upstairs. He died.

RHODORA

When did he pass?

JOSEPHINA

Yesterday.

RHODORA

That was the body you said you found. *Some random old guy, no family or friends.* I forget to feed the cat but that is how you put it. I won't bother with the obvious questions but you must have some giant plans. Well I invented do-it-yourself, going back to my punk days, and short of some sad piddling about you're in way over head, doll. You have to archive and catalogue and establish ownership and of course monetize. I'm willing to do all that for a reasonable percentage. You can engage me in an endless lawsuit or we can become rich and I'll teach you on the way. So that's decided. Now who else knows any of this?

JOSEPHINA

I showed one of the folios to Morf.

RHODORA

Are you two actually some sort of item?

JOSEPHINA

We're figuring it out.

RHODORA

His prominence as an art critic doesn't guide your feelings at all I'm sure. I'm only just now starting to get you. Did you tell Morf how you obtained these?

JOSEPHINA

No. I wanted his opinion. He did some research and learned he's never shown.

RHODORA

(peering at a painting)

A found artist par excellence.

WE'RE

looking up at RHODORA staring down at us ...

RHODORA

There is a God.

RHODORA shutting the folio ... BLACK SCREEN ... silence and

WHOOSH

as the folio's opened and the world reappears ... we're in a LAWYER'S OFFICE ... spectacled ATTORNEY hovering over us ...

ATTORNEY

We can claim the property was abandoned if she says she found it in the dumpster.

SECOND ATTORNEY coming into FRAME ... staring down at us ...

ATTORNEY #2

And took steps to find a rightful owner.

THIRD ATTORNEY appearing ... looking at us ...

ATTORNEY #3

First reports are that he had no heirs.

ATTORNEY #2

Could the apartment building make a claim?

THIRD ATTORNEY lifting the folio to the light ... angled view revealing JOSEPHINA at a conference table in the BG ...

JOSEPHINA

The salvage guy said they were junking everything. I mean it took me hours to carry it all down into my apartment. There was just so much of it.

ATTORNEY #3

You retrieved the art from the trash, not from his apartment. This is important. Remembering back, you found it in the dumpster, isn't that what happened?

JOSEPHINA

The dumpster. Yeah, I remember now.

ATTORNEY shutting the folio ... BLACK SCREEN and

WHOOSH

as the FRAME unrolls to a rectangle and ... we're looking into RHODORA'S OFFICE ... RHODORA and MORF studying us ...

MORF

Critique is so limiting and emotionally draining. I always wanted to do something long-form, beyond opinion. Dip my toe into an exploration of origin. The metamorphosis of spirit into reality. How essence negotiates form. I never had the vehicle until now. An artist toiling in the recesses, discovered in death. I want to start researching immediately.

RHODORA

There's timing. Meshing with our extensive marketing plans, which we haven't gotten to yet.

MORF

I'm willing to write the exhibit brochure, that gives instant weight to the launch. In return I want exclusive rights to a book and several pieces.

RHODORA

Well that sounds swell. So what's this I hear that you and Ed might be splitting? That would be a shame, he's a keeper.

MORF

I wasn't aware you were acquainted.

RHODORA

We met at a function once.

MORF

I think you know I've met someone else.

MORF rolling the scroll closed ... BLACK SCREEN ... building sound of HEAVY METAL AND POWER TOOLS as

WHOOSH

and we're a SQUARE FRAME looking into the UPSTAIRS OF RHODORA'S GALLERY ...

ENORMOUS NUMBER OF DEASE'S STORED ...

BRYSON finishing building a frame ... HEAVY METAL playing as he takes a DEASE ... stares at it ... sets it in the frame ... covers it with a clothe and ... BLACK SCREEN as

WHOOSH

a WOMAN ARCHIVIST peers at us through an illuminated magnifying lens ... fascinated by what she sees ... jotting notes as ... the ARCHIVIST'S phone rings ... answering ...

ARCHIVIST/ON PHONE

Hi, it's Gita ... Well I'm cataloguing his materials and running spectrums on his paints and it's the damndest thing, I don't even know how to account for it ...

ARCHIVIST/GITA leaving the room to continue the call ... turning the lights off ... BLACK SCREEN and

WHOOSH

as we're in STUDIO ... view through VARIOUS FRAMES of RHODORA and some of her staring STAFF as ... we're photographed ... FLASH ... FLASH ... FLASH ... time accelerating as the CAMERA FLASHES become STROBE-LIKE and

WHOOSH

as we're a FRAME being carried through RHODORA'S GALLERY ... see preparations for the Dease exhibit as ... we're set down near the reception desk ... COCO swamped by ringing phones ...

COCO/INTO PHONE

Haze Gallery please hold ... Haze Gallery please hold ... Haze Gallery please hold--

COCO presses the next phone button ... about to speak when she OVERHEARS RHODORA on the line ... speaking with a MAN ...

RHODORA/OVERHEARD ON PHONE
You're sure it's the same Dease?

MAN/OVERHEARD ON PHONE
*I have his records in front of me. I
 also contacted the institution.*

RHODORA/OVER PHONE
*Send them over and wash your hands of it.
 And double your bill.*

A WORKER approaches the reception desk and ... COCO goes back
 to the lines that are holding ...

COCO/INTO PHONE
 Haze Gallery, can I help you?

The WORKER turns us against the wall ... BLACK SCREEN and

WHOOSH

as we're a FRAME looking into MORF'S BEDROOM ... night ...
 MORF at his desk ... framed DEASE on the wall before him ...
 photos of DEASE'S WORK everywhere ... notes spread around ...
 MORF typing as ... he narrates what he writes ...

MORF'S VOICE
 Vetril Dease appears first in a 1939 Los
 Angeles court document. Citing cruelty
 beyond the bounds of humanity, child
 protection services removed Vetril from
 his abusive father and placed him in the
 Good Templars Orphanage in South Vallejo.

WE BREAK FRAME

and pass over MORF'S desk ... looking at 1930S COURT RECORDS
 ... OLD PHOTOS of the austere GOOD TEMPLARS ORPHANAGE ...

MORF'S VOICE
 At 18 Dease was put on the street where
 he found work as a sign painter. Shortly
 after, he disappears from all city and
 state records for three decades, suddenly
 resurfacing on the payroll of the
 Sawtelle Veteran's Hospital, where he was
 employed as a janitor for 42 years.

WE

move to an old NEWSPAPER PHOTO of the VETERAN'S HOSPITAL
 CENTENNIAL ... group of employees gathered and CLOSE ON

A BLURRY MAN IN THE BACK ROW, WEARING A JANITOR'S UNIFORM ...

MORF'S VOICE

Dease lived a monk-like existence outside his work, using his minimal wage to pay for a four-decade fixation exploring the bonds, fragility and terror of childhood.

WE

look at *SCANS OF DEASE ART ... ALWAYS THE SAME FAMILIAL THEME ... PARENTS AND CHILDREN ... BEAUTY ... LOVE ... ABUSE ...*

MORF'S VOICE

Removed from established art circles, Vetril created a pictorial saga with no apparent regard of commerce or recognition. His epic work, at times accompanied by text, tracks a family torn by the conflict between innocence and evil, frequently depicting infants and children endangered by those entrusted with their care.

WE

come around MORF ... examine him closely as he writes ...

MORF'S VOICE

Dease's world appears hermetically sealed. The geography is an amorphous suburban landscape with glimpses of industry and a mountain retreat called Lake Of Constance, a well-spring from which creativity seems derived.

WE

linger on a *DEASE SCAN SHOWING THE FAMILY BESIDE A STUNNING LAKE ... ITS MIRRORED CALM REFLECTS A TRANSCENDENT SUNSET ...*

MORF'S VOICE

Dease used a highly unique pastiche process to create a realm where youth struggles to survive in the penumbra of adults, whose actions often seem contradictory, threatening and violent.

MORF stretches ... gets naked ... joins JOSEPHINA in bed ...

MORF'S VOICE

Children in Dease's world are hardly benign, however, as authority figures guilty of abuse suffer hallucinatory, other-worldly punishment, often at the hands of child-animal hybrids.

WE

angle to a DEASE SCAN DEPICTING A SUBURBAN KITCHEN AT NIGHT
... DIM LIGHT ... FATHER FIGURE COWERING IN A CORNER OF THE
ROOM ... BEING MAULED BY SHADOW CHILDREN as

MORF kills the light ... DARKNESS and ... our view suddenly
returns ... EERILY INFRARED as

WE

watch MORF and JOSEPHINA in bed ... kissing ... feeling ...

JOSEPHINA

Ricky has an exhibition Friday. He's a
hack, a bearded downtown poser.

Things getting heated ... MORF into it as ... she stops ...

JOSEPHINA

He hasn't had like an original idea in
his life. He steals from everyone. I
want you to give him a bad review.

Two of them seen in INFRARED ... bodies entwined ...

MORF

You're serious?

JOSEPHINA

Yeah I'm serious. Go to Ricky's show.
See for yourself how much he sucks. Then
do what you do. For me.

JOSEPHINA climbs on him ... kisses him and ...

BLACK SCREEN

as ... CROWD sounds filter in ... event overheard and ... the
BLACK is pierced by a SMALL FRAME offering a window into

RHODORA'S GALLERY

at the DEASE EXHIBIT opening ... FRAMES of different shapes
and sizes come to life ... give views into the ART GALA packed
with ... HUNDREDS OF WEALTHY and FAMOUS and HIP and CUT TO

INSIDE THE PARTY

Gallery filled with DIFFERENT SIZE FRAMED PIECES BY DEASE as
... RHODORA and JOSEPHINA are seen across the room talking to
a COUPLE ... their conversation oddly heard over others ...

RHODORA

He came from nowhere, knew no one and if our industrious Josephina here hadn't been so observant the poor soul's work would have been thrown away and he would've been consigned to oblivion.

JOSEPHINA

I spotted it by a street light over a dumpster.

WE

traverse the party from a silent, unseen PERSON'S POV ... reach RHODORA and JOSEPHINA and the COUPLE ...

MAN

Approximately how many pieces are there?

RHODORA

Unfortunately Mister Dease's output was the opposite from what one would call prolific.

JOSEPHINA shoots RHODORA a look ...

RHODORA

And he's certainly not making any more.

WOMAN

There's one we're very interested in.

RHODORA

Just know demand has people ready to kill.

GRETCHEN approaching ...

RHODORA

Fetchen.

GRETCHEN

(air kiss, pulls RHODORA aside)
Before the sublime the whole body quivers.

RHODORA

At these prices your museum's locked out.

GRETCHEN

I just yesterday left the museum. So I can speak freely now. I'm an advisor for a private buyer.

RHODORA

Whom?

GRETCHEN

Our friend who bought Sphere.

RHODORA

How hilarious for you.

GRETCHEN

In that capacity I have my eye on several of the large format product for him.

RHODORA

Well the sales staff have been busy beavers. Everything's on reserve.

GRETCHEN

Perhaps we'd pay a premium.

RHODORA

That doesn't butter the biscuit.

GRETCHEN

What would?

RHODORA

I'll sell you two Dease if you buy three pieces at Damrish's opening next month.

GRETCHEN

I don't know if my client will respond to Damrish.

RHODORA

You're the advisor. Advise.

WE

leave RHODORA ... *HOVERING* through the CROWD ... enter a

SIDE ROOM

to find DAMRISH alone on a sofa ... staring at a *DEASE* as

PIERS sits down beside him ... the two of them staring as ... a WAITER enters ... circles and ... PIERS suddenly grabs a drink ... throws it back as ... DAMRISH fires a joint ... both utterly absorbed by the *DEASE* and

WE

follow the WAITER into the MAIN ROOM ... find RHODORA working the CROWD as ... JOSEPHINA approaches ... takes her aside ...

JOSEPHINA

What did you mean his output was the opposite of prolific?

RHODORA

If Debeers released all their diamonds they'd be cheap as cut glass. Didn't they teach any of this in art school?

JOSEPHINA

How many are we saying he made?

RHODORA

Their value is their scarcity, there's no stockpiling for future sale. So it's not what we say. It's reality.

JOSEPHINA

The reality is we have over 3000 pieces stored upstairs.

RHODORA

That's nonsense. Why I'd doubt if it's practically even half that number.

JOSEPHINA

What have you done?

RHODORA

Removed them from circulation. Locking them away for some rainy day.

RHODORA is encircled by chatty HIPSTERS as ... JOSEPHINA angrily angles through the packed room ... passing MORF ...

MORF

Hey, I want you to meet Josephina--

JOSEPHINA doesn't stop as ... we stay on MORF talking to two GERMAN WOMEN ...

MORF

Josephina just made partner here so she's super busy bringing Dease to the world. Isn't it exhilarating to see something substantial, I mean other than celebrity tattoo artists and balloons for painting tools. I'm writing a book about him.

WOMAN #1

I just loathed your Ricky Blane review yesterday. I thought his show was inspired.

MORF

I didn't get it I suppose.

WOMAN #1

I felt we saw totally different exhibits.

MORF

Well even a bad review's better than
sinking into the great glut of anonymity.

WOMAN #2

Is that a joke?

MORF

Not that I'm aware of.

WOMAN #2

Ricky got drunk and crashed his car last
night. He's in a coma.

WOMAN #1

I heard he was crushed.

MORF

By the car?

WOMAN #2

Your review.

The WOMEN meet a group of GERMANS ... drift off ... leave MORF
surrounded by PEOPLE ... alone ... absorbing the news and ...

WE

move from him ... travel above heads and hairdos ... down a

BACK HALL

where we swiftly ascend a STAIRCASE to FIND

JOSEPHINA

key-coding a SECURITY DOOR ... opening it and CUT TO

THE UPSTAIRS STORAGE ROOM

where BRYSON works ... JOSEPHINA turns on the lights ... looks
around to SEE

EMPTY STORAGE SPACES

where the DEASE PIECES were kept ... JOSEPHINA realizes a
LARGE NUMBER ARE GONE as she kills the lights ... leaves and

WE

stay in the room ... spill light illuminating a framed DEASE
on BRYSON'S work bench as ... CAMERA TRACKS AHEAD ...

RACING THROUGH THE FRAMED PIECE ... INSTANTLY EMERGING AND

WE

are looking through a GIANT FRAME 50 FEET ABOVE SUNSET
BOULEVARD ... night TRAFFIC passing below as

BRYSON'S PICK-UP TRUCK appears ... HEAVY METAL heard playing
from the open window and

REVERSE

to show a big BILLBOARD faces the Boulevard ... 50 feet up ...
displays a stylized photograph of a MODEL-WAIF STANDING BESIDE
HER MIRRORED TWIN ... a logo reads FOREVER 21 as ...

BRYSON'S PICK-UP

drives by and CLOSE ON

A DOZEN CRATES marked HAZE GALLERY stacked in back as ...
BRYSON'S TRUCK PASSES and ... HOLD SHOT ... beat before we
suddenly SEE

THE BILLBOARD TWINS SUDDENLY CHANGE ... EXPRESSIONS CURLING
FROM SMILES TO FROWNS TO FURY AND CUT TO

AERIAL

BRYSON'S TRUCK as it leaves L.A. ... driving into the less-
developed outskirts of the city and CUT TO

MOVING PICK-UP TRUCK

Crates slide side-to-side in the truck bed as the truck
ascends a high MOUNTAIN ROAD ... middle of nowhere and

WE

go THROUGH the rear into the cluttered cab ... HEAVY METAL
MUSIC loud here as ... BRYSON drives ... wears a

MEGADEATH
COUNTDOWN TO EXTINCTION
WORLD TOUR

t-shirt and ... EXTREME CLOSE UP ON

AN AIR FRESHENER

dangling from the mirror ... a SCENIC PHOTO shows a field of wild flowers as we SEE

THE FIELD OF FLOWERS BLACKEN ... DARKNESS INKS THE SCENE AND

BRYSON glances from the road ... sees the now

BLACK AIR FRESHENER

and notices a repulsive scent ... pulling it from the mirror ... regarding it ... unsure ... he powers down his window and throws it out ... smell remaining as he

LIGHTS

a cigarette ... glow of the lighter giving a glimpse of himself in the rear view mirror as

THE GHOSTLY APOCALYPTIC SCENE

ON HIS T-SHIRT BEGINS TO MOVE ... COMING TO LIFE AS

BRYSON HOLDS THE LIGHTER CLOSE TO SEE

GRUESOME SHIFTING SCENES ANIMATING HIS T-SHIRT ...

HELLISH FIGURES COMING TO LIFE ON HIS CHEST AS ...

BRYSON tugs the shirt off and ...

LIGHTER catches clothe ...

FLAME spreading across fabric ... unnaturally fast ...

BRYSON descending the mountain road ... trying to steer ...

RIPPING the shirt away ... wildly patting scorched skin as

BRYSON ... frantic ...

FISHTAILS around a turn ...

PUMPING the brakes ...

NOT WORKING and CUT TO

AERIAL

as the PICK-UP speeds down a steep mountain road ...

SKIDDING serpentine corners and

INSIDE MOVING PICK-UP

as BRYSON suddenly spies

A GHOSTLY FATHER AND SON in the center of the road and ...

BRYSON swerves ...

SKIDS around a curve as

AN OLD GAS STATION SIGN comes into view and

BRYSON brakes with both feet as

THE TRUCK angles off the road ...

SKIDS across a dirt parking lot ...

IMPACTS

WITH THE GAS STATION ... AIR BAGS BLOWN ... ENGINE LEAKING AS

BRYSON

climbs out ... feeling his head ... he's bleeding ... limping
around ... MILES FROM ANYWHERE ... SPIES

THE CRATES broken in back ... HORDE OF DEASE PIECES revealed
and ... WIDER TO SHOW

THE OLD RUN-DOWN GAS STATION'S

closed ... BRYSON pulls his cell ... NO SERVICE as ... he goes
around the building ... tries the bathroom ... it's locked and

BRYSON grabs a sledge hammer from the truck bed ... goes to
the bathroom door ... swings ... door SMASHING open and CUT TO

INSIDE BATHROOM

as BRYSON staggers in ... hits the switch ... stark light
reveals a sink, urinal and stall ...

BRYSON glimpses his bloody face in the mirror ... splashes his
face and scorched torso with water and ... BRYSON sees he's

FACE TO FACE

with an old, plastic-protected PRINT on the wall ... depicting
ANTHROPOMORPHIZED DOGS WORKING IN A GARAGE ... BRYSON drops
his gaze ... splashes with more water ... not watching as

THE PRINT MORPHS ... DOGS TURNING INTO FACELESS CHILDREN as

BRYSON

starts to settle ... head down and

MYRIAD HANDS THRUST FROM THE PICTURE ...

GRAB BRYSON ...

YANK HIM INTO AND THROUGH THE PICTURE FRAME AND CUT TO

OUTSIDE THE OLD REMOTE GAS STATION

as the SIGN blinks off ... darkness settles over the tableau
... subdued color bands float on the horizon and DISSOLVE TO

A CONTEMPORARY PAINTING

with an identical palette as we PULL BACK TO SHOW WE'RE INSIDE

A LOUD, LUMINOUS RESTAURANT beside the BROAD MUSEUM ... art,
food and beautiful people ... vines hang above a booth where
MORF and RHODORA eat lunch ...

MORF

Is your food salty? Mine's over-salted.
I have to update my Yelp review. So as I
research this I'm starting to think Dease
didn't simply use pastiche as a medium,
he chose it to parallel depth of meaning.
A way to emphasize themes. The writing
in his folios express a persistent and
deep distrust of materialism. There's a
reverence for the sanctity and
transformative power of art that runs
through all of his work, accompanied by
fury and disgust for the world of money.

RHODORA

Well the great ones are usually off.

MORF

This is highly evolved. He's railing
against art being co-opted and corrupted
for purely-commercial ends.

RHODORA

Because the tortured soul only knew
squalor. We believed all that when Polly
and I started in punk, crashing in dirty
rehearsal rooms, screwing anyone who had
a bed. You can't live on sunshine. It
was on that point Polly and I parted.

MORF

I thought I'd be able to find more facts and biographical information but there's a 30-year gap where he just disappears. When he resurfaces he's a modern day hermit. The bottom line is I need more money for research.

RHODORA

Get an advance from the publisher.

MORF

I did. I spent it already. It wasn't enough to get to the heart of who Dease was. Look you want this to be good.

RHODORA

I grasp the upside. Whatever you need.

MORF

Thank you. I hear Jon Dondon's very upset at you about Piers. Word is you very cleverly palmed Piers off on Jon because he's run out of creative gas.

RHODORA

He's forgotten he can fly.

MORF

Jon was going to take the income from Piers and knock you down to number two.

RHODORA

Man perishes without a dream. Well I have to go. Our installer disappeared and left us all in a lurch, right when we're shipping out the Dease exhibit buys. Speaking of, Josephina didn't come in today.

MORF

She's decorating the new apartment.

RHODORA

Welcome to the world of money.

RHODORA departs ... threads her way out as her cell rings ...

RHODORA/INTO PHONE

Hello ... Where? ... Well was there any sign of him? ... No, I'm coming down. I want to see what was recovered.

RHODORA pushing out the door ... disappearing in the glare of outdoors and CUT TO

OUTSIDE THE DONDON GALLERY

with its clean, stark lines as an

ARMORED VAN

pulls up ... WORKERS emerge ... unlock the back and CUT TO

INSIDE THE JON DONDON GALLERY BASEMENT

as the WORKERS carry a painting-size CRATE through the doors of the VAULT ... filled with STORED ART as ... we find JON overseeing the work, speaking on the phone in FRENCH ...

JON ON PHONE/SUBTITLED FRENCH

Your Dease just arrived ... I'm checking the condition now.

WORKERS power-tool screws ... reveal a large DEASE inside ... HIDDEN-FACED FAMILY ... STUNNING ... MOVING ...

JON ON PHONE/SUBTITLED FRENCH

The painting's fine, no transport damage. You can store it in our vault as long as you wish, It's a service we offer our superior clients. My pleasure to help.

The WORKERS depart ... JON hangs up ... alone in the vault with the DEASE as ... he leans in ... regards the painting closely and ... JON leaves ... locks the vault ... walks by an

EXHIBIT ROOM

SHOWING A VIDEO INSTALLATION ... A 360-DEGREE PROJECTION OF A CLUTTERED ATTIC ... as JON passes ... walks upstairs and into

THE GALLERY

ASSISTANT

Your three o'clock's here. Interview for the archivist opening.

JON DONDON'S OFFICE

COCO waiting ... JON enters ... casts her a fast glance ...

JON

You're too young.

COCO

I'm 27.

JON

The position requires someone with years of experience. Stop back when you're 40.

COCO

That's it?

JON ignoring her as ... COCO sets her resume on his desk ... heading out ... passing through the GALLERY and ...

JON

You worked for Rhodora?

COCO turns ... JON with her resume ... two of them framed by a
DESERT MURAL OF A GLARING BRIGHT SUN OVER BLEACHED BONES ...

COCO

Just a few weeks, so the non-compete clause doesn't apply.

JON

She fired you.

COCO

I was on a break. A man walked in and talked to her. She never let it go. About me, I worked at the Whitney, the Ren. I have an MFA from Northwestern.

JON

You were there for the Dease opening.

COCO

It was a zoo.

JON

You know how much she generated?

COCO

I saw the numbers.

JON

The buyer list?

COCO

Every name.

JON

Very resourceful.

COCO

I've learned you have to be. I overheard some interesting things. About Dease.

JON

I might have an opening. Come back to my office and tell me what else you heard.

JON walks COCO back and ... hold on the

DESERT MURAL ... GLARING SUN OVER BLEACHED BONES AND CUT TO

A GLARING SUN BEATING DOWN ON THE L.A.C.M.A. PARKING LOT

as a new JAGUAR parks and ... an expensively attired GRETCHEN emerges ... dons sunglasses ... heads to the MUSEUM and CUT TO

EXHIBIT POSTERS

line a hall to L.A.C.M.A.'S EXECUTIVE OFFICES as ... GRETCHEN passes ... enters a door marked CURATING and

L.A.C.M.A. CURATING OFFICE

GRETCHEN facing a MUSEUM CURATING MAN AND WOMAN across a conference table ...

GRETCHEN

I do miss it here. The camaraderie. The purity of purpose. The Tuesday meatloaf at the cafe overlooking the tar pits.

GRETCHEN enjoying her monied return ... MUSEUM CURATING MAN AND WOMAN finding smiles ...

GRETCHEN

Well on to Vetril Dease. In the United Federation of the Universe I doubt there's a hotter artist at the moment. Did you know since the exhibit opening he's actually trending on twitter?

MUSEUM CURATING WOMAN

We're interested in showing him.

GRETCHEN

It's quite rare to be present the moment something is pronounced great, and rarer still to have access to the work.

MUSEUM CURATING MAN

How many pieces are we talking about?

GRETCHEN

I can supply two owned by my client, large-format, landmark product, and another 10 on loan from the Haze gallery. I'm offering all for immediate display.

MUSEUM CURATING MAN

Send dimensions and jpegs for the group
and we can aim for a slot next season.

GRETCHEN

I want them exhibited ASAP. Main hall,
new wing, event marketing.

MUSEUM CURATING WOMAN

You know we have a process Gretchen.

GRETCHEN

I had a glorious concept to support my
former employer and supposedly premier
contemporary art museum in Los Angeles
with the first showing of a Dease.

MUSEUM CURATING MAN

We appreciate the significance. We also
appreciate the financial benefit to you
and your client to have them shown here,
but there's the issue of space.

GRETCHEN

Move Banyo's Horse Penis or the Jeweled
Vagina. Put one inside the other for all
I care. There's tax issues and my client
wants his Dease exhibited immediately.
Now in return for my very generous offer
I also want Minkins' Sphere to be shown.

MUSEUM CURATING MAN

Come on Gretchen, this isn't a rug
bazaar.

GRETCHEN

No, it's an equation with a solution at
the end. If you can't grasp that there's
other museums I assure you that will.

Hard beat ... GRETCHEN stares the CURATING DUO down and CUT TO

POLICE IMPOUND YARD

as RHODORA and JOSEPHINA circle BRYSON'S totalled TRUCK ...
accompanied by a DETECTIVE ...

DETECTIVE

It looks like he ran head-on into a gas
station out in Angeles National Forest.
The place has been closed for years.

RHODORA

What caused the crash?

DETECTIVE

Don't know. There was no sign of alcohol or drugs. We think he must have hit his head and wandered off. The park service is searching the area. It's easy to get lost out there.

RHODORA

What was recovered?

DETECTIVE

We put it in the back.

RHODORA, JOSEPHINA and the DETECTIVE look in the BACK where some tools ... food wrappers ... old clothes are seen ...

JOSEPHINA

That's all you found?

DETECTIVE

The vehicle might have been vandalized before we located it. The stereo's missing. Was there anything of value you know was inside?

RHODORA

Not that I'm aware of, no.

JOSEPHINA meets RHODORA'S gaze and CUT TO

MINUTES LATER

RHODORA and JOSEPHINA walk through the impound yard ... surrounded by crashed vehicles as they head for their cars ...

JOSEPHINA

Where did he go? Where's the art? Why would you trust him in the first place?

RHODORA

I didn't tell him what was in the crates. All he had to do was deliver them to a warehouse in Lancaster.

JOSEPHINA

He's taken them. He's gonna start selling them himself. This shit goes sideways and I'm telling you straight up, I'll say this was all your idea, I had nothing to do with it.

JOSEPHINA climbs in her new Bentley ... RHODORA approaches her chauffeured SEDAN ... DRIVER holding the open door ...

RHODORA

You can wait inside.

He gets in the sedan ... RHODORA pulls her CELL and CLOSE ON

RHODORA'S PHONE as she speed-dials 'BRYSON' ... gets a recording and ...

RHODORA/INTO PHONE

Listen to me you son of a bitch. Are you trying to strong-arm me? Cash in on your own? Where the hell are you?! CALL ME.

RHODORA hangs up ... gets in her sedan and CUT TO

WILSHIRE CORRIDOR

Canyon of HIGH-RISE BUILDINGS at night as CAMERA angles up to ... a glowing PENTHOUSE in the sky and CUT TO

PENTHOUSE APARTMENT

where a BEAUTIFUL DEASE hangs in a soaring, barely furnished LIVING ROOM as ... we move through the luxe apartment ... past

ANOTHER DEASE in a hall ... MUSIC heard as we travel a richly carpeted CORRIDOR to reach the

MASTER BEDROOM

where a large DEASE hangs above a sleigh bed ... depicts THANKSGIVING DINNER ... FATHER CARVING A TURKEY ... WIFE AND TWO CHILDREN WATCHING ... FACES TURNED OR OBSCURED as MUSIC draws our attention toward the

BATHROOM

where JOSEPHINA towels off ... naked ... song playing as she turns and ... MORF is staring ... hands going around her ...

MORF

I came at the right time.

JOSEPHINA

No no no, not now, I have a lot to do.

MORF

It's not for three hours.

JOSEPHINA

It'll take that long for me to get ready.

MORF kissing her ... JOSEPHINA looking at herself in the mirror as he does ... pulling away ...

MORF

It's just a fund raiser.

JOSEPHINA

There's going to be pictures. Our first time out. This is super important to me. You really don't know girls at all.

MORF

What's that supposed to mean?

JOSEPHINA

We take longer.

MORF

I know enough to know how to please you.

JOSEPHINA

I didn't say you didn't.

MORF

Unless you're acting.

JOSEPHINA

You always get me off. Don't get all hurt. I'll make it up to you tonight.

JOSEPHINA works on her hair ... MORF goes into the bedroom ...

JOSEPHINA

We're a power couple, baby. I want to look good. I found a sick dress.

MORF regards the new furniture ...

MORF

This sofa's completely too small for the ceiling height. It swims in here.

MORF staring at the DEASE over the bed ...

MORF

I was at Rhodora's cataloguing paintings for the book. Something doesn't add up.

JOSEPHINA

What's that?

MORF

Either someone made a typo or more than half of his work is gone.

JOSEPHINA freezes ... staring at herself in the mirror ...

JOSEPHINA

There was a new girl who logged them wrong. They're all there, trust me I'd know. Hey I got some great champagne in the fridge. Open it while we get ready.

MORF heads for the kitchen ... JOSEPHINA turns up the music, doing her hair and CLOSE ON

DEASE PAINTING OVER THE BED ... FATHER'S HAND RISING SLIGHTLY ... SET TO STRIKE HIS SON ... PAINT DRYING AND CRACKING ... LOCKING HIM IN PLACE AND CUT TO

CRACKED PAINT

clings an old VICTORIAN CHAPEL at the sprawling grounds of the SAWTELLE VETERAN'S HOME

Santa Ana winds blowing ... blustery day as MORF parks outside the ADMINISTRATION BUILDING and CUT TO

INSIDE VETERAN'S ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

MORF talks to an ADMINISTRATOR in the institutional office ...

MORF

The deeper I go the farther away I seem to get, as in who Vetril Dease was at his core. So you being his boss and interacting with him on a daily basis, well I'm sure you understand how valuable your impressions would be.

ADMINISTRATOR staring ...

MORF

What kind of employee was he?

ADMINISTRATOR

42 years he never missed a day of work.

MORF

What about his personality?

ADMINISTRATOR

I'm not going to speak badly of him.

MORF

Would you have reason to?

ADMINISTRATOR silent ...

MORF

If you did have reason why wouldn't you?
I mean he's dead.

ADMINISTRATOR ... blank stare ... pushing a file to MORF ...

ADMINISTRATOR

Employment history, as requested. You
can see where he worked. Take Nimitz to
Patton to Grant. Last building on the
left. That's it then.

MOVING MINI-COOPER

MORF driving the forgotten, far-stretching facility ... old
VETS spied on benches ... in wheelchairs as MORF pulls up to

A GOTHIC CEMENT STRUCTURE

and exits the car ... looks up at a tall chimney and CUT TO

INSIDE CEMENT STRUCTURE

as MORF opens a door ... enters the bunker-like building ...
dark ... industrial ... dominated by a large, blazing FURNACE
... MORF looks around as

A FIGURE in a janitor's uniform emerges from the shadows ...
carries a large wrench and ... MORF jumps when he sees him ...

MORF

Sorry. God. I didn't see you there.
Hi, I'm Morf Vandewalt.

The MAN'S big ... grease-stained overalls ... goes to an
ancient PUMP on a work table ...

MORF

I'm here researching Vetril Dease.

MAN using the large wrench to muscle a frozen bolt ...

MORF

I'm writing a book about him.

JANITOR

What for?

MORF

He's become a prominent artist. In the
outsider school. Did you work with him?

JANITOR

18 years.

MORF

It would be extremely helpful if we could arrange a time to talk in-depth.

The MAN registers pure exertion ... all of his focus on the bolt ...

MORF

You see I have so many questions and there's so few people who either knew him or are willing to speak. Your boss for example.

JANITOR

He didn't like being taken advantage of.

MORF

I see. So you're saying he stood up for himself? As in he had a strong sense of fair play?

JANITOR

As in you didn't fuck with him.

The bolt suddenly shears ... wrench whipping back ... slamming the MAN'S hand ... MAN doubling in pain ...

MORF

Can I help? Can I get anything?

MAN clutching his curled hand ... world of pain ... glancing around the shadowed, industrial space ...

MAN

I got nothing more to say. And tell the other damn fella.

MORF

Who?

MAN

One who came around yesterday.

MORF

I don't know who that would be.

MAN going to a cluttered desk ... sweeping tools aside ... shoving MORF a BUSINESS CARD that reads

RAY RUSKINSPEAR
PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR
RETIRED L.A.P.D.

THE MAN

stalks off ... disappears in the shadowy back and CUT TO

DONDON GALLERY

at night ... closed ... light in an UPSTAIRS OFFICE and CUT TO

DONDON GALLERY

PAINTINGS and *SCULPTURES* in darkness ... across the gallery we see ... JON DONDON in his office with a MAN (RAY RUSKINSPEAR) as we overhear ...

RAY RUSKINSPEAR

Dease lived completely off the grid. No bank account, car, license. I couldn't even find a usable photo. But your tip about an institutional stay paid off once we searched the deeper databases.

WE'RE

pushing though the gallery ... toward JON with RUSKINSPEAR ...

RUSKINSPEAR

We tried the name Vetril Raymond Dease and it flagged nada in terms of any biographical info, however putting his middle name Raymond first uncovered the reason for him living as he did.

RUSKINSPEAR hands JON a file marked *RUSKINSPEAR & ASSOCS* ...

RUSKINSPEAR

Raymond Dease suffered some sort of breakdown in his early 20s. Apparently he tracked down his father and murdered him. The details are in the court records there. Dease spent 30 years in a psychiatric hospital for the criminally insane. When he was released he moved to L.A., changed his first name to Vetril, got a job at the Veteran's home and disappeared.

JON

You're absolutely sure of all this?

RUSKINSPEAR

The facts are the facts.

JON studying the Dease file and CUT TO

THE DONDON GALLERY FOYER

is dark as JON unlocks the main door for RUSKINSPEAR to go ...

JON

This will kill sales of Dease's work.
I'm going to release it in the next few
days. I'll need you to speak to the
press, attesting to your credentials and
the authenticity of what you've found.
Until then not a word to anyone. I'll
contact you on the timing.

RUSKINSPEAR shakes hands ... leaves and ... JON locks the door
... stands in his dimly lit gallery ... dancing in the dark
with the file and CUT TO

DONDON STORAGE VAULT

JON in the basement space ... locking the file away ... pulls
his cell phone ... dials ... reaching someone's voice mail ...

JON/INTO PHONE

Hi Morf, it's Jon. Call me as soon as
you can. I have something I think you'll
be very interested in. Ciao.

JON hangs up ... SEES

THE DEASE PAINTING

in the shadows ... JON regarding it in the dark as ... he
suddenly hears a noise ... looks to SEE

A FIGURE

mopping the dimly lit basement hall ... janitor coveralls,
head down ...

JON

Excuse me. This isn't cleaning day.

FIGURE working in the gloom ...

JON

Hoy no es día de limpieza.

CLOSE ON

The figure's old and worn overalls ... a faded patch reads ...

GOOD TEMPLARS ORPHANAGE

JON sees the FIGURE mop his way to the dark VIDEO INSTALLATION ROOM and go inside ... glow suddenly coming to life within ...

JON

Hey! You can't turn that on. HELLO?

JON stalks from the vault ... enters

THE VIDEO EXHIBITION ROOM

THREE WALLS SHOW VIDEO PROJECTIONS OF A CLUTTERED GARRET ATTIC ... DIRTY WINDOWS IN THE PROJECTION GIVE A GLIMPSE OF A RURAL SCENE OUTSIDE ... REAL OBJECTS ARE SPACED AROUND THE ROOM ... FURNITURE ... SCATTERED CLOTHES ... GENERAL CLUTTER AS

JON COMES IN ... LOOKS AROUND ... JANITOR NOT SEEN ...

JON

Hello?!

JON GOING DEEPER INTO THE ROOM ... LOOKING BEHIND A CHEST ... STACKED BOXES ... NO ONE THERE AS ... HE TURNS TO SEE

THE DOORWAY

HE CAME THROUGH HAS BECOME PART OF THE VIDEO ... FOUR WALLS NOW SHOWING THE 360-DEGREE PROJECTION OF AN EERIE ATTIC AS

JON SEARCHES WHERE THE DOOR WAS ... UNSURE AS HE TURNS

TO SEE THE ATTIC HAS BECOME REAL ... REAL FLOOR ... REAL CEILING ... CRAMMED WITH REAL, DUSTY CLUTTER AS

JON THREADS HIS WAY THROUGH THE ACCUMULATED DEBRIS ...

INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ...

SEARCHING FOR THE DOOR AS

JON SUDDENLY HEARS A NOISE ...

SOME UNSEEN MOVING THING ...

JON BACKS AWAY ... KICKS AN OLD PROJECTOR ... POWERING UP AND

GRAINY HOME MOVIES PROJECT ON A WALL ... FAMILY SCENES ... TRANQUIL AT FIRST ... HAPPY ... BECOMING IMAGES OF TRAUMA AS

JON STUMBLES TO THE DUSTY ATTIC WINDOW... SEES

A HUNCHED FIGURE MOWING A DEAD LAWN AND

JON POUNDS THE WINDOW ...

TRYING TO BREAK THE GLASS ...

THE FIGURE LOOKS UP ...

FEROCIOUS FEATURES ...

THE ATTIC DIMS AS

JON FEELS FRANTICALLY TO GET OUT AND

HE'S SUDDENLY SNATCHED UPWARD INTO THE DARK ...

VELVET SLIPPED FEET KICKING WILDLY IN MID-AIR ...

THE ATTIC BULBS BLOW AND

DARKNESS DESCENDS AS WE

DISSOLVE TO

MORNING

outside the DONDON GALLERY ... PEDESTRIANS heading to work as ... COCO arrives ... unlocking the gallery door ... goes inside and

HOLD

as the world turns ... city noise the soundtrack and

A MUFFLED SHRIEK

is heard ... no one noticing over the urban thrum as we CUT TO

JON DONDON

hangs in the DOWNSTAIRS VIDEO INSTALLATION ROOM ... electrical cord dug tightly into his neck as ...

COCO

flees the scene ... past an ABSTRACT SCULPTURE ... running up the stairs and ... HOLD ON the SCULPTURE as we DISSOLVE TO

THE STATUE

of a HEAD-BOWED ANGEL on one of the MYRIAD HEADSTONES dotting FOREST LAWN CEMETERY'S

sun-drenched lawns ... serene beat as ... we SEE

A GATHERING of people on a hilltop and CUT TO

JON DONDON'S FUNERAL is about to begin ... SEVERAL HUNDRED
HIP, ARTIST-WORLD MOURNERS gathered as we FIND

MORF and JOSEPHINA being ushered to seats near the front ...

MORF

What's with this cheesy organ music? And
that casket. What color is that? Smog
orange? Did they buy it on sale?

JOSEPHINA

Not so loud.

MORF

Seriously, imagine having to spend an
eternity in that.

JOSEPHINA

Jesus nothing's good enough with you.

MORF

I'm selective, that's my job. What are
you even saying? Toss out taste and
standards? Whisper the truth? What kind
of tragic world would that be?

MORF and JOSEPHINA sit ... MORF checking texts on his phone as
... JOSEPHINA sees she's seated beside DAMRISH ...

JOSEPHINA

Oh hi! I'm Josephina, I work with
Rhodora. I'm a partner at the gallery.

DAMRISH

Damrish.

JOSEPHINA

Of course. I'm just such a huge fan of
your work. I do the Dease collection.

DAMIRSH

It's other-worldly.

JOSEPHINA smiles as ... CLOUDIO appears ... stares at MORF ...

CLOUDIO

Your review of Hoboman killed the sale.
Instead of being shown it's gathering
dust at a storage facility.

MORF

I am not your mouthpiece.

RHODORA walks past and

WE

FOLLOW her as she ... sees PIERS ... looking like shit ...

RHODORA

We competed for everything but I
absolutely despise being here for this.
I mean what the hell was he facing? To
do something like that?

PIERS

He seemed his usual shallow self the last
time we spoke. I'm drinking again.

RHODORA

Happy days.

PIERS

With Jon gone I have nowhere to show now.

RHODORA

If you start producing again we could
discuss a return. Give a jingle if you
inspire yourself.

RHODORA sits front row ... a DONDON employee arrives ...

DONDON EMPLOYEE

This is for family and friends only.

RHODORA

Jon started at my gallery. Where the
hell else would I sit?

The music ends ... A STYLISH CLERGYMAN faces the gathered ...

STYLISH CLERGYMAN

We are all curators of our own lives. We
choose. We prioritize. We display. And
by doing we announce ourselves and
beliefs. Jon's philosophy was reflected
in his gallery, the number two
contemporary art retailer in L.A. Quite
an achievement for a financial analyst
with no art education or background.

MORF glances away ... regards a nearby

HEADSTONE AND A BRONZE SCULPTURE OF A WOMAN IN MOURNING ... A
BREEZE BLOWS AND ... HER METAL VEIL RIPPLES LIKE FABRIC AND

MORF reacts ... peering ... metal now unmoving ... MORF looks
around to see if anyone else saw and CUT TO

GRETCHEN'S DRESS

billows as she walks with MORF and RHODORA ...

MORF

Jon called me that night and left a message that he had something he wanted to tell me. He seemed just incredibly excited, I mean so far from depressed.

GRETCHEN

We shared the same pharmacologist. Poor dear probably went off his meds, suffered some sort of episode.

RHODORA

On or off meds I never once knew him to catch even a glimmer beyond his own self-importance. My money it must have been some auto-erotic fantasy gone astray.

MORF

I find the timing of it just utterly bizarre given his call to me. I contacted the police, zero interest.

GRETCHEN

Moving forward it's hard to imagine his gallery continuing. I suppose they'll be forced to liquidate his entire holdings. Has anyone heard mention of that?

RHODORA

Careful Gretch, you're walking on graves.

GRETCHEN'S veered off ... stepping over grave enclosures ...

GRETCHEN

My Jag's this way. Final prep tomorrow night for the Dease exhibit at L.A.C.M.A. No advance press. We're going to re-enchant the art world. Kisses.

GRETCHEN gone ... MORF walks on ... sees RHODORA'S stopped behind him ... staring out at the sloping hill cemetery ...

RHODORA

Polly's buried down there.

MORF

Polly Anna?

RHODORA

She OD'ed in Hollywood, her family put her here. God that's 30 years ago. Polly was the real deal. She belongs in a lichen-covered crypt at Père Lachaise, next to Morrison and Wilde.

A cloud passes ... RHODORA continues down the hill ...

MORF

Are you aware the police have officially listed your installer as missing?

RHODORA

Well you know L.A., it just swallows people up.

MORF

I wanted to talk to him about the missing Dease paintings.

RHODORA

Josephina said she discussed this with you. It was a clerical error.

MORF

I found storage invoices that indicate otherwise. Are you stockpiling them?

RHODORA

Fess up, exactly what am I helping pay for you to write?

MORF

I thought you'd want to get to the bottom of it.

RHODORA

I saw it as a sort of coffee table thing, created to raise the value of the art.

MORF

I'm sensing a bigger story here.

RHODORA

Don't try to tart this up or I'll bar the rights for all Dease images and repros. Wouldn't be much of a book then would it?

MORF sees JOSEPHINA with DAMRISH ... laughing ... phones out ... exchanging numbers ... RHODORA follows MORF'S gaze ...

RHODORA

Your girl's got the hots for artists.

RHODORA continues down to her car ...

MORF watching JOSEPHINA and DAMRISH ...

CRYING ANGEL HEADSTONE behind him and CUT TO

RHODORA'S CAR

winds through the CEMETERY ... stops and

RHODORA exits with a bouquet ... walks amid headstones to an

UNIMPRESSIVE PLAQUE

with weeds crowding in... etched in brass we SEE

POLLY ANNA

No Death No Art

RHODORA sets her flowers down ... tugs away some of the overgrown grass and CUT TO

BRUEGAL'S 16TH CENTURY *"THE FIGHT BETWEEN CARNIVAL AND LENT"*

and its grim representation of village life ... PEOPLE shown as grotesque allegories of greed or gluttony and CUT TO

BOSCH'S 17TH CENTURY *"A VIOLENT FORCING OF THE FROG"*

presenting a vision of broken HUMANS ... tortured by hybrid-human/animals summoned into the physical realm and CUT TO

FUSELI'S 18TH CENTURY *"NIGHTMARE"*

depicting a haunting evocation of a WOMAN asleep ... demon on her chest ... horse head emerging from darkness and CUT TO

BLAKE'S 19TH CENTURY *"NEBUCHADNEZZAR"*

showing a MAD KING crawling like a beast ... tangled beard sweeping dirt ... talon nails ... eyes of terror and CUT TO

MUNCH'S 20TH CENTURY *"THE SCREAM"*

dominated by an agonized FORM ... ears blocked against some infinite, nature-distorting cry and CUT TO

RAPID-FIRE IMAGES OF ART

through the ages ... recurring imagery ... CONFLICT BETWEEN HUMANS AND FORCES SUMMONED FROM THE SUBCONSCIOUS and CUT TO

JOSEPHINA'S PENTHOUSE

in the dead of night as we see ... photo-scans of the FAMOUS PAINTINGS spread on Morf's increasingly cluttered desk ... scope of his research clearly expanding ... DEASE'S ART WORK mixed among the historical artwork as ... animal noises bleed in and PULL BACK TO SHOW

MORF AND JOSEPHINA in bed ... JOSEPHINA on all fours ... MORF behind her .. mid-act ... mechanical quality as ...

JOSEPHINA

Jesus did you take Viagra or something?

MORF

Almost there.

JOSEPHINA

I'm going on my back.

MORF

No.

JOSEPHINA

I can't stay like this.

JOSEPHINA rolls ... MORF adjusts ... keeps going ...

JOSEPHINA

Open your eyes.

MORF does ... finds himself looking at the DEASE PAINTING above the bed ... dimly seen in the dark ...

JOSEPHINA

I'm down here.

MORF staring at the PAINTING ... hard to see in the black as *THE CARVING KNIFE IN THE PAINTING SEEMS TO SLASH BEFORE HIM* and ... MORF falls back ... completely freaked ...

JOSEPHINA

Goddamn it.

JOSEPHINA gets out of bed ... goes into the bathroom ...

MORF

I don't know what's going on.

JOSEPHINA

We got a fucking problem. Literally.

MORF

No. I'm seeing things. Things moving. Seriously I'm really scared.

JOSEPHINA

I was turned on by your passion and listening to your intelligent mind but now you've turned into I don't know what. Your reviews have fallen off and you still have feelings for Ed, admit it.

MORF

I do not have feelings for Ed.

JOSEPHINA

Gretchen ran into him and he said you and he were talking and were working it out.

MORF

Ed's a big liar and Gretchen's a bitch.

JOSEPHINA

I checked your phone, you made six calls.

MORF

He was moving out, we were coordinating. What do you mean my reviews have fallen off?

JOSEPHINA

Your eye, your edge. It makes sense, you don't know what you like or even want.

MORF

What do you mean? I'll tell you what I did like -- Ricky's Blane's show. But you jammed me to crush him.

JOSEPHINA

Don't lay that on me. Like he was your first bad review. Gimme a break.

MORF

I'm saying I regret it, not that I blame you. You helped discover a part of me I never knew and it's astonishing to me. I think I've been staring too long at the Dease art and all his material. I'm getting my vision checked. This'll pass. Hey, listen to my intelligent mind.

MORF embraces her ... JOSEPHINA embracing him ... not as tight ... MORF looking at the DEASE PAINTING and CUT TO

PIERS'S ARTIST COMPOUND

where PIERS'S CAR COLLECTION gleams in L.A. sun ... a DRIVER lounges outside Rhodora's parked LIMO and CUT TO

INSIDE PIERS'S STUDIO

as we find RHODORA standing in the center of the space ...

STUDYING a series of CANVASES we don't see as ...

PIERS watches expectantly nearby ... GREAT DANE at his feet
and ... charged beat before ...

RHODORA

I'm not pickled.

PIERS ... deflating ... dying ... GREAT DANE slinking away ...

RHODORA

It's a small step I suppose. Toward
something. But let's talk turkey. What
are you afraid of?

(coming close)

We go way way back so I'm going to share
with you a little something something.
"Dependency murders creativity.
Creativity plays with the unknown. No
strategies exist that can enclose the
endless realm of the new. Only trust in
yourself can carry you past your fears
and the already known. To create you
have to move toward what you can't see
and urge it into being." Polly Anna,
1978, scrawled on a paper bag I found
clearing out her apartment.

PIERS staring ...

RHODORA

I want the deepest, unchained part of
you. I love you that much. You need to
get away from here, from all this. Take
a break. Use my house in Saint Bart's.
Stay there until you do something for
nobody but yourself.

PIERS ... taking it in ... nods ... watches her leave ... seen
through the window getting into her limo and CUT TO

MORF'S EYE

fills screen ... staring at us ... blinking and WIDER TO SHOW

DOCTOR'S OFFICE

as MORF has an eye exam ... DOCTOR peering in his iris through
a magnivisor ... flipping the lens ... checking a chart ...

DOCTOR

Your acuity's actually improved since your last prescription, refraction unchanged, perimetry response excellent. I don't see any cause for concern.

MORF

I was hoping you'd find something. To explain what's happening.

DOCTOR

The phantom movements.

MORF

I think I have Charles Bonnet Syndrome. Hallucinations, visions, moving objects.

DOCTOR

You've been on the internet. It's highly doubtful in the absence of other factors. Let's schedule another appointment for next week, during which you keep a journal noting the time and circumstances of any new events. I dilated your eyes, you have to wear these for a few hours.

The DOCTOR hands MORF a tinted eye shield ...

MORF

These are heinous.

MORF puts them on and CUT TO

JOSEPHINA'S PHONE

rings in her hand ... caller I.D. reading MORF ...

JOSEPHINA

Him again. He call bombs you if you don't pick up.

RHODORA

That's a turn-on.

JOSEPHINA puts the ringing phone in her bag and WIDE TO SHOW

RHODORA'S OFFICE

RHODORA and JOSEPHINA mid-meeting ...

RHODORA

The Guggenheim wants four Dease at a 30 percent discount, too high by half but I leaked word we're talking to the Tate so I expect movement there pronto.

JOSEPHINA

I got a call from Mana. They want two at 40 off but for the permanent collection.

RHODORA

Stall Mana, I'll counter with the Tate. We'll aim for the Guggenheim at 20. Also I've placed a dozen of the smaller pieces with minor museums, the list is there.

JOSEPHINA

(regarding a paper)

These prices are confirmed?

RHODORA

I have personal connections with members of their boards, all of whom have made private acquisitions and understand the importance of building the brand. And that closes phase one. No more Dease sales for a half-year.

JOSEPHINA'S phone rings again ... she checks it and ...

JOSEPHINA

You made Dease screen savers? How'd you put it on my phone? Through the gallery wireless?

JOSEPHINA holds her phone up ... reveals a

DEASE SCREEN-SAVER OF THE SUNSET-TINGED LAKE OF CONSTANCE

RHODORA

Damn it I didn't okay that.

RHODORA picks up her phone ... dials an extension as ... the door opens and GRETCHEN sticks her head in ...

GRETCHEN

I'm a tiger relying on sheep. The L.A.C.M.A. P.R. kits wound up here. I brought my new assistant to carry them.

COCO appears behind GRETCHEN ... waves ...

COCO

Hi.

(RHODORA and GRETCHEN busy)

I know where they'll be.

(no response)

Well I guess I'll just get them.

RHODORA/INTO PHONE

Who okayed a Dease screen saver?

COCO leaves ... JOSEPHINA stands ... revealing outfit ...

JOSEPHINA

I gotta go.

GRETCHEN

You're showing a lot of skin.

RHODORA/INTO PHONE

Well how is that possible? I mean it just popped up on a phone.

JOSEPHINA

How do I get it off?

GRETCHEN sees JOSEPHINA'S DEASE SCREEN SAVER ...

GRETCHEN

Now that's marketing. I want one. How do I get it on mine?

RHODORA

(hanging up)

You don't. Apparently we created no such app and if we had it would be impossible to download without the user's request.

Charged beat before ... COCO appears ... carrying heavy boxes as ... JOSEPHINA leaves ... focused on her phone and CUT TO

OUTSIDE RHODORA'S GALLERY

GRETCHEN pops the trunk on her JAG ... COCO struggles to lift the boxes into the trunk as ... GRETCHEN sees

JOSEPHINA

getting into a car with DAMRISH and CUT TO

L.A. FREEWAY

clogged with EVENING TRAFFIC as CAMERA FINDS

GRETCHEN'S JAG inching along and CUT TO

INSIDE GRETCHEN'S MOVING JAGUAR

as GRETCHEN drives ... music plays and ... her phone rings ...
"UNKNOWN NUMBER" ... hesitating before pressing hands-free ...

GRETCHEN/OVER PHONE

Yes, who is this?

MORF/OVER PHONE

It's me.

INTERCUT - MORF DRIVING HIS MINI-COOPER -- EYE SHADE ON

GRETCHEN/OVER PHONE

How clever, you blocked your number.

MORF/OVER PHONE

Because you won't answer my calls.

MORF having trouble seeing at night wearing the eye-shade ...
removes it as ... he's immediately hit by the headlights of a
passing car ... putting it back on ...

GRETCHEN/OVER PHONE

After your vile voice message yesterday
you're surprised?

MORF/OVER PHONE

Telling Josephina I'm seeing Ed?!

GRETCHEN

Is that my crime?

MORF/OVER PHONE

We broke up, I was coordinating him
moving out. Honestly I expected an
apology.

GRETCHEN/OVER PHONE

Ed said precisely there was more to it
than that, I merely passed it on.

MORF/OVER PHONE

You're a joke. You have no credibility
in any way.

GRETCHEN/OVER PHONE

Really? Well in that case I suppose
there's no truth whatsoever in your
friend Josephina sniffing around Damrish,
whose car I just saw her climbing into.

GRETCHEN ends the call ... turns up the music and CUT TO

INSIDE MORF'S MINI-COOPER

as he pulls to a curb ... angrily redials ... holds to hear

GRETCHEN/VOICE MESSAGE

This is Gretchen, can't take your call.

Be a dear and leave a message. Kisses.

MORF hangs up ... exits his car ... adjusts his eye shade as he enters a sleek, CONTEMPORARY BUILDING and CUT TO

A LUCIEN FREUD PORTRAIT

Unsettling ... penetrating ... FULL FRAME and WIDE TO SHOW

ARCHIVIST'S OFFICE

where we saw the DEASE being studied ... FREUD PORTRAIT on a stand ... brightly lit ... ARCHIVIST from before peering at it as ... MORF appears at the door ... eye shield in place ...

MORF

Hi. Gita?

ARCHIVIST/GITA

Yes.

MORF

I'm Morf--

ARCHIVIST

Vandewalt. Of course. I've read you for years. Are those the new Persols?

MORF

Yes, that's right.

(re: painting on the stand)

That's a--

ARCHIVIST

Yes it is.

MORF

I've never seen that one before.

ARCHIVIST

No one has, it's been in a crate since '92. And going right back into one. Most buys now are pure investment. I loved your exhibit brochure on Dease by the way.

MORF

Thank you. As I said on the phone, I'm expanding it into a book.

ARCHIVIST

There's enough there for one.

MORF

You catalogued the collection pre-sale.

ARCHIVIST

Not catalogued. Rhodora only wanted an overview so we just chose several dozen representative works. I identified conventions, work flow, classifications.

MORF

How many pieces did you inventory?

ARCHIVIST

It was an object rich collection.

MORF

More than 3000?

ARCHIVIST

I couldn't hazard a guess. Rhodora has the inventory worksheets I'm sure.

MORF

There's a discrepancy.

ARCHIVIST

A full analysis of the catalogue would have taken months, compounded of course by Dease's distinct methodology. It was almost impossible to delineate between the work and what was underneath.

MORF

What was underneath?

ARCHIVIST

Entire other works. We only noticed it when we scraped some paint for analysis. His finished work is simply a surface covering myriad other depictions below.

Frozen beat ... MORF peering over the eye shade and CUT TO

THE LIFE-SIZE MAMMOTH REPLICA

trapped in the LA BREA TAR PITS ... forever struggling ...
L.A.C.M.A. in the BG against the NIGHT sky and CUT TO

INSIDE L.A.C.M.A. GALLERY

closed for the night ... SECURITY GUARD making rounds through the vast *CONTEMPORARY ART COLLECTION* and CUT TO

L.A.C.M.A. CURATING OFFICE

as GRETCHEN paces in front of the CURATING DUO from before ...

GRETCHEN

Minkins is culturally important by any standard, the apex of conceptual rigor. I have an entire list of daring curators panting to show him so I don't get your push-back on a Minkins retrospective here in the Fall of all his major works.

CURATING MAN

We already okayed to show Sphere in exchange for you bringing in 12 Dease.

CURATING WOMAN

Seriously, Gretchen. It's rude. And dumb. If you wanted to ram more of your collector's hoard down our throats to increase their value you should have done so before the Dease deal was locked, not the night prior to the exhibit's open.

GRETCHEN

I hear marketing has high hopes for a traveling Dease collection, they've even run projections. I believe my leverage looking ahead is considerable.

CURATING MAN

There's absolutely no space in the Fall to put on a Minkins show.

GRETCHEN

I'm going to meet with your board tomorrow and suggest a reduction to the emerging artists exhibit, they don't sell any tickets anyway.

CURATING WOMAN

Over my dead body.

L.A.C.M.A. GALLERY

at night ... GRETCHEN alone ... surrounded by a *DOZEN LARGE DEASE PIECES* hung around the room as ...COCO enters ...

COCO

The hard copy P.R. material's sorted and
the electronic kits get sent at midnight.

GRETCHEN

Be here early. Keep me informed of any
celebrities or art stars.

COCO

If it's all right with you I'd like to go
home and get a few hours sleep.

GRETCHEN

They corrected the lighting on Sphere?

COCO

The side lights, yes. I had them keep it
lit so you could see it on the way out.

GRETCHEN

Well run along then.

COCO

Good night.

COCO departs ... GRETCHEN regarding the DEASE EXHIBIT and

WE

watch her through the FRAMES of the DEASE ART as she strolls
the space ... our POV

MOVING FRAME to FRAME as she passes ...

GRETCHEN pausing to peer at us ... leaving the exhibit room as

WE

BREAK FRAME and ... follow her ... a floating presence as

GRETCHEN

walks through the wings of L.A.C.M.A. DISPLAYS ... alone with
the vast display of contemporary ART as ... she reaches

SPHERE

in the center of a GALLERY ROOM ... the BIG, MIRRORED BALL
dotted with dozens of holes ... and the sign

MY FURRY ANIMAL LIKES TO BE PET

GRETCHEN casts an eye to the lighting ... regards her

DISTORTED REFLECTION in the mirrored sphere ... close now ...
LOOKING at the many holes ...
HESITATING before she chooses one and puts her
HAND inside the mirrored ball ... feeling farther ... farther
... up to her elbow now inside the art work unaware as ...
A JANITOR appears in the dim BG ...
WORKING a polishing machine and ...
GRETCHEN FEELS SOMETHING within ... uncertain what it is ...
PLEASURABLE at first then ...
SUDDEN concern ...
TUGGING to remove her arm and
SHE can't ...
GRETCHEN trying to extract her arm ...
ALARMED by what she feels ...
FEAR becoming panic as
HER ARM is jerked DEEPER ... screaming as she SEES
THE JANITOR
methodically moving the polisher in circles past the entry ...
GRETCHEN
Help! HELP ME!!!
JANITOR pausing ...
GOOD *TEMPLARS ORPHANAGE* patch seen ...
FACELESS FEATURES revealed as
GRETCHEN'S ARM is yanked fully into the hole ...
BODY slammed to the mirrored sphere ...
SCREAMING ...
NO escape as ...
BLOOD splatters from the sphere's many holes and CUT TO

INSIDE L.A.C.M.A.

as GRETCHEN'S SHRIEKS echo through empty, art-filled halls ...
and we CUT TO

A RISING SUN

struggles through morning fog as we pull back to SHOW

RHODORA

at her outdoor crushed car table ... having her morning fruit
... directly beneath the

BIG STEEL SLAB SCULPTURE

dominating the back yard as ... her phone rings ...

RHODORA/INTO PHONE

Hello ... No ... When?

INTERCUT - JOSEPHINA IN HER SUNNY PENTHOUSE ABOVE THE CLOUDS

JOSEPHINA/ON PHONE

This morning! Somehow she got stuck
inside of it, there was some kind of
malfunction and I guess it like
completely took her arm off and she bled
to death. It was horrible. The security
guards thought it was part of a new
installation so they just opened up and
let people in.

INTERCUT - L.A.C.M.A. SECURITY CAMERA POV

of the SPHERE EXHIBIT room ... GRETCHEN'S BODY seen splayed
over the big, mirrored globe ... pool of blood as we hear ...

JOSEPHINA/OVER PHONE

The Dease pop-up announcement was blasted
last night so everyone was heading there.
People just walked by like she was part
an exhibit.

MUSEUM-GOERS seen on the silent SECURITY CAM VIEW... walking
past GRETCHEN'S body ... not even pausing to look ...

JOSEPHINA/OVER PHONE

Then a school tour came along.

A GROUP OF KIDS enter FRAME ... circle GRETCHEN'S body ...

JOSEPHINA/OVER PHONE

The kids thought it was fake blood and started stepping in it and spreading it around and who knows how long it would've gone on until Coco came in, on her way to do press for the Dease show and she saw Gretchen and just lost it.

COCO seen screaming on the SECURITY CAM ... KIDS and TEACHERS stampeding away as they realize it's real and BACK TO

RHODORA

on the phone with JOSEPHINA ... deeply shaken ...

JOSEPHINA/OVER PHONE

Are you there? Rhodora?

RHODORA/OVER PHONE

I don't understand. Bryson then Jon and now Gretchen? What in God's name is going on?

JOSEPHINA/OVER PHONE

I don't know. I mean we just saw her last night. They shut that wing of the museum but I hear the Dease exhibit is mobbed.

RHODORA'S HAIRLESS CAT darts by with a DEAD BIRD ... RHODORA stands ... follows it

INSIDE

where the CAT drops the dead bird before ... A DEASE PAINTING hanging in RHODORA'S LIVING ROOM ...

JOSEPHINA/OVER PHONE

We're spiking on moments and instagram. It's a major hit. Rhodora? Are you still there? Did you hear what I said? The Dease exhibit is booming.

RHODORA silent ... chilled ... watching the CAT wildly paw the wall under the DEASE as

RHODORA'S CELL buzzes ... second call ... she looks, sees it's 'BRYSON' ...

RHODORA/INTO PHONE

Jesus, hold on Josephina.

RHODORA quickly switches to the incoming call ...

RHODORA/INTO PHONE
 Goddamn it where the hell are you?!

Silence ...

RHODORA/INTO PHONE
 Hello?!

Beat before we hear ... the sound of *CHILDREN LAUGHING* ...
DISCONNECTED ... DISTANT ...

RHODORA/INTO PHONE
 Bryson? Bryson! All right who the hell
 is this?!

Dial tone ... RHODORA standing before the DEASE ... freaked
 beat as ... she re-connects with JOSEPHINA ...

RHODORA
 Are you there?

BACK TO

JOSEPHINA'S PENTHOUSE as there's a knocking on her door ...

JOSEPHINA/INTO PHONE
 Someone's at my door, I gotta go.

JOSEPHINA hangs up ... knocking continuing as she checks a
 security monitor to see

MORF

staring into the camera ... JOSEPHINA opens the door and ...

MORF
 Did you hear about Gretchen? Did you?

MORF walks in ... distraught ...

MORF
 Jesus can you believe it?

JOSEPHINA
 Okay you have to leave. You can't just
 walk in like this.

MORF
 I need to be with someone right now. I'd
 think you would too.

DAMRISH
 What's going on?

DAMRISH come from the bedroom hall ... towel at his waist ...

MORF

Are you kidding me?

JOSEPHINA

We are not together, I was clear.

MORF

You said a break.

(to DAMRISH)

The admiration I had for your work has completely evaporated.

DAMRISH

Hey I wasn't trying to jump your train.
She said you two were done.

MORF

Are we? Are we? Say we don't share something real.

JOSEPHINA

I was never particularly obsessed.

MORF overwhelmed ... storms away and CUT TO

OUTSIDE JOSEPHINA'S APARTMENT BUILDING

as MORF rushes out ... sits at a

BUS STOP

with his head in his hands ... glances up to see

A BUS STOP AD OF A STYLISH WOMAN WITH HER BACK TO US ... THE WOMAN IN THE POSTER SUDDENLY MOVES ... TURNING TO REVEAL IT'S GRETCHEN ... MISSING ARM ... BLOWING MORF A KISS AND

MORF scrambles away ... looks back to SEE

THE BUS STOP AD as it was ... STYLISH WOMAN with her back turned ... PEOPLE passing and CUT TO

LOS ANGELES ART GALLERY

Austere ... white ... ART PIECES here and there as ... a haggard MORF is ushered through by a BRITISH GALLERY OWNER ...

GALLERY OWNER

We expected you yesterday. We closed the exhibit for half-a-day in anticipation, actually. I thought Artnet was clear on the timing.

MORF

I'm sorry. It's my fault. I know this is pre-debut. I've been experiencing some personal matters. Then of course Gretchen this morning.

GALLERY OWNER

If this isn't a good time...

MORF

No. It's overdue. I'll write and file my review today.

THEY ARRIVE AT A ROOM

THAT'S VOID ... SAVE FOR 50 DIFFERENT SIZE SPEAKERS SUSPENDED AT VARYING HEIGHTS AROUND THE SPACE ...

GALLERY OWNER

Lillith Vanlandingham is storming the world with her revolutionary sound exhibits. She won the Nam June Paik award last year. Her latest piece is called "Mysticete." As discussed we've arranged for you to experience the exhibit alone.

The GALLERY OWNER departs, closes a door behind him ... leaves

MORF

alone with the myriad suspended speakers as ... it begins WITH INSTITUTIONAL SOUNDS ...

CHILDREN LAUGHING ...

SEVERAL BASS NOTES FILTER IN ...

ADULT VOICES BLEEDING IN ...

DROWNING THE CHILDREN ...

OVERLAPPING ...

CHILDREN COMPETING FOR ATTENTION ...

INTONATIONS BECOME CLEARER ...

ADULT PHRASES RESONATING ...

DISTURBING ...

ACCUSATORY ...

VOICE

LOOK AT HIM STANDING THERE. HE
ONLY EMBRACES WHAT HE KNOWS.

VOICE

PIECE FOR PIECE IT'S THE BIGGEST
WASTE OF STEEL SINCE THE TITANIC.

VOICE

THIS PAINFUL EXHIBIT SHOULD BE BULLDOZED.
THE DEBRIS WOULD BE BETTER THAN THE SHOW.

VOICE

SOME DON'T SURVIVE
THE MAULING.

VOICE

REMOVE THE SPOTLIGHT OF HYPE AND
HIS LATEST WORK IS A SNOOZEFEST.

VOICE

VILE. BRUTAL. DECEITFUL.

VOICE

NOT WORTH THE FREEWAY DRIVE.
IT'S ALL EGO AND NO ART.

VOICE

I'LL HATE YOU FOREVER
FOR SAYING THAT.

VOICE

SUPPOSEDLY A SIX-YEAR LABOR OF LOVE, THE
PIECE IS STRICTLY BARGAIN BIN. SKIP IT.

VOICE

RICKY BLANE IS THE CLASSIC CASE OF
PRESENTING A POSER AS CUTTING EDGE.

VOICE

THE JUDGEMENT SHOULD
BE JUDGED.

MORF

motionless in the middle of the room ... message of the installation seemingly directed at him as the

VOICES GET INCREASINGLY OTHERWORLDLY AND SHRILL ...

DEVASTATING SNIPPETS FROM MORF'S REVIEWS ...

AN AUDITORY ONSLAUGHT AND ...

sudden silence as ... the door opens and ... the GALLERY OWNER re-appears ...

GALLERY OWNER

Sorry for the delay, our computer crashed. We'll start it now.

MORF

What did I just hear?

GALLERY OWNER

Nothing. This is a sound-proof room.

MORF

Voices.

GALLERY OWNER

I have no idea. "Mysticite" is a symphony of whale intonations recorded 20,000 feet under the sea in the Mariana Trench. You are up for this?

The GALLERY OWNER regards him ... MORF nods ... the GALLERY OWNER departs as ... *MOURNFUL WHALE CALLS BEGIN* and CUT TO

A BLUE SCREEN

fills FRAME ... ORGAN music ... CHOIR ... the BLUE PARTS and

RHODORA'S FACE

appears ... surreal ... smiling ... laughing ...

RHODORA

I'm flying. I'm a child again.

RHODORA pushing through the blue ... arms wide ...

RHODORA

I'm soaring through the atmosphere.

RHODORA'S movement creates ripples in the blue and we REALIZE

SHE'S ENVELOPED IN A REALM OF MYRIAD SUSPENDED BLUE FIBERS

RHODORA

Porous to the world.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Rhodora?

RHODORA'S form flits past ... blue swirling as she runs ...

WOMAN'S VOICE

Rhodora, Morf's here to see you.

RHODORA stops ... her amorphous form passes and WIDER TO SHOW

RHODORA'S GALLERY

*AS WE SEE THE ROOM'S FILLED WITH FLOOR-TO-CEILING BLUE STRANDS
... FORM A DENSE, PENETRABLE MEDIUM AS ... THE BLUE PARTS AND*

RHODORA emerges ... sees her new young ASSISTANT standing next
to MORF ... beard stubbled ... disheveled ...

RHODORA

Art provides an escape in difficult
times. So?

MORF

We have to talk.

RHODORA

(re: the BLUE STRAND EXHIBIT)

I'm asking about Blue Sky. You're one of
the first to view it. First impressions?

MORF

It's blue.

RHODORA

I'm worried. Look at you. Grooming used
to be one of your strong suits. I'm late
for a meeting, walk with me.

RHODORA heading through her gallery ... MORF following ...

MORF

There's something profoundly wrong.

MORF freezes ... backing away and ... follow his gaze to ... a
LITTLE GIRL RAISING A LARGE GUN ... PHANTOM-LIKE ...

RHODORA

Honey it's a hologram.

RHODORA stopped before AN ABORIGINAL FERTILITY FIGURE ...
WOVEN FROM BRANCHES ... 10-FEET TALL ... FACELESS ...

MORF

Dease served 30 years for murder. You
withheld that.

RHODORA

And you're basing that on what?

MORF

I spoke to Coco. She heard you getting
that information and burying it.

RHODORA

Well first off I don't think you're in
any good place to continue the book.

MORF

I'm not talking about the book. Do you
know Dease painted over most of his work?
There's an entire other collection hidden
beneath.

RHODORA

Hardly uncommon.

RHODORA continuing through the GALLERY ... MORF trailing ...

MORF

I'm seeing things. I'm hearing things.
Unexplainable things. Impossible things.
And this is hard to say as an adherent of
the here and now and denier of childish
belief but something truly goddamn
strange is going on.

RHODORA and MORF pass A MUSICAL ART PIECE ... MECHANICAL
FOREST ANIMALS PLAY INSTRUMENTS ... HUNTERS DANCE IN TIME ...

MORF

What happened to Bryson?

RHODORA

According to the police he had an
accident and wandered into the woods.

MORF

Coco saw him the night he went missing.
The night of the opening. She said he
was taking crates of Dease art from the
store room and loading them in his truck.

RHODORA

And all this relates how?

MORF

DEASE. His altered mental state,
tortured soul, phases of the goddamn moon
-- I don't know how but these deaths, the
disappearance, everything that's now
happening, it's all connected to his art.
Imbued with some spirit. Created out of
some vital ideal.

RHODORA walking by ... *AN EXHIBIT OF VERY LARGE LENSES* ... *SHE*
AND MORF MADE GROTESQUE BY THE DISTORTED GLASS ...

RHODORA

A bit baroque don't you think?

MORF

I came here to warn you.

RHODORA

It's been a fucked up few weeks but
listen to yourself. What are you saying?

MORF

Stop selling Dease.

RHODORA

It's a nine-figure collection.

MORF

I'm writing an article about this. About
Dease, his work and past and methods,
about everything that's gone down.

RHODORA

You'll kill your career.

MORF

Get rid of it, box it away, all of it.
That's what I'm doing.

MORF walking away ... calling to him ...

RHODORA

Oh c'mon. Come back here.

MORF becoming tiny and telescoped in an *EXHIBITION LENSES* ...

RHODORA

Don't you know, all art is dangerous.

MORF'S blurred form disappears and *DISSOLVE TO*

A SMALL, DISTANT FIGURE

walking toward us ... larger ... coming into view to REVEAL
... JOSEPHINA dressed in downtown couture as ... she ENTERS

RHODORA'S OFFICE

and finds RHODORA on the phone ... mid-call ...

RHODORA/ON PHONE

It's been a feeding frenzy since the debut ... What's changed is we ran new metrics and realized we've been overly precious with supply ... I sent you six Dease JPEGs, all available for immediate purchase at the quoted price and destined for significant appreciation.

RHODORA taps a key on her computer and ... SIX PHOTOS OF DEASE ART fill the screen ...

RHODORA/ON PHONE

All of them, that's swell ... I'll send the papers ... Of course you are, see you in Basel.

(hangs up, keys the intercom)
Who's next?

ASSISTANT/OVER PHONE

That's everyone on the sheet. We're waiting for call backs.

JOSEPHINA

What's going on? We closed the first phase on Dease. Why are we selling more?

RHODORA closes the office door ...

RHODORA

Morf's hell-bent on writing a story. He's connecting Bryson disappearance and Gretchen and Jon's deaths to the Dease pieces. He believes they're somehow channeling some sort of spirit.

JOSEPHINA

What kind of spirit?

RHODORA

I don't know the varieties.

JOSEPHINA

He's literally been acting so weird. You know we broke up this morning.

RHODORA

Now you tell me? Jesus Josephina, your connection with him was useful.

JOSEPHINA

What? I should've stayed with him?

RHODORA

You should have kept me informed. his influence is not unsubstantial.

JOSEPHINA

So he writes some bat-shit story, who cares?

RHODORA

We don't sell durable goods, we peddle perception. Thin as a bubble. A piece like this, by Morf, could start a run. Call your buyers, sell as much Dease as you can before he posts something.

ASSISTANT/OVER INTERCOM

Mister Kay in Palm Beach on one.

RHODORA/INTO PHONE

Hey doll ... I'm circling back on you wanting some museum-quality Dease.

RHODORA speaking as we PUSH IN ON

THE SIX DEASE JPEGs ON HER COMPUTER ...

ONE SHOWING THE FAMILY LOADING A CAR FOR A TRIP ... FACES OBSCURED ... BENEATH A LOOMING PALM TREE AND DISSOLVE TO

PALM TREES

whipped by Santa Ana winds ... a large frond breaks away as ... we PULL BACK TO SHOW

LOS ANGELES

at night ... city scoured by a dry desert gale and CUT TO

MORF'S APARTMENT

as windows rattle from the wind ... silence, save for the soft clacking of computer keys as

WE

drift through MORF'S living space ... SEE

HIS DEASE PAINTINGS

and DEASE MATERIAL have all been removed ... heavily wrapped
and taped and stacked by the door as we FIND

MORF in his OFFICE ... typing on his computer ... deep into
writing as his phone vibrates on the desk as we SEE it's

JOSEPHINA

calling ... MORF not answering ... phone display showing it's
the NINTH TIME she's called and CUT TO

JOSEPHINA'S PENTHOUSE

where a decked out JOSEPHINA stands in her kitchen ... phone
in hand ... waiting for MORF to answer ... hanging up ...

JOSEPHINA

(calling into the next room)
I've got a new favorite song and it sucks
because I know I'm gonna burn out on it.

JOSEPHINA cues a song ... music plays as ... she brings a
bottle of Crystal and two glasses out to the

LIVING ROOM

where DAMRISH is smoking a joint ... legs up ... boots on the
coffee table ... staring at a big DEASE on the wall ...

JOSEPHINA

Baby the table's onyx, your boots.

DAMRISH

Ever notice anything about that picture?

CLOSE ON

THE LARGE, LIVING ROOM DEASE ... ON A MANTLE OVER A FIRE ...
PAINTING SHOWING A CROWDED SCHOOL CAFETERIA ... EVERY FACE
LOOKING DOWN, TURNED, BLURRED OR IN SHADOW ... FACELESS
TEACHER ADDRESSING THE CHILDREN ...

DAMRISH

If you look long enough the kids move.

JOSEPHINA

Pop this.

JOSEPHINA hands DAMRISH the Crystal ... he pops the cork ...

JOSEPHINA

You have strong hands.

JOSEPHINA pours two glasses ... lifts hers to clink but ...
DAMRISH downs his in one swallow ... stares at the DEASE ...

DAMRISH

It's alive. Don't you see?

DAMRISH ... unblinking stare and REVERSE as

WE'RE

The DEASE looking at JOSEPHINA and DAMRISH ... both looking
back at us ...

JOSEPHINA

I just sold it.

DAMRISH

What? I would've bought it.

JOSEPHINA

You couldn't afford it. We don't want
it. Trust me. I'm doing you a favor.

JOSEPHINA straddles him ... hands roving ... DAMRISH ...
staring at us (the DEASE) as ... JOSEPHINA starts tugging off
his t-shirt and ... he stops her ...

DAMRISH

I gotta get down to Traction Avenue.

JOSEPHINA

I thought we were spending the night in.

DAMRISH

Something came up I gotta deal with.
Tonight.

JOSEPHINA

You're blowing me off?

DAMIRSH

I want you to come.

DAMRISH stands ... goes out ... JOSEPHINA about to follow when
... her phone rings ... she answers and

INTERCUT -- MORF DESCENDING IN HIS APARTMENT BUILDING ELEVATOR

MORF

Why do you keep calling?

JOSEPHINA

Why? Are you serious? We break up and now you're writing a story to destroy my livelihood? I want you to stop whatever the fuck it is you're working on.

MORF

I'm not doing this to get back at you.

JOSEPHINA

Are you even aware you've lost your mind?

MORF

We don't realize the value of friends until they're gone. I still consider you a friend, Josephina.

JOSEPHINA

Go fuck yourself. Then lose my number.

JOSEPHINA hangs up ... ties a scarf around her neck ... stands directly in front of the DEASE ... back turned and CLOSE ON

THE DEASE PAINTING ... ONE OF THE FACELESS CHILDREN'S NOSTRILS BEGIN TO BREATHE AS ...

JOSEPHINA leaves with DAMRISH and CUT TO

A TRAFFIC LIGHT

swings wildly in the Santa Ana wind ... blinking red as... JOSEPHINA'S BENTLEY roars by ... music blasting and CUT TO

INSIDE JOSEPHINA'S MOVING BENTLEY

as JOSEPHINA drives ... DAMRISH getting high ... listening to a TRANCE SONG and CUT TO

RHODORA

in her big empty bed ... finishing a glass of wine ... facial mask applied ... regarding an art folio ... wind blowing hard outside as ... she hears something ... listens and

ELECTRIC GUITARS are heard ... from downstairs ... soft and melodic as ... RHODORA freezes ... activates a

SECURITY VIEW ON HER TV

showing a dozen live images of the estate ... nothing amiss as ... she rises ... leaves the room and HOLD ON SECURITY CAMERA VIEWS as ... one by one they change ... form a mosaic making a DEASE PAINTING and CUT TO

RHODORA

nervously comes down the stairs ... guitar music louder ... harsher ... no sign of the source ... RHODORA motionless ... building fear as ... she sprints to the security panel ... about to activate the alarm when she SEES

A WINDOW'S OPEN

and wind blows in as ... RHODORA looks up and realizes the

GUITAR MOBILE

is turning in the breeze from outside ... strings strangely affected ... creating an eerie symphony of sound and CUT TO

A GREEK SCULPTURE

of a nude WOMAN ... headless ... armless and PULL BACK TO SHOW

MORF AND COCO

in a ROOFTOP RESTAURANT ... night-time L.A. spread below ...

MORF

With this article I'm pouring gas on myself and lighting a match. I don't have a choice. It's been revealed to me that I handed in the wrong life review and there is some sort of larger power, some entity invested in our endeavor.

COCO

Invested how?

MORF

In the violation of inviolate rules. What if what's shown isn't what people want, it's what we feed them. Have I gone mad?

COCO

You're asking me? I found both bodies. I'm sleeping with the lights on. On top of which if I don't land something soon I'll have to return home.

MORF

I'm leaving town while my article breaks but I could use an assistant here for a few weeks while I'm gone.

COCO

Really?

MORF
If you're interested.

COCO
I am. Thank you. That means a lot.

MORF
I'm storing some art tonight and leaving
early tomorrow. These are keys to my
storage space. I need to have everything
itemized that's there.

MORF eats ... catches COCO regarding him ...

MORF
I have something in my teeth?

COCO
No.

MORF
What?

COCO
I can't keep it in. You're gonna be
upset.

MORF
Okay.

COCO
Like seriously.

MORF
Uh oh.

COCO
It's really fucked up.

MORF
What is it?

COCO
I was Rhodora's personal assistant. I
saw her checks. Rolled calls with her.
I think she sometimes forgot I was on.

MORF
Tell me.

COCO
Your ex-boyfriend, Ed. He worked for
her.

MORF

You mean worked her out, he's a trainer.

COCO

No. I mean Rhodora paid Ed to give her advance word on your reviews. He told her what you liked before you posted and she made buys.

MORF motionless ... wind-whipped trees behind him ...

COCO

She gave him a lot of money. Like maybe that was why Ed was with you.

MORF still as a statue ...

COCO

Do I still have the job?

MORF downs his wine ... pours another glass and CUT TO

POOL BALLS

smashed ... colored spheres explode over green felt as we FIND

JOSEPHINA AT A DOWNTOWN DIVE BAR

where she sits at the rail ... out of place in designer clothes ... sandwiched between STREET WALKERS, DRUGGIES, PUNKS ... speaking loud over the MUSIC --

JOSEPHINA

(to the BARTENDER)

Is my car safe out there?

BARTENDER not hearing ... serving customers as ... JOSEPHINA looks around ... no sight of DAMRISH ... nursing a drink as she regards the interior ... every inch covered with years of OVERLAPPING GRAFFITI, STICKERS, DRAWINGS and ... DAMRISH taps her shoulder ...

JOSEPHINA

Where'd you go?

A FIGURE appears behind DAMRISH ... the large, tattooed NATIVE AMERICAN MAN we met earlier ...

DAMRISH

This is Ben. He runs my old collective.

JOSEPHINA

Hey.

BEN stares ... walks off ...

JOSEPHINA
Lovely. Can we leave now?

DAMRISH
I'm staying.

JOSEPHINA
I don't like this place.

DAMRISH
I'm talking longer time line. I'm
leaving Rhodora. Her gallery.

JOSEPHINA
No you're not.

DAMRISH
I can't be there.

JOSEPHINA
We have a significant show planned.
You're high, c'mon.

JOSEPHINA tugs his arm ... DAMRISH not moving ...

DAMRISH
I mean it.

JOSEPHINA
You're about to break big. We're taking
you global. You'd give that up? For
what? Some sad garage space peddling
graffiti murals? Jesus what's the point
of art if nobody sees it?

DAMRISH kisses her forehead ... disappears into the loud,
crowded bar and CUT TO

A STREET SIGN

whipping in the Santa Ana wind as ... headlights pierce the
dark ... MORF'S mini-cooper speeds past and CUT TO

INSIDE MORF'S MOVING MINI-COOPER

Small car crammed with MORF'S boxed up DEASE art and material
... MORF buzzed ... blows through a yellow light and CUT TO

LOS ANGELES STORAGE BUILDING

as we see the mini-cooper parked outside ... MORF putting his
boxed DEASE art work on a dolly and CUT TO

INSIDE STORAGE BUILDING

as MORF signs in at the desk ... tugs his dolly into the massive building and CUT TO

DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES STREET

as JOSEPHINA walks alone ... wind whipping ... gets to her BENTLEY to see someone's

DOUBLE-PARKED CAR blocking her way out ...

JOSEPHINA

FUCK.

JOSEPHINA gets in ... starts her Bentley ... honks the horn ... again ... again ... no one around and CUT TO

INSIDE STORAGE FACILITY

as MORF appears down a long dark corridor ... lights automatically activating as MORF goes and we SEE

THE HALLWAY'S

lined with STORAGE SPACES covered by screen mesh and CUT TO

DOWNTOWN L.A. STREET

as JOSEPHINA presses for UBER ... looks around ... searching for an address to type in ... going to a

DESOLATE CORNER where she reads street signs ... keys them in ... waiting ... wind whipping ... unaware of a

GRAFFITI MURAL

ON A BRICK WALL IN THE BG BEHIND HER AS ... THE MURAL BEGINS TO MOVE ... MORPH ... BECOMES A DEPICTION OF

A GRUNGE ART GALLERY FACADE

THAT SUDDENLY BECOMES REAL AS

JOSEPHINA

shivers in the wind ... turns to see the GALLERY behind her ... lights on inside and CUT TO

STORAGE FACILITY

as MORF pulls his dolly of DEASE ART deeper and deeper into the enormous facility ... arrives at a

STORAGE SPACE

and MORF pulls a key ... unlocks the mesh covered door ...
enters a partially-filled space ... unloading the dolly and

WE

watch him from inside a STORAGE SPACE across the corridor ...
through the dim clutter of someone's stored possessions as

A SILHOUETTED OBJECT

suddenly starts to move ... MORF seen working across the
corridor as ... the silhouette rises ...

WRITHING SILENTLY AND CUT TO

DOWNTOWN L.A. STREET

as JOSEPHINA approaches the lit GRUNGE GALLEY ... opens the
door ... enters a ... GRAFFITI ART-FILLED GARAGE SPACE ...

JOSEPHINA
(calling to the back)
I'm just waiting for my Uber.

NO ONE seen ...

JOSEPHINA looking around ...

REGARDING the graffiti art ... sweeping scale and scope and
CUT TO

STORAGE FACILITY HALLWAY

as MORF finishes taking his DEASE art off the dolly ... going
out to the corridor ... locking the door as

THE CORRIDOR LIGHTS

suddenly go dark ... blackness ...

MORF
Oh Christ.

MORF presses his phone ... screen creating a small island of
light as ... a storage door is heard opening in the dark ...

MORF
Hello?

MORF looking around ... nervous ... starting down the dark
corridor ... suddenly SEEING

THE SILHOUETTE

of someone standing directly before him in the blacked out hallway ...

MORF

Hello?

MORF slowing ... stopping ...

MORF

The power went out.

THE SHADOW FIGURE in front of him starts to move ... MORF peering into the dimness ...

MORF

Do you work here?

THE STORAGE FACILITY LIGHTS FLASH ON ...

HOBOMAN SEEN GYRATING FOR A TERRIFYING SECOND ... WEARING THE TUXEDO ... MASK ... HOLDING THE SIGN

will work for food

AND LIGHTS OUT AS ...

MORF STARTS TO RUN ...

DEEPER INTO THE DARKNESS ...

HALLWAY LIGHTS BLINKING ON AND OFF ...

HOBOMAN'S CONTORTED FORM GAINING FAST AS

MORF REACHES A MESHED BARRIER AT THE END OF THE HALL ...

MORF

HELP!!! HELP ME!!!

NO escape ...

MORF spins ...

LIGHTS strobing as ...

HOBOMAN FILLS FRAME ... THE CRIPPLED, TUXEDOED, BATMAN-MASKED ROBOTIC VAGRANT UNNERVINGLY NEAR ... DROPS THE SIGN AS ...

MORF IS EMBRACED ... PINNED ...

SAVAGED AND CUT TO

JOSEPHINA

inside the GRAFFITIED SPACE as ... her phone rings ... sees
it's RHODORA ...

JOSEPHINA/INTO PHONE

Damrish is leaving.

INTERCUT - RHODORA IN HER HILLTOP ESTATE

RHODORA/INTO PHONE

Don't even kid.

JOSEPHINA/INTO PHONE

He met his old exhibitor at a dive bar
and told me he's going back, it's over.

JOSEPHINA paces before the spray-painted walls ...

RHODORA/OVER PHONE

Do you know what that costs us?

JOSEPHINA/INTO PHONE

I'm not responsible for this.

RHODORA/OVER PHONE

Letting Morf get away and now Damrish.

JOSEPHINA/INTO PHONE

What are you suggesting?

JOSEPHINA looking at the vivid murals ... doesn't SEE

THE FLOOR

BENEATH HER FEET BECOMING SPRAY-PAINTED AS WELL ...

STAINING HER SHOES ...

COLOR CREEPING UP HER HIGH HEELS ...

ONTO HER LEGS ...

COVERING AND CLIMBING BARE SKIN ...

RHODORA/OVER PHONE

What's done is done. At this point it's
about damage control.

JOSEPHINA/INTO PHONE

How do we contain it?

RHODORA/OVER PHONE
We can't be seen as having lost him. We
have to frame it that we cut Damrish
loose. That's the party line.

JOSEPHINA staring at a *GRAFFITI MURAL* and

INTERCUT - RHODORA'S HOUSE

as RHODORA sees her hairless CAT outside in the storm ...
pawing the glass door ... meowing over the wind ...

RHODORA/INTO PHONE
Shit, hold on.

RHODORA slides the door open ... reaches and

THE CAT darts away ... across the lawn ...

RHODORA
Come here. Get over here. Goddamn it.

RHODORA follows ... barefoot as WE PAN UP TO SHOW

RHODORA

is standing directly below the massive STEEL SLAB SCULPTURE
... wind blowing hard ... whipping around ... stopping under
THE HUGE STEEL SLAB and CUT TO

JOSEPHINA

IN THE GRAFFITI GALLERY ... GLANCING DOWN ... SUDDENLY SEEING

VIVID COLORS RISING AND COATING HER BODY AS

JOSEPHINA FRANTICALLY TRIES TO WIPE IT AWAY ... STAINING HER
HANDS ... COVERING HER ARMS AS

SHE'S CONSUMED IN COLOR AND CUT TO

RHODORA'S BACKYARD

as she bends down ... trying to grab the CAT ...

CRACK OF METAL and

RHODORA

pulls away ... falls back just as the

STEEL SLAB

slams down where she was and

CRUSHES the table and chairs as

RHODORA

scrambles away ... runs

INTO THE HOUSE

and locks the door ... she sees her phone ... picks it up ...

RHODORA/INTO PHONE

Jesus Christ you can't believe what just
happened.

JOSEPHINA'S SCREAMS ECHO from the other end of the phone ...

RHODORA

Josephina?! Josephina?!

JOSEPHINA'S SHRIEKS FILTER THROUGH and then ... silence ...

RHODORA

Hello?! Hello?!

Something touches RHODORA'S leg and

RHODORA

bolts ... looks down to see her

CAT

meowing at her as we DISSOLVE TO

MORNING

over L.A. ... winds have wiped the city clean ... blue sky and
calm as

COCO

comes down the sidewalk ... approaches the

STORAGE BUILDING

where MORF'S mini-cooper is still parked outside ... COCO
enters the building and CUT TO

INSIDE STORAGE BUILDING

as an elevator opens ... COCO steps out ... starts down a
corridor ... lights automatically activating as she goes
deeper and ... HOLD SHOT as

A FREAKED SHRIEK

echoes through the cavernous corridor and CUT TO

DOWNTOWN L.A. STREET

as morning traffic and people pass a large GRAFFITI MURAL on a brick wall and CLOSER TO SHOW

JOSEPHINA PART OF THE STREET DISPLAY ... BECOME ART AND CUT TO

AERIAL OF RHODORA'S HILLTOP ESTATE

where a line of MOVING TRUCKS are seen parked on her long, private driveway and we descend to FIND

RHODORA on her patio ... on the phone ... hearing the news ...

RHODORA/ON PHONE

How?! ... A storage facility? ... Well
what do they *think* happened? ... I have
to go ... No, I'm not coming in.

RHODORA hangs up ... stunned ... calls JOSEPHINA ... no response and CUT TO

MOVERS

carrying ART from her house ... everything art-related being loaded into the trucks and CUT TO

INSIDE THE HOUSE

where the last of the MOVERS carry out the final objects ... leaving the structure completely bare ... a SUPERVISOR walks

OUTSIDE

where RHODORA is sitting on the grass ... looking at the steel slab that almost killed her ...

MOVING SUPERVISOR

That's all of it.

RHODORA

Everything? Every piece of art?

MOVING SUPERVISOR

Uh-huh.

RHODORA

Say it.

MOVING SUPERVISOR
It's empty. Took six trucks but we
removed everything.

RHODORA
Thank you.

The SUPERVISOR leaves and CUT TO

MOVING TRUCKS

pulling away ... snaking down the hill and CUT TO

RHODORA'S LIVING ROOM

as RHODORA enters from outside ... surveys the barren large
space ... every shred of art removed and

RHODORA

moves tentatively ... into the center of the living room ...
looking around as she ...

SITS

on the floor ... knees up ... looking out at the view of

LOS ANGELES

in the daytime ... sun shining and CLOSE ON

RHODORA

as she starts to settle ... eyes closing and WE SLOWLY

PAN

around her FACE ... to a patch of bare neck where we FIND

THE TATTOO

OF THE VELVET BUZZSAW ... BEAT BEFORE IT STARTS TO TURN AND

RHODORA'S EYES

open ... first shocking stab of pain as the

BUZZSAW TATTOO

spins furiously near her neck ... drawing blood and

BLACK OUT

and MUSIC ... CREDITS run to the end and

FADE IN

to find a dejected COCO loading her suitcases in a cab ...
climbing in ... addressing the driver ...

COCO

L.A.X.

INSIDE MOVING CAB

as COCO looks out at Los Angeles ... returning home and ...
she stops looking just as ... the cab passes a ROADSIDE STAND
on a busy street and CUT TO

WE

stay with the ROADSIDE STAND ... see several HOMELESS PEOPLE
unloading the

CRATES taken from the back of BRYSON'S pick-up ...

FILLED with DEASE ART ...

HANGING pieces on a fence as ...

A CAR stops and a COUPLE get out ... regard the art ...

WOMAN

Oh that's lovely. How much is it.

HOMELESS MAN

I dunno. Five bucks.

MAN

Okay.

CLOSE ON

the DEASE ... STUNNING LAKE OF CONSTANCE FILLING FRAME as ...

MORE PASSERSBY

begin to stop ... regard the MYRIAD PIECES OF DEASE ART ...
pulling wallets ... carrying them off and

THAT'S IT