

Voice over transcript

I HAVE NO MEMORY OF MY DIRECTION

2005, digital video, super 8, lomographic supersampler, Barbie wireless videocam, Intel Digital camera, Tyco & Trendmaster toy video cameras; 5.1 surround sound; 77 minutes  
by MIDI ONODERA

SCENE 1:

Fade in from black. Through a series of dissolves and fast motion effects, the sun rises in the sky. As the sun gets higher, the sky takes on a somewhat surreal quality.

TITLE: I Have No Memory Of My Direction

SCENE 2:

By an ocean pier, a group of four young Japanese girls surround a concrete bench. They are dressed in school uniforms of navy blue blazers and skirts with white blouses. They chat, fiddle with a cell phone and pass their after school time together.

VOICE OVER:

*When she recalled that moment their faces would reappear to her suspended in the oxide-coated mylar tape. Like a strange three-dimensional puzzle the pieces would continuously re-arrange themselves depending on the clarity of her vision. But they never seemed to tell the entire story, the one she knew was there. The one she knew was hidden in that magnetic recording.*

FADE OUT

SCENE 3:

A series of images of the Shinagawa train station during morning rush hour. Shinagawa Station, one of Tokyo's main transfer points is crammed full of people rushing to work. Most of the people are men, wearing dark suits and ties. There are so many people that a Station Manager/Conductor is directing them up and down the stairs. The flow of people is continuous and seemingly never-ending.

VOICE OVER:

*A chronic insomniac, dreams became the vacations she wouldn't otherwise be able to afford.*

*In this dream, on Thursday morning, she disembarks from the Yamanote line in Tokyo and finds herself in the middle of Shinagawa station.*

*She knows she's unremarkable in the sea of Asian faces. She imagines how she appears to them – a part of the crowd, an inhabitant, invisible. The dislocation she feels is buried beneath her skin. She's only been here in her imagination.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 4:

The Tawaramachi district of Tokyo is a well-known area that specializes in restaurant supplies, kitchen utensils, and amazingly crafted fake food. Intercut with CU of different fake food are clips from different Japanese TV showing people enjoying food. The clips are re-photographed with the Gameboy toy camera.

VOICE OVER:

*Her stomach growls. She thinks of dream food – manufactured, perfected, a feast for the eyes.*

SCENE 5:

On a bright spring day in Kyoto, several heavily costumed young women in white face awkwardly attempt to walk through the streets, precariously balanced on their high geta. They take photographs of each other with digital cameras and cell phone cameras.

VOICE OVER:

*Something in her pocket begins to vibrate. She knows the mechanical sensation in her sleep. She takes out a small buzzing cell phone and answers in a foreign voice she doesn't recognize as her own. The speaker calls her by her name. It's her grandmother.*

*She urges her to go to the Mitsukoshi Department store. They're having a special sale on kimono. It'll be her grandmother's treat – with her employee discount, no need to worry. As a Mitsukoshi switchboard operator, her grandmother easily monitors the comings and goings of the store.*

SCENE 6:

In the famous Ginza shopping district of Tokyo, the shoppers have yet to arrive. Instead the streets are mostly empty, with only the occasional street cleaner or garbage man. Men toss empty cardboard cartons out of a second story window. Garbage men run across the street in front of the Kabuki theatre – reminiscent of the Beatles "Abby Road" album. An elderly woman hoses down the sidewalk. Shopkeepers prepare for the day.

VOICE OVER:

*She's transported to the Ginza. She knows it never looks this way in real life. Usually it's so jammed with people you can't even see where you're going until you get there.*

*She knows nothing of her grandmother's life in Tokyo. Tiny dust-bunny fragments of the imagined past fuse with the daily lives of the early morning workers. She tries to picture her grandmother's dreams, but it only leads to feelings of homesickness. She could never belong here. A fine thread of inheritance isn't enough to ground her.*

SCENE 7:

The EXT of the Nihombashi Mitsukoshi Department store. A Japanese flag flies high on top of a 1920's style department store. The building looks distinctly Western, almost Art Deco in design. Although there are contemporary window displays the building has an old quality to it. There are two large bronze lions in front of the main store entrance.

VOICE OVER:

*She arrives at the old Mitsukoshi Department store that somehow has been moved from Nihombashi to the Ginza. As she begins to film the building, a security guard startles her.*

SCENE 8:

A montage of Lomo Supersampler still photographs of the Mitsukoshi Department store.

VOICE OVER:

*Miming the universal "forbidden" sign, he tells her that she is not permitted to photograph the store windows.*

SCENE 9:

Inside the Mitsukoshi Department store, in the front foyer there is an elegant smoking lounge. Gold and red are the dominating colours. A group of Italian businessmen and women enter the foyer and continue their meeting while smoking with their Japanese counterparts. A few elderly women rest on the red velvet benches, while a Salaryman pauses for a cigarette.

VOICE OVER:

*Just behind the replicas of the lions in Trafalgar Square, there's a smoking lounge. She sits down and watches a group of Italian businessmen while waiting for her grandmother's shift to end.*

*Slowly she comes to understand that grandmother has long since died. She will never meet her here. She's heartbroken.*

*On the pretense of extinguishing his cigarette, one of the Italians approaches her with a message. He tells her that her grandmother has appointed her the guardian of her father's memories.*

*She never felt close to her father. She isn't up for the job. She can't even remember what she had for dinner last night.*

#### SCENE 10:

The screens are now horizontally split. In both of the screens there are low angled wide shots of train platforms. There are only a few people waiting. People's feet enter the frame. Some are carrying umbrellas, while others lug shopping bags or briefcases.

#### VOICE OVER:

*In a logic associated with waking consciousness, she looks for direction.*

*She rummages through her pockets and finds a strange-looking map. The only references she can decipher are two small characters outlined in red – a dog and a cat.*

*Still folded between the crevices of sleep she feels her heart quicken. She's compelled to board the speeding train. But she knows she'll never safely cross the undulating gap between the platform and the car before the doors close.*

*It's always been that inescapable electrifying outcome that shakes her from her slumber.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

#### SCENE 11:

The "realistic" shots are transformed into "cartoon-like" images of a short sequence of television commercials that feature different people holding umbrellas. The high contrast, almost pixilated images have been manipulated through various toy cameras.

#### VOICE OVER:

*But this time, it's the tips of umbrellas that panic her.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

#### SCENE 12:

The cartoon-like images have returned to the “realistic” mode. The camera continues to be positioned in a low angle on the train platform. This sequence is made up of different shots from roughly the same camera position but in different train stations. The platforms are slightly more crowded now, as people rush in and out of the train cars.

#### VOICE OVER:

*Ten years ago in March, the same month she knows is now, she sees a man with his umbrella, waiting for the train to pull into the station. Rain has not been forecast for that day.*

#### SCENE 13:

The camera is now inside the moving train car. It is positioned to see into the next car through the window. Various people sit and stand – reading newspapers, books and looking out the window. No one makes eye contact and no one sees the camera.

#### VOICE OVER:

*Once inside the train he drops a clear plastic bag onto the floor. The sweat-covered handle of his umbrella slips as he attempts to puncture the bag. Finally, he manages to pierce it as the train pulls into the next station. He calmly moves to the door and out onto the platform. The doors shut and the train moves forward.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

#### SCENE 14:

Part of an excerpt of a television news story on the Aum cult. In 1995, the Aum Cult was responsible for one of the worst disasters in the Tokyo underground. They released sarin gas, killing 12 people and injuring over 5000 people. The clips are archival news footage of the catastrophe that have been re-photographed using various video camera toys and altered to look almost cartoon-like.

The news footage is being broadcast with English voice-over.

#### TV ANNOUNCER:

*Toxic Fumes later identified by police as the highly lethal nerve gas, Sarin, was found wrapped in small packages on at least five subway cars. Immediately two subway lines that crisscross the giant metropolis were shut down, a third was partially closed. The government which was heavily criticized for its' slow reaction time and inefficiency after the Kobe earthquake acted swiftly in the wake of this toxic disaster. Self-Defense Forces specializing in chemical warfare were called*

*in to neutralize the Sarin as emergency crews rushed people by the hundreds to area hospitals.*

SCENE 15 :

By contrast to the previous chaotic imagery, the cult leader, Shoko Asahara is seen in various news clips. He is a chubby man with a small beard barely covering his large chin. He is seen either smiling or meditating with slightly closed eyes. The footage has been altered to appear almost psychedelic and otherworldly.

VOICE OVER:

*Months later, several top members of the Aum cult and their leader, Shoko Asahara are arrested and charged for masterminding this extreme act. But she knows that he'll just become another terrorist action figure in the landscape of a world at war.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 16:

Tokyo pedestrians on a rainy day: crowds of people are seen through the dim reflection of a glass building. Hidden by their umbrellas, the people pass in front of the camera.

VOICE OVER:

*In her dream she keeps confusing the Tokyo District Court House where the Aum trial is currently underway, with the opening of the Bob Newhart Show.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 17:

This sequence is a rough facsimile of the opening of the 1970's television show, "The Bob Newhart Show". In a series of shots we see Japanese businessmen or "salarymen" standing in for "Bob". The men wear dark suits and usually carry a briefcase. Most of the shots are too wide to see the actual faces of the men or their backs are facing the camera. The sequence consists of various shots in urban Japanese cities, with fast camera zooms changing with each location as "Bob" travels to work in an office building that resembles the Tokyo District Court House. Both building are similarly dull in their architectural style. The music of the Bob Newhart show is heard.

VOICE OVER:

*She's never been to Chicago. Who's to say it isn't like her dream of Tokyo? Bob, she supposes, could be an Aum follower. Middle class, book smart. Clinging to a*

*deep-seated desire to relinquish responsibility, become enlightened and experience unconditional love.*

*But even in the world of a television character, how could the horrendous events of that day be anticipated? Over 5000 people injured, 12 dead. The effects of the Sarin poisoning still lingering to this day.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

#### SCENE 18:

Shot through the window from inside a moving train car. The sky is bright and the sun shines as the train travels through suburban Tokyo. Occasionally yellow barriers/gates prevent small groups of pedestrians from crossing the road as the train passes. Japanese-style homes, clothes hanging out to dry, small markets and grocery stores, can be seen.

#### VOICE OVER:

*From the reports that day, there was no panic, at least not at first. Most people carried on as usual, blaming their symptoms on spring allergies or a looming cold. It was necessary to ignore the truth because it was unbearable to imagine.*

*But knowing that it continues to be someone else's nightmare only aggravates her anxiety. Empathetically their worlds have touched each other like passing strangers in a crowd.*

*She focuses on the characters flowing past her. Like the words on the map, they're hard to decipher. Language, she understands, is not a genetic characteristic.*

*An elegant woman in her late 50s moves through the car and takes a seat. She's dressed in a beautiful flowered kimono with gold branches running throughout. She pulls a tiny ebony pen and a small leather notebook from her purse and begins to write something.*

*The train enters the next station, the woman replaces the items in her purse and departs. Like an unfinished sentence, she leaves a curious essence lingering in the air.*

#### SCENE 19:

A montage of shots focused on cats: stray cats eating scraps in a park; sunning themselves on the sidewalk, in front of a temple, in a garden; dodging the crowds of people on a busy street; ignoring the camera. Although all of the cats are stray none of them are white in colour.

VOICE OVER:

*She recalls the time her father took her to pick out the family cat.*

SCENE 20:

WS of a road lined by tall pine trees. A Japanese style archway or gate is seen in the distance. Further along a crude homemade sign of a Maneki Neko (lucky white cat) is displayed in front of a small flower shop. Nearby a white cat washing itself, and then runs away.

VOICE OVER:

*Her fingertips brush against the map in her pocket. A white cat. She must be close.*

SCENE 21:

In a small cemetery, various headstones and stone Buddha dot the bare gray ground. In one area there is a row of six slightly larger than life-size stone statues of men. The primitively carved stone figures wear bright red scarves on their bald heads and red bibs around their necks.

VOICE OVER:

*She confirms her direction with six passing strangers.*

SCENE 22:

At the Gotoku-ji Temple, there is a large “cat bell” hanging from the temple roof. There is a heavy braided cord attached to the bell, enabling people to ring it. Beside the temple there is a small rack of wooden prayer plaques, called ema and a water pump for purification.

VOICE OVER:

*She senses she’s been here before. The temple’s familiar but brighter than she recalls and smaller than she expects.*

SCENE 23:

A young boy runs up to the Temple. Surrounding an old stone carving of Buddha, there are countless numbers of white Maneki Neko – white cat statues with one of their paws raised. Besides these typical offerings there are other hand-made cats and strings of folded paper cranes. In the distance the sound of a large cat bell can be heard.

VOICE OVER:

*A young boy gestures to her childhood.*

*As he wanders off, she tries to recall all the cats in her life. She claps her hands twice and asks forgiveness for forgetting any of them.*

*She likes to imagine that her cats all know each other now. She likes to believe they're happy.*

SCENE 24:

The camera travels in a boat through a Hello Kitty land ride (similar to Disney World, although smaller). We pass through various scenes featuring characters from Sanrio world. Comic monkeys, dogs, frogs, etc. wave as we pass by – Hello Kitty appears numerous times.

VOICE OVER:

*Pop culture Shinto. Optimistic, fundamentally good and deeply rooted in tradition. (Hello Kitty, Chococat, Badtz-maru, Cinnamoroll, Chihi-maru, Deery Lou, Frooliemew, Pochacco, My Melody, Usahana, Purin, Pannapitta.)*

SCENE 25:

A dreamy abstract sequence of lily pads floating in a ceramic pot of water. The figure of a monk in saffron robes, his back towards the camera fades in and out of the water. A large bird soars in the air. A faint chant by the monk is heard in the distance.

VOICE OVER:

*Like a name half forgotten, resting on the tip of her tongue, she unearths an artifact glazed with time.*

*In the age of black and white, in a small coastal village there lived an eccentric sort of woman, Madam Yoshi and her son, Kisho. She stood on the back of a tortoise and was over seven stories tall but Kisho only measured 6 and a half centimeters high.*

SCENE 26:

A montage of shots from the children's festival in Chinatown, Nagasaki. The footage begins in black and white and gradually acquires slightly more colour, but it is never "realistic". Although the footage is contemporary, there is a kind of timeless quality to it as there are no obvious signs of contemporary life. The children, all dressed in "traditional" costumes are participating in a festival where different groups perform dance numbers or play small replicas of traditional Japanese taiko drums. Some groups even carry miniature shrines and dance with elaborate dragons "puppets".

VOICE OVER:

*Madam Yoshi cherished all children. And as far back as anyone could remember, her love for Kisho spread like a blanket of happiness over the village.*

*But alas, the story doesn't end well.*

SCENE 27:

A montage of various horror movie clips that feature spiders as the “monster”. Some clips are taken from “Arachnophobia”, “Spiders 2: Breeding Ground”, and “Eight Legged Freaks”. All of these clips are re-shot using the Tyco toy camera –making the footage a soft focus black and white. Various screams are heard on the soundtrack, building up into a frenzy. The montage ends with a manipulated, pixilated clip from the original black and white movie, “The Fly”. The clip is climax of the film where the “fly-man” is trapped in the spider’s web and killed. On the soundtrack the words “help me” are distorted and muffled.

VOICE OVER:

*On the last day of their happiness, at exactly 11:02 in the morning, the boy became trapped in a spider’s web. He cried out but no one heard him. The web was torn from his struggle, and as he lay dying in agony, a few drops of his blood fell onto the silvery threads. The blood congealed, mending the tattered web, transforming the strands into delicate, almost translucent, noodles.*

SCENE 28:

Medium Shot (MS) on the cook/owner of a small noodle shop. The woman, who is not very tall seems to be almost dwarfed by the two large bowls in front of her on the counter. She is concentrating on making two bowls of noodle soup. The footage is in black and white, soft focus – re-photographed using the Tyco toy camera.

VOICE OVER:

*Heartbroken, Madam Yoshie opened a small noodle shop and there for the rest of her life, she served warm, nourishing noodle soup for all those who were hungry. For she wished that no one should ever experience the emptiness that she had endured.*

SCENE 29:

Various colour shots of the enormous statue of “Madam Yoshi” standing on the back of a turtle. Although the audience may not know this, the statue is actually the figure of Kannon at the Fukusai-Ji Temple in Nagasaki.

VOICE OVER:

*It's a dream story. One that's neither a recognizable tale nor a documented truth. She wants it to be a story about sacrifice, about a mother's unrelenting love, about the loss of innocence. She decides the boy was sent to repair the web of time, sacrificing himself for the happiness of generations to come.*

SCENE 30:

A montage of different ariel shots of Tokyo Harbour. The day is clear and there are few people below. The most predominant structures are modern buildings, ships in the harbour and an occasion passing plane.

VOICE OVER:

*She knows the only chance she has to shift the perspective of time is in her dreams.*

*Somehow she must find the secrets of the REM state and draw it up to the surface of her wakefulness.*

*Hold onto her dreams, walk through them. Let them guide her.*

SCENE 31:

A montage of Japanese urban street life. A large group of Japanese school children on a field trip, all wearing bright yellow hats; a young hip crowd hang out in Shinjuku; a pair of parking lot attendants direct traffic in and out of a busy lot, calling out directions over a loudspeaker system; elderly people in the park feeding cats; the crowd waiting outside the Kabuki theatre; businessmen smoking in front of Tokyo station; an NHK cameraman shoots crowds of people crossing the street, etc.

VOICE OVER

*In dreams, you can never be lost. The seemingly random images and scenes create their own storyline, their own meaning.*

*And yet she's surprised when she looks down to find a black and white photograph in her hand. At first the face of the young Japanese man is unfamiliar. Then, she recognizes her father as a young man.*

SCENE 32:

In the Harajuku district, groups of fashionably dressed young men pose for tourists and wait for friends. Various young women are stopped by professional photographers and asked to pose for youth market magazines. The streets are

jammed with young people, tourists and Salarymen. There are many people taking still photographs as well as shooting video.

VOICE OVER:

*She searches the congested streets hoping to glimpse the young version of the man, before he was her father. Her thoughts snap, clicking like a camera shutter. Of course, her father was always behind the lens, not in front of it.*

*She imagines that she has inherited his way of seeing. She imagines that she's behind her father's viewfinder.*

*She sees his eyes, moving like a camera, capturing the world around him. The process of turning information into pictures, memories.*

SCENE 33:

Montage of a few popular tourist attractions in Japan:

In the Asakusa district, large groups of tourists and school children tour one of the oldest temple areas in Tokyo. On route to the temples, there is a large torii (gate) with a huge paper lantern hanging from it. It is a popular picture-taking spot. In Kamakura, the site of the second largest Buddha in Japan, more schoolchildren and tour bus groups photograph themselves and each other at the site. There is even a group of female tour guides in-training snapping pictures. In Nara Park, various tourists visit landmark temples and pagodas, recording everything with the camera. At the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, various tourists take pictures of themselves in front of a bridge that crosses the Palace moat. At Shijo Castle, in Okinawa, groups of school children pose in front of the colourful replica of the destroyed castle.

VOICE OVER:

*Every direction she faces she's detained in someone else's photograph. She recognizes the need to maintain the distance between the seer and the seen.*

*She wishes the authenticity of her dreams would remain clear to her in the waking world.*

*The only object she has to bridge these worlds is the photograph of her father. In her dream the glossy image seems to embrace his substance but in the factual world she rarely sees him that clearly.*

*She longs to discover the instrument that will record her imaginings. A kind of camera obscura for dreams.*

SCENE 34:

A Close Up (CU) on one of the large outdoor video screens in Shibuya. At first the images are abstract and pixilated, gradually they transform into clear recognizable representations of car commercials, clips from music videos, etc.

VOICE OVER:

*The dark chamber of sleep cloaks her in the blackness of her imagination.  
Projected images, alive, in colour, pre-cinematic.*

*Luminescent sorcery. An amplified picture gallery of personally collected scenes.  
A sequence of heartfelt treasures.*

*If she could somehow preserve these scenes she might for an infinitesimal  
moment create memory.*

SCENE 35:

A montage of various street traffic mirrors in different locations. The mirrors are round and convex shaped – all of them reflect different neighbourhoods in Japan. Some images are: a rickshaw driver carrying his tourist passengers; people rushing off to work, passing typical Japanese architecture; middle-aged women carrying shopping bags; a small car jockeying for space with a large truck on narrow street, etc.

VOICE OVER:

*If she could somehow record her dreams, replay them when she was awake, edit  
them into her daily life, she might understand everything more clearly. Illuminated  
projections bouncing off mirrors, altering memories as they form.*

*Rationally she knows this is impossible, it's acid future tech. But for now she has  
to rely on what is available, what she knows best. The formality of the camera.*

SCENE 36:

A montage of photographers at the Hachiko statue in Shibuya. Groups of people take turns photographing each other in front of the Hachiko statue while others wait patiently for friends. The photographers and people waiting are the main focus of this scene and although we see parts of Hachiko, the dog is not the primary focus.

VOICE OVER:

*So deeply buried amongst those waiting, watching, taking pictures, she almost  
misses it entirely. When she finally sees it, she feels relieved. This is the dog on  
her map. She knows instinctively, she's arrived at the right spot.*

SCENE 37:

We now see the statue of Hachiko more clearly. Like the saints in Rome, people have rubbed the bronze figure's front paws smooth.

VOICE OVER:

*Like a familiar voice whispering in her ear, she contemplates the story of the dog, Hachiko. Everyday, Hachiko waited for his master at the station but one day his master died. The dog didn't know it and he continued to wait all his life. People were touched and gave him food. After he died, a statue was dedicated in his honour. Offerings continue to be placed in front of him, so Hachiko will never go hungry.*

SCENE 38:

Continued montage of the Hachiko statue in Shibuya. This montage morphs into multi-screens of Hachiko – at Shibuya and at the Tokyo Science Museum. At the museum, Hachiko is seen in the stuffed form. He is behind glass and positioned next to other dog/wolf breeds.

VOICE OVER:

*Over 20 years has passed since she first heard this story. Somehow it's taken root in her unconscious, becoming not just a memory of a film, but the film of her dreams.*

*But unlike the cinematic sunless version, Hachiko is everywhere.*

SCENE 39:

At the Tokyo Science Museum, Hachiko is seen along side his stuffed friends –bears, a variety of small rodents, birds, cranes and other sea creature. The room is mostly empty except for the occasional visits by school children. Most of the children recognize Hachiko and snap pictures of the dog and their friends.

VOICE OVER:

*Here at the Tokyo Science Museum the ever-fading Hachiko stands forever, alert, patient, anticipating his master's return.*

*Eternally caught behind a sheet of glass, another specimen, stuffed and sculpted. The subtlety of movement frozen beneath his pelt.*

*Does this representation of Hachiko bring us closer to the spirit of the animal? Is it possible to preserve loyalty and capture love?*

*One thing's for certain, none of the others had what Hachiko once experienced – a friend who made you wait.*

SCENE 40:

The Odate Train station in Akita Prefecture is for the most part empty. The station and platforms are deserted except for the occasional worker walking by. On the main platform there are two large paper maché statues – one of Hachiko and the other, mochi (sticky rice sweets) on sticks.

VOICE OVER:

*She doesn't mind waiting. Time to soak up her surroundings and gather her bearings.*

*His instructions are clear. After all he makes his living driving a taxi. He contacted her through a friend of a friend. Their correspondence has been limited to email exchanges. Brief choppy sentences. This will be their first meeting.*

*He said he was Kurosawa's secret – his mother died in childbirth, he was raised by his grandmother and only told of his famous paternity upon her death.*

*Now in his sixties, he wants to begin his movie career. She's there to scout locations and audition to be his cameraperson. The script is Hachiko's story - a modern Japanese legend. She thinks of Lassie.*

SCENE 41:

Driving in the taxi, looking through the front window from the backseat. We drive through farm country in Northern Japan. The fields are ripe with the season's harvest, occasionally we see a person on a bike or walking along the side of the road.

VOICE OVER:

*She's uncertain what's expected from her. His English is better in the written form. She hopes their filmic ties are strong enough to overcome their differences.*

*On the way to Hachiko's birthplace they try and find a common language, common ground. It quickly deteriorates into half formed sentences proclaiming lineage, authenticity, birthrights, and claims of familial characteristics.*

*They have each carved part of their identity out of who they believe their fathers to be. Each of them believes that they have an inherited right to do what they do, be who they are. Each of them wishes to see through their fathers' eyes.*

SCENE 42:

In the middle of the country, at Hachiko's birthplace, across the road, there is a public washroom. The small modern structure has a "Hachiko" head-shaped roof.

VOICE OVER:

*Shooting by the Hachiko public toilet, she understands what he's telling her - he believes his movie will be a hit. All his life he saw the world differently – he could somehow perceive the truth in people. Reveal to them what they didn't see in themselves. He knows this sixth sense rests in his blood. And because of this genetic transmission, his movie will be successful. And besides, Hachiko's birthday is the same as Buddha's.*

SCENE 43:

Around Odate, there are a few visual reminders of the famous dog – outside the house of his birth there is a white stone likeness of Hachiko. On a sidewalk imbedded in the pavement, a painted likeness of the dog interrupts the grey concrete. Outside the train station there are two more bronze statues of Hachiko. One of the statues depicts an Akita family – Hachiko's family. The other is similar to the Hachiko in Shibuya.

VOICE OVER:

*Like all legends, Hachiko's presence is more strongly felt in death. He stands as an ever-lasting symbol of moral certitude. Faithful and dedicated to his long departed master.*

*If there's such a thing as divine destiny, then they're perfectly matched – through the spirit of a dog, she, her father's daughter and he, Kurosawa's illegitimate son, should be able to intuitively collaborate with each other.*

*Regardless of their cultural differences and their communication difficulties they should be able to express their inherited visions.*

*He tells her, that they must hurry, he's doing this on the sly, the meter's running.*

SCENE 44:

Driving in the taxi on the way to the next destination. There is a small amount of tape damage or drop out that begins to appear on the image.

VOICE OVER:

*They must meet the canine star, Hachiko's real life counterpart along with a shortlist of candidates who are auditioning to play the teen version of Eisaburo Ueno – Hachiko's master.*

#### SCENE 45:

At the Akita kennels, a young dog paces in his large cage, while three young men pet and tease him. There is obvious camera drop out and tape damage. At the end of the scene, the drop out overwhelms the image of the dog. Finally the image deteriorates entirely.

#### VOICE OVER:

*Pre-occupied with making a good impression on the dog, the young men hardly notice them. She gets very little direction from him. Outside of his taxi, his domain, he is less imposing, less talkative. Trying to communicate his desires to her, or else relying on her intuition. In that way he reminds her of her father. She concentrates on the image displayed on the screen. She feels restricted by the fence, separated from the real action. She knows she is trying her best.*

*After the young men leave, she continues to shoot. Distanced from her subject, she is left alone with her thoughts.*

*She knows something's wrong with the camera. The transport mechanism, the recording device. She's afraid to playback the tape because she knows what she's seen will not be there.*

*There are no excuses. She understands she has lost the job.*

*In the end, the fare is over 30,000. yen.*

#### SCENE 46:

Akihabara or "electric town" is Tokyo's electronic Mecca. Full of multi-story electronic stores, this district offers the consumer a wide range of appliances, computers, games, anime products, cameras and anything that requires batteries to run. The noise from the video games, current pop hits, street vendors and pre-recorded sales pitches fill the streets. This montage is shot with the Intel toy camera – the feeling is abstract, colourful, and pulsating. The images appear in a multiple screen format.

#### VOICE OVER:

*Deeply disappointed, she finds herself transported to Akihabara, "Electric Town", the birthplace of manipulation. She has to find a replacement for her camera. What she wants is her imagined camera obscura.*

*Searching the stalls for the latest, the most obscure, and the obsolete, she feels her distress building. How will she ever find the right tools to hypnotize her dreams and render them into a true form?*

*She's obsessed with the creations in her mind. Somehow she must preserve her own history and connect it with the one she's inventing for her father.*

*It's essential she retrace her steps. But the instant she looks at the figure of the dog on her map, she loses her short-term memory.*

SCENE 47:

A montage of different shots throughout Tokyo of dogs with their owners. The shots progress from still photographs to moving video. The photographs are taken with the Lomo Supersampler camera – each image contains 4 separate shots in one picture – Each of the four shots detail the progressive movement of the action – like the single frames of an animated sequence.

VOICE OVER:

*Wandering through the streets with no sense of where she's going. Just another tourist in search of the exotic, in search of the familiar.*

SCENE 48:

Various shots of different tour groups and their guides at famous Japanese tourist sites – from the temples in Nagano to religious sites around Tokyo. All of these groups consist of Japanese people, there are no foreigners. The groups are large and sometimes overlapping, what distinguishes them are the different coloured flags held up by each tour guide.

VOICE OVER:

*For the moment, for this moment, she's a tourist. Falling in line with a group of Japanese sightseers, she's accepted as belonging. They troop from one attraction to another, following their group flag.*

*They pause long enough for a snapshot. A group picture. A memento of that place, that time. She understands nothing, only that she cannot confess she doesn't understand.*

*She believes she will only know where she's been once she's seen the pictures. A kaleidoscope of places –shoot first think later. I was here. I did this. I had fun.*

*Yet this country's in her blood, it's in her genes, it's in her physical memory.*

SCENE 49:

In front of the Shibuya train station, the camera quickly pans from a dog statue (Hachiko) over to an elderly man wearing a bright yellow vest. Besides the black Japanese characters sewed on his vest, there are the English letters: U-F-O. The man, oblivious to the on-lookers picks up cigarette butts around the statue.

VOICE OVER:

*At last the relief of a familiar touchstone, Hachiko. Peering through the crowd she tries to make sense of what she is seeing.*

SCENE 50:

The camera reveals an anti-war protest in progress. The man in the yellow vest is clearly part of the odd collection of protestors. They are all members of the Raelian cult. The women wear slightly revealing clothing, with anti-war slogans written on their backs in English. The men hand out pamphlets while awkwardly flirting with the young women.

VOICE OVER:

*An anti-war demonstration. This week the US war against Iraq. Last month, the war in Afghanistan. Next year the war in the Sudan, in Israel, in Indonesia. Two years from now, the war in North Korea, Iran, Chechnya. The ever-changing geographic locations, the terror of difference, the terror of peace.*

*The Raelian cult, believers of Elohim, extra-terrestrials who created mankind in their own image through DNA synthesis, are the hosts of this gathering. Denouncing the prospect of war, promoting sensual meditation, and celebrating their scientific breakthrough – the first cloned human.*

SCENE 51:

News clips announce the breakthrough of human cloning by the Raelian cult. There is a large group of reporters recording the announcement made by one of the Clonaid scientists. She does not “look like a scientist” –her long hair is coloured a strange orangey-brown and she wears a short leather skirt as she makes her announcement in a generic hotel conference room.

TV ANNOUNCER:

*The baby was born to a 31 year old American woman.*

RAELIAN SCIENTIST:

*Science can be the worst and the best for humanity but I choose to think that this is for the best.*

SCENE 52:

Continued montage of Raelian demo at Shibuya. There are shots of young women parading around, laughing, and smiling at the curious crowds. The cult members take group pictures of themselves and their friends. Others carry large

black and white photographic posters of young war victims – their faces mutilated by some catastrophe.

VOICE OVER:

*She searches for the connecting strands of thought – war, cloning, photography. War – the ultimate destruction of the human race. Cloning – the definitive statement of our fragile egos, the preservation and perpetuation of self. And photography, the blind witness to our arrogance.*

SCENE 53:

Shot from inside a public bus, a solitary Japanese soldier patrols the entrance to a military base. The bus is empty and the focus is on the soldier as he paces back and forth in and out of sight.

VOICE OVER:

*But what does the war really mean in this country? In any country? Once those who have survived a war have died, who will be left to remember the fallen?*

*She supposes what remains are those visual depictions - the photographs, the videotapes of war.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 54:

A slow motion collage of Sumo wrestling. The movements of the athletes appear almost dance-like and graceful. The TV clips have been re-shot with the Trendmaster toy camera.

VOICE OVER:

*War and sports are two things she knows nothing about.*

*Coaches, Presidents, Generals, sitting and watching from the sidelines.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 55:

In a news interview clip, Mrs. Bush and President Bush are being interviewed. The clip is re-photographed with the Trendmaster toy camera.

MRS. BUSH:

*We watch a lot of sports.*

The president nods and smiles vacantly.

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 56:

Continuation of clips from Scene 51 – Sumo wrestling. The TV clips have been re-shot with the Trendmaster toy camera and superimposed with the “real” footage.

VOICE OVER:

*There wasn't much to say that hadn't already been said, and far more eloquently at that.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 57:

A clip from “Buffy the Vampire Slayer”. In the last episode of the series, Buffy tells a fellow Slayer her views on war. The clip is re-photographed using the Trendmaster toy camera –giving it a soft otherworldly effect.

BUFFY:

*War is about death. Needless, stupid, death.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 58:

A montage of various news clips of “night raids” and night vision photography on the frontlines in Iraq. The footage is abstract, ghostly and tinted in a yellowish-green colour. “Authentic” battlefield fighting clips are intercut with short video game clips tinted in the same green colour. At times it is difficult to determine which footage is “real” and which is a game.

VOICE OVER:

*In an effort to comprehend it all, she finds herself concerned more with the depictions of war. The illustrations, the digital messages, that pepper our collective nightmares.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 59:

A short clip of a President Bush news conference. The footage has a degenerated quality to it –like many generations of dubbed VHS tape.

PRESIDENT BUSH:  
*America, will never run.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 60:  
A short TV clip of the CNN war logo and dramatic music accompaniment. The footage continues to have a degenerated quality to it. Instead of the logo for the war on Iraq, the graphic now read: "World At War".

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 61:  
A CNN voice over track describes how a military operation is performed. The graphic images detailing this operation are from a number of war video games such as "Desert Storm" 1 & 2 and "Airforce Delta Strike". The superimposed CNN logo and news scroll running at the bottom of the screen add authenticity to the video game footage. The "CNN story title" is "War Is Not A Video Game".

The news scroll will be running fictitious headlines.

TV ANNOUNCER 1:  
*Ah, let's put this in motion and give you a sense first of all, of how, ah, an advancing group of armor might do it.*

TV ANNOUNCER 2:  
*The enemy will take advantage of zeroing in with their artillery, their mortars, their rockets.*

TV ANNOUNCER 1:  
*There are some fortified positions, go ahead...*

TV ANNOUNCER 2:  
*And they're going be shooting, going to be shooting at coalition forces as they try and cross this bridge.*

TV ANNOUNCER 1:  
*This is an F-16 that we've depicted here. That F-16 would it be thwarted by that same smoke?*

TV ANNOUNCER 2:

*It would be thwarted by the smoke if he was dropping a bomb visually. He can't see what's under the smoke with the human eye and so we have other means to help him...*

TV ANNOUNCER 1:

*...Call in some help. And in this case, Special Forces are what we're talking about.*

TV ANNOUNCER 2:

*You bet.*

TV ANNOUNCER 1:

*A small squad would get down in there, perhaps behind enemy lines, who knows where, right?*

TV ANNOUNCER 2:

*Yeah, yeah indeed. So that smoke cloud in theory is perhaps not the obstacle that the Iraqis had hoped it to be.*

TV ANNOUNCER 1:

*That's right, for every measure there's a countermeasure.*

SCENE 62:

A video game clip with the words "mission failed" fills the screen.

SCENE 63:

This clip shows a CNN anchorwoman commenting on the footage we have just seen. The footage is slightly degenerated – objects are outlined in fuzzy black halos and it is difficult to make out any details.

ON CAMERA TV ANNOUNCER:

*Well, Miles and General Sheppard, thank you both. If we didn't know any better, sometimes we look at those very impressive graphics and we think we're watching a video game.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 64:

A short news clip of President Bush. The image is degenerated.

PRESIDENT BUSH:

*Bring em on.*

SCENE 65:

A sequence from the 1970s TV show, "Charlie's Angels". The three "angels" are undercover at a skating show performance. In the audience there is a group of Arab men dressed in djellaba (full robes) and kaffiyeh watching the show. They all have long beards and are wearing dark sunglasses. The skating performance consists of a patriotic American dance number, with the skaters wearing glittery outfits in red, white and blue. Most of the skaters carry rifles. This sequence is re-photographed with the Trendmaster toy camera. The music on the soundtrack is "Let Freedom Ring" a patriotic American pop song performed by Barry Manilow.

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 66:

A TV clip from CNN where the two main anchors comment to each other on the war. One of them is in the comfort of the newsroom while the other is in the field. The footage continues to have a degenerated quality to it. The subtitle reads: "World At War Day, 769, No End In Sight"

TV ANNOUNCER 1:

*Dramatic developments unfolding, we're watching history.*

TV ANNOUNCER 2:

*We certainly are.*

SCENE 67:

A montage of various "imbedded reporting" TV footage – shots with cameramen with their cameras, ducking gunfire, amongst bombed-out tanks and crowds, cars with the word "TV" gaffer taped to the outside, etc. The footage continues to have a degenerated quality to it. A melancholy music track plays as the war footage continues. A stiff-sounding network newscaster comments briefly as a ghostly music track plays.

TV ANNOUNCER 1:

*Photographers, the other shooters in this war. Their fingers on the trigger.*

VOICE OVER:

*She finds herself capable of only pretending to read the horror through the veil of actual telecast images.*

*It's like a movie. Sponsored, rated R, rated PG. Apparent proof that this has happened.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 68:

A clip from the 1990s movie, "Starship Troopers". A recognizable child actor tells his soldiers that he has to make decisions everyday that cost people their lives. It is not easy being in command. The image is bluish in tone and highly degenerated.

MALE ACTOR:

*You don't approve...well, too bad. We're in this for the species boys and girls. It's simple numbers, they have more. And everyday I have to make decisions that send hundreds of people like you to their deaths.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 69:

The images continue to play on the old television from the 1970s in a conservative middle class living room: The clip, also from "Starship Troopers" shows a video cameraman shooting in the battlefield – it is a war between humans and large ugly dangerous bug creatures. The cameraman is stabbed by one of the bugs and killed. The image is bluish in tone and highly degenerated.

VOICE OVER:

*She's asleep in the apartment she lived in 20 years ago. She's left the television on, the set is mute but the images flicker in the vagueness of her room. Her mouth is dry and she has to pee. She gets out of bed and notices an old oil painting in a gilded frame. Something compels her to lift it off the wall.*

SCENE 70:

This is a clip from the original movie, "Psycho" in which Norman Bates removes a painting from the wall and peers into the next room through a peephole. The clip is re-photographed with the black and white Tyco toy camera and Gameboy camera. Instead of seeing Janet Leigh in the next room, we see a super 8 colour shot of a man standing in front of a window. The music gradually transforms from the melancholy selection to an eerie string piece similar to the original music from "Psycho".

VOICE OVER:

*Leaning towards the peephole, she doesn't feel like herself. She expects to see into the next room and is astonished to see the shadow of a man in the building across the street.*

#### SCENE 71:

The sequence unfolds in grainy super 8 – since it is night, it is difficult to make out any details clearly. A man's shadow moves across an orange-lit window. Shot from above, firemen and rescue workers clamor on the street and enter the building. The camera tilts down from the empty window to the firemen crowding around a body on the sidewalk. Through a rhythmic pattern of flashing lights, we see a fireman on a ladder by the window. The music from the previous scene continues.

#### VOICE OVER:

*The orange glow from the window flickers as a fire breathes to life. She knows he's going to jump. She doesn't even think to call the police. She grabs her camera and starts shooting.*

*By the time the man jumps, the police and fire trucks have arrived and she is concentrating on the framing, hoping to catch the action.*

*At the precise moment the man jumps she feels her body mirroring his movements – but he's too fast, especially on telephoto.*

*Her thoughts slow to a crawl. She's condensed the man down to an object in the frame, isolated him, cropped the shot. He's become unhinged from his reality.*

*She tells herself that he would have jumped regardless of the film running through the camera. She rolls over in her bed.*

#### SCENE 72:

A highly abstracted image of the recognizable A-bomb mushroom cloud formation. This image is made up of a collage of shots from historical archive footage, to images from "Dr. Strangelove" to a cartoon version from the popular anime, "Akira". As the bomb falls to the ground, there is a comment from the "pilot".

#### PILOT VOICE OVER:

*What I was thinking was, well, you know, this could be the big one, let's make sure we get it right.*

#### SCENE 73:

At the Zojoji Temple in Tokyo and the Hase Dera Temple in Kamakura, the camera pans over a seemingly endless rows of baby Jizo –small stone statues that represent the souls of young children. Some of the figures have red knit caps on their heads, others wear baby bibs with "Hello Kitty" logos and colourful t-shirts. The scene ends on a "no war" sign propped up beside one of the Jizo.

VOICE OVER:

*Can a place become a living memory? What about the power of collective memory and cultural shorthand? If one person forgets, will their memories be somehow cared for by the others? Or would it be like a domino effect of failing to remember? Gradually, over generations, a kind of inherited amnesia would prevail.*

SCENE 74:

In an underground mall, near the Hiroshima train station there is a large screen television monitor that dominates one of the tiled walls. This is the only touch of contemporary life against the 1950s style architecture. An elderly security guard ignores the few homeless people as they watch the monitor.

VOICE OVER:

*She's an outsider. Distanced from the past, she can only see the people of Hiroshima through a translucent shroud of sympathy.*

*Like most tourist views, her perspective is artificial, without responsibility. Everything seems to be covered in an invisible blanket of radioactive history.*

SCENE 75:

A static shot of the current skyline of downtown Hiroshima. The shot is slightly sped up and clouds move quickly across the sky.

VOICE OVER:

*She thinks about Yoshito Matsushige of Midori-machi, the only photographer to shoot in Hiroshima city on August 6, 1945. Although he had two rolls of film, he only managed to take five pictures that day.*

*She has never met Matsushige but she sees him standing in the rain on the eastern bank of the Ota River. He has a Speed Graphic camera around his neck. Every so often he brings it up to his eye and peers through the lens. It seems as though he is framing his shot and making adjustments to the exposure. But just as she thinks he is about to snap the shutter, he brings the camera down again. He's unable to capture the image.*

*She can't see what he has seen. What he will see forever in his memory. She can't tell the difference between the raindrops on his face and the tears rolling down his cheeks and clouding his viewfinder.*

SCENE 76:

A short sequence of still shots from the Hiroshima Peace Park: At the base of a small memorial, there is a snow globe of an idyllic winter scene; on a rainy day, a bamboo garden rack rests against a wooden cart half full of garden waste; a close-up of a sewer grate swamped by rain, the shadowy figure of a person is reflected in the water.

VOICE OVER:

*Naturally, Matsushige's face is that of her father. Not as a young man, but as he is today. Frail and tired. But she knows he's not haunted by his recollections, it's his fury to retain his memories that disturbs him.*

SCENE 77:

Abstract shots of clouds moving quickly through the sky.

VOICE OVER:

*At the moment of the blast at 8:15 in the morning, hermetically sealed film stored at the Red Cross Hospital in Hiroshima was exposed. Dr. Shigeto made this discovery as he attempted to document the injuries of the A bomb victims. This was one of the first indications that the bomb was radioactive.*

SCENE 78:

On a bright fall day in the Hiroshima Peace Park, young school children of all ages pay their respects to the A-bomb victims. They hang chains of paper cranes on some of the memorials, play around with each other and eat lunch together. A digital clock flips over to 8:15 am.

VOICE OVER:

*Like others who have traveled this way, she can't see the city as it is now. She needs to isolate Hiroshima. Contain the radioactive afterimages and swear that it can never happen again.*

SCENE 79:

On a street a lit sandwich board for an eye doctor displays a pair of red-framed glasses with two hypnotically rotating eyes.

VOICE OVER:

*If reality becomes a nightmare then the nightmare must be made fantastic. She's drawn towards the manufactured control of the movie screen.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 80:

An excerpt from the 1960's Japanese science fiction movie, "Attack of the Mushroom People": Two women open a closet door and scream. An eyeless giant turtle appears in the closet. A man comments on how the turtle became deformed due to radiation exposure. An obviously insane woman laughs hysterically. The footage is re-photographed with the Trendmaster toy camera.

MALE ACTOR 1: (reacting to women's screams)  
*What happened!?*

MALE ACTOR 2:  
*Look, no eyes.*

MALE ACTOR 1: (reacting to eyeless turtle)  
*What is it?*

MALE ACTOR 2:  
*A good example of mutation caused by radiation.*

MALE ACTOR 1:  
*Maybe this ship was studying the effects of nuclear radiation.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 81:

A collection of shots from different Japanese science fiction films such as Godzilla, Mothra, etc. The clips highlight mass destruction. Re-photographed with the Trendmaster toy camera. The clips are played in the background of a film shoot for a "Power Rangers" type television show. The actors in full costume rehearse and shoot different fighting sequences in front of a large green screen. Occasionally the green screen is visible as the clips fade in and out.

VOICE OVER:  
*Images of survival. Images that cradle our sanity and nurture our forgiveness.*

*She feels as though she is drowning in a churning sea of images. Pulled under by the weight of history and the nostalgic extravagances of film.*

SCENE 82:

It is early morning on the banks of the Tama River, a fairly large body of water that runs through Tokyo. This particular part of the river is home to small encampments of homeless people who live in blue-tarped ramshackle buildings. Nearby, gym classes play Lacrosse, young children toss stones into the river and a few people fish. Two train lines as well as several bridges cross the river.

VOICE OVER:

*She stands on the bank of the Tama River with the smell of frying fish filling the air. Here on the edges of this small village, she has come to pay her respects to film.*

*It's Tokyo dawn and the local fishermen cast their lines into the river. Only the lucky will catch the strange creature known as the Bake-sakana. They're almost identical to the Koi that inhabit the moat of the Imperial Palace. But it's been said that those who eat these fish will see visions of a past that most people don't recall. For the Bake-sakana scavenges river silt, composed of remnants of Japanese films that were destroyed here by the American Occupied Forces in 1946.*

SCENE 83:

A series of CU shots of colourful Koi swimming in greenish brown waters. The fish range in colour from solid orange to speckled grey and white to black. Besides these fish, there are two empty cigarette packages that float in the water. One package is from the "Hope" brand, the other one is from the "Peace" brand.

VOICE OVER:

*The US forces had hoped that the war propaganda cinema of Japan would be erased from civilian memory. By tossing the offending objects into the river, they hoped to eliminate the hatred and distrust towards the enemy.*

*But the Bake-sakana and the visions they induce prove that films, their stories, survive - faint voices embedded in cassette tape, like tiny, almost invisible fish bones.*

SCENE 84:

A montage of different street shots of homeless shelters around Tokyo. All of the structures are recognizable by their bright blue tarp coverings. Most of the shelters are in parks and along alleys behind major streets. There are very few people hanging around these shelters, only pedestrians wandering by.

VOICE OVER:

*The people who make their homes here and in the parks, under bridges and overpasses, are outsiders. They see and choose to ignore and in return are ignored. Maybe their hallucinations are too real.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 85:

A clip from the popular show, "Sailor Moon". Re-photographed with the Gameboy toy camera.

SAILOR MOON:

*This is your dream, you control everything that happens in it.*

A short burst of video static and white noise.

SCENE 86:

A montage of blossoming cherry trees. The blossoms are beautiful and subtly colourful. Some of the shots are near traditional Japanese buildings and temples. Others are shots of people taking pictures of the blossoms as though they were tourist attractions.

VOICE OVER:

*She had always firmly believed that seeing was believing. But surrounded by those who look like her, she wondered if that was true. On the outside, from all appearances, she could pass. If she never said a word, she could hide.*

*This is what spies feel like.*

SCENE 87:

On a rainy day in Kyoto, the cherry blossoms are nearing the end of their short lives. As the wind blows, delicate pink petals fall like snow on the rainy streets.

VOICE OVER:

*She's in Kyoto. Just past the Gion, on one of the main streets, she comes across a temple, sandwiched between a hair and make-up office and a day care centre. Maybe it's the colorful fabric dancing in the downpour that invite her inside or maybe she just wants to take shelter from the rain.*

SCENE: 88:

This scene contains only one shot of the exterior of the Meyami Jizo temple in Kyoto. Although it is daytime, it's raining heavily and the temple is barely visible through the traffic and rain. Brightly coloured "drapes" hang from the temple entrance, flapping in the wind. Occasionally a person hidden beneath an umbrella enters the temple.

*She finds herself in an open-air temple with a father and his daughter. Each of them says a brief prayer before leaving her in the company of Kannon. She takes her cue from them, tosses her coin and mumbles some thoughts. Opening her eyes, she cranes her neck to get a closer look at the statue behind the scratched*

*Plexiglas. She feels their eyes meet. Suddenly the eyes of the god open and then very slowly close.*

*She calls out, but realizes she's alone.*

SCENE 89:

A montage of Zen Buddhist temples in Kyoto. The images are static and shot from a low angle. There is a predictable air of peacefulness. Stones rest in almost perfectly raked sand. Small carefully tended evergreen trees evoke thoughts of larger landscapes. A hollow bamboo pole drips a small stream of water into a worn stone container.

VOICE OVER:

*She was quite possibly looking in the wrong direction. Her father could remember he was losing his memories. But she wonders if he would believe her constructions?*

*Chasing ghosts. Chasing memories.*

SCENE 90:

Similar to the shot in the taxicab, this is from the perspective of the front seat of a car looking out the front window. It is Northeastern Japan, in Miyagi prefecture. The area is rugged farmland, with the occasional small town. There are few people outside.

VOICE OVER:

*The GPS navigation system traces her journey. Turning a corner, the road on the electronic map vanishes into a sea of video blue and collides with her father's inexpressible past.*

*She's here to meet her aunts, her father's sisters. Separated when they were children, too young to commit each other to memory, the girls were sent to Japan when their mother died. The last time her father had seen them, Hachiko was alive and well, waiting for his master to return home. That was over 70 years ago, before the war.*

*She wonders if the Italian businessman was right –had she really been appointed the guardian of her father's memories? Or had she come here, like the tiny boy, Kisho, to repair the web of time?*

SCENE 91:

At the Jidai Matsuri Festival (The Festival of Ages), a veiled woman in period costume walks down one of the main streets in Kyoto. Her face is hidden by a

large straw peasant hat and she carries a bamboo walking stick. Her hands and face are made up in white face make-up and her small mouth is sharply outlined in dramatic red lipstick.

VOICE OVER:

*She thinks about myths, traditions that would never be part of her history. She thinks about markers of time.*

*When she was born, her father was so happy he gave her mother a fur coat. Congratulations, it's a girl.*

*She thinks of Cynthia Wayne from Delaware. Like her aunts, Cynthia was born in North America and came to Japan by steamship around 1927. When they finally docked in Yokohama harbour, her aunts could only weep. They couldn't speak the language and were tarnished outsiders, gaijin.*

*Cynthia however was eager to show off her Western style, her blue eyes and strawberry blonde hair. She would be marveled at wherever she went.*

*It was only during the war, that they shared something in common. They were branded enemies. Her aunts survived, and so did Cynthia. But some of Cynthia's cohorts did not.*

SCENE 92:

The doll, Cynthia Wayne is revealed in a slow zoom out. Cynthia, a traditional American doll with a shiny plastic face is styled in her original clothing of 1927. Although her wardrobe has faded with time, she is in good condition and her expression is still full of life.

VOICE OVER:

*Along with over 12,000 other dolls, Cynthia had been sent to Japan as gesture of friendship, an encouragement to increase trade with America. During the war, almost all of them were destroyed – enemy dolls. Cynthia, along with her passport, her extra pair of socks and mittens had been carefully hidden away.*

SCENE 93:

A multi-screen abstract collage of images shot from a moving train.

VOICE OVER:

*An elegant woman in her late 50s moves through the car and takes a seat. She's dressed in a beautiful flowered kimono with gold branches running through out. She pulls a tiny ebony pen and a small leather notebook from her purse. She pauses for a moment and then writes in English, "I have no memory of my direction."*

SCENE 94:

At the Hiroshima train station, a group of seven or eight musicians play on the station platform. They are all seated at old-fashioned music podiums and are playing a familiar big band song. The point of view is from the platform across the way. A train pulls into the station slightly obscuring the band. We get on the train and continue to watch the band play as we pull out of station.

VOICE OVER:

*The texture of her dreams take on a nubby character. A kind of fickle and scratchy imagination. Something she has definitely inherited from her father.*

SCENE: 95:

A clip from the TV series, "Lone Wolf and Cub" – a Samurai drama featuring a warrior and a young child. The young boy finds his father lying wounded after a battle. The father tells his son to remove the sword sticking out of his back. Calmly the young boy obeys. The clip is bathed in sepia-tone.

VOICE OVER:

*Much to her mother's amusement, her father had always claimed his family were descendants of a Samurai warlord. He would just smile and say, "anything's possible."*

*Her childhood father was strict, responsible, stubborn -qualities she envisions a true Samurai would possess.*

*Now, taking the photograph of her father out of her pocket, it seems as if he is fading ever so gradually. Specks of black grain sinking into the sepia-tone paper.*

SCENE: 96:

A Black and white photograph of a young Japanese man wearing black-rimmed glasses. It was taken in the 1950s. Through a series of dissolves, the face of the man gradually fades, but the image of his glasses remains strong.

VOICE OVER:

*Eventually the only the image that would remain would be that of his eyeglasses.*

SCENE 97:

In Ueno Park, Tokyo, there is a simple black marble monument. Besides the carved Japanese text there is a bold imprint of a pair of glasses.

VOICE OVER:

*In Ueno Park, there's a simple monument that seems to pay homage to her father.*

*But these glasses belonged to Ieyasu Tokugawa – founder of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Somehow, through trade with the Portuguese and Spanish, he managed to acquire a pair of tortoise shell eyeglasses. She wondered if his sight was failing, or was it merely the fashion statement of 1651.*

SCENE 98:

In Nikko, the annual parade of the Toshogu Festival is underway. Over 800 men participate in the colourful ceremony. All of the men wear different period costumes depicting different classes in the Tokugawa Shogunate. Many of the men and young boys wear glasses. Most of the shots focus on these men.

VOICE OVER:

*Here, 10,341 kilometers away from her father, in a place he has never been to – she is trying to uncover a part of him she could barely conceive of. It wasn't very practical.*

*She was more inclined to occupy herself with casting the role of her father. That was the easy part. But she would never be able to look through her father's eyes. She would only inherit the dim collection of half imagined tales – a re-enactment of memories.*

*It seemed hopeless.*

SCENE 99:

Inside a plane, a few clouds can be seen outside the small window. Passengers doze off as an exercise video shows three young Japanese flight attendants performing stretching exercises while seated in a plane. A short montage of Lomo Supersampler still photographs of fluffy white clouds, occasionally a plane wing is in the shot.

VOICE OVER:

*She was nearing exhaustion. She had to go back to bed. She wanted to grasp the thought bubbles that popped above her sleeping head. She needed to wake up refreshed.*

*She wanted to neatly fold her dreams into something that would coax her father's memories. She considers Sadako Sasaki and the 1000 origami cranes.*

SCENE 100:

A montage of still Lomo Supersampler photographs – various shots of origami cranes arranged in long colourful chains. The number and variety of cranes is astonishing.

VOICE OVER:

*Sadako, a young girl of 12, was stricken with leukemia as a result of the radioactive fallout in Hiroshima. But she was determined to get well. To fulfill her wish she decided she to fold 1000 cranes. Her task was never completed.*

SCENE 101:

In a grim coloured sky, a small orange tinted moon tries to break through the dense cloud cover. This dissolves into a shot of a fog-drenched landscape almost indecipherable through the mist.

VOICE OVER:

*She knew she would wake up and her father would not remember. He would keep forgetting until she forgot who her father once was.*

*She closes her eyes, wishing she could untangle time in her dreams. She looks into the darkness behind her eyelids. As a child, she figured out that black was never black – in fact it was composed of millions of perfect microscopic circular rainbows.*

SCENE 102:

In a split screen format, at a busy intersection in Shibuya, crowds of people walk down the street. We focus on different people as they pass the camera in slow motion.

VOICE OVER:

*She would stare into these rainbows, past them in fact and see face after face morphing into each other, transforming into someone else. But they were never people she knew.*

*She watches these faces as though they are a series of close-ups in a movie scene. She waits to see someone she recognizes.*

*Like the chances of catching a Bake-sakana the first time you cast your line in, this happens rarely.*

SCENE 103:

Outside a large stadium in Tokyo, hundreds of graduating high school students mingle and take pictures after a graduation ceremony. The young women wear

formal kimono, some chat on their cell phones, while others laugh and enjoy each other's company. The young men are either wearing traditional school uniforms or grungy street wear.

VOICE OVER:

*She sits in the darkened theatre, watching the faces of the women captured forever young. She wishes she could believe that the camera sees more than she does. She longs to record the real. She wants to hold it up to the light and see the truth, frame by frame.*

SCENE 104:

It is the same group of young Japanese women by the ocean that appeared earlier in the video. The shots are identical -they are dressed in school uniforms of navy blue with white blouses and pass the time together.

VOICE OVER:

*She thinks of the young women by the sea. She tries again to imagine their stories, their lives on that day. A rainstorm is approaching, the dying rays of sunlight tickle the water, the taste of salt on their lips. She can imagine everything about that moment except the truth.*

SCENE 105:

On the edge of the famous Yoyogi Park, small groups of young people hang out and entertain the tourists with their "wild" looks. Fashionably dressed people in anything from over the top Goth wear to French maid outfits to anime characters. In a group of simply dressed young women, a lone individual hangs out on the fringes. From the camera's position, she appears to be slightly separated from the group, almost "alone in crowd". She barely interacts with the others yet we understand that she wants to be part of the group.

VOICE OVER:

*The flickering faces on the screen seem truer to her than the man breathing heavily beside her. More authentic than the coarse material of her theatre seat.*

*For some reason she feels an implicit bond with this young woman suspended on the edge of the frame. Instinctive doppelgangers. What they share is the desire to one day know their fathers, understand them for who they really are, and perhaps in the process see themselves more clearly.*

*She feels as if she is clinging to a rock in the mouth of a river spilling out into the sea, a confluence of actualities. She is numb. She wants clarity, precision, definition. This is a dream. This is not a film. This is not true.*

SCENE 106:

Reminiscent of the opening scene, crowds of people are rushing to and fro in the main Tokyo train station. It is rush hour and the pace is unbearably fast.

VOICE OVER:

*She wakes up and deadens the alarm. She remembers it's Thursday and she must be at Shinigawa station at 7:30*

*END*