

A Black screen

INT. SUNNY BEDROOM - DAY

An attractive girl stands with her back to the camera staring out of the window. Hot summer sun splays in the window and white curtains flutter beside her on the breeze. We hear the sound of the ocean and in the distance small fishing boats jostle on the waves.

ANTONY:

Lost? What does that mean? LOST

I sometimes wonder, is it possible to lose anything? I mean really lose anything. Every atom, every molecule, resonates with its own memory does it not? Perhaps that vibration is a trace inside each of us that records everywhere we have been.

The camera dollies in to her neck and passed her out to the blue sky above.

CROSS FADE

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

We follow a pigeon flutter down from the blue sky onto the ground. We see a woman's feet and grains of food landing next to them as she feeds the greedy flock of pigeons.

We hear the clicking sound of a cigarette lighter

Fumbling click of a latch.

ANTONY:

Great.. Its good ... you know most places.

We pan up and hold on a whisp of smoke coming from a building on the corner of the square.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

We are close up on Antony as he struggles to open the window. He has a cigarette in his mouth and a file of papers clasped clumsily under his arm.

He finally manages to push the window open slightly and sits back at the table facing the CLIENT, a woman in her early thirties.

CLIENT:
 (Out of shot)
 Thank you. How is the investigation progressing?

ANTONY:
 I'm still working on things... I don't have it all... Well I don't have all the material I... I'm working on it. There are some promising leads.

CLIENT:
 and are you any closer to finding out where she is?

ANTONY:
 Yes.... no...Shes fading away, it s hard...

CLIENT:
 What about the evidence? The evidence you have been collecting?

ANTONY:
 Ah yes the evidence. No,... its...I'm close I can feel it. There are only a few pieces of the puzzle to go. I was at the belle epoque early yesterday, before 8, before the rush hour crowd,

The client reaches forward to touch the file that Antony has put on the table

EXT. CAFE BELLE EPOQUE - EARLY MORNING

Antony standing outside the belle epoque cafe early morning. He looks very rough - his hair is wild and dishevelled - huge bags under his eyes. He puffs on a rollie and gazes mournfully at the cafe. He places his hand flat on the glass o the door. The cafe is not open yet

CLIENT:
 What did you find?

ANTONY:
 I've been reconstructing her movements, following the memories, trying to understand her motives, sometimes that's all there is to go on now... the sensations she left. Her trace.

CLIENT:
 Her trace?

ANTONY:

She had been there. I spoke to the owner.

INT. CAFE BELLE EPOQUE - DAY

Antony sits at a table eyeing the female clientele. A waiter comes over and out of ear shot Antony asks him a series of questions. The man points outside and gesticulates as he speaks.

ANTONY:

She had lunch there every day. I took some notes. The details are everything.

Antony pays and the waiter points again, clearly giving antony directions.

ANTONY: (CONT'D)

I found her previous address...

INT. EMPTY FLAT - DAY

Antony stands on his own in the flat and surveys the room. It is a small compact place. There are still signs of someone having lived here.

ANTONY:

...its all in the details.

CLIENT:

So what details have you gathered so far?

ANTONY:

I waited there. I recorded the sounds.

Antony stands in the flat with a portable boom mic and HD recorder. He points it at the pillow for a long time recording silence. He is lost in thought.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Antony stands in the street wielding the portable boom mic and HD recorder. A pigeon lands near him and he clumsily tries to record the sound of its feathers.

ANTONY:

They say the last few days, the last few hours are the most important... but however much I find there is always something missing

CLIENT:
Missing?

ANTONY:
(looks glumly at his
cigarette)
Missing? She's been gone too long.

CLIENT:
how long is it now?

ANTONY:
Six weeks....Shes been missing six
weeks and fourteen hours.

INT. CAFE BELLE EPOQUE - DAY

Antony sits at a table abstractly doodling on a piece of paper.

ANTONY:
It was in the third week that I hit
upon the method. I have been
careful, fastidious in recording
everything.

CLIENT:
What about her relationships?

INT. OFFICE - DAY

We are close up on Antony he looks wary, uncomfortable

ANTONY:
Relationships?

CLIENT:
You don't think there was someone
else? Run away somewhere?

There is a long pause as Antony looks pensive

ANTONY:
I've made notes. Different ways
people described her hair.

Antony rummages in his bag

CLIENT:
Can I?

Antony produces a series of crumpled sheets with minutely detailed sketches of the back and profile of a womans head with various different hairstyles - bun, pigtails, braids, straight, curly...

The client looks at them and gives a nod.

ANTONY:
All these details, they follow me.

INT. EMPTY FLAT - DAY

Antony walks to the window and looks down below at the street lost in reverie. The camera dollies over to the window.

CLIENT:
(puzzled)
They follow you?

ANTONY:
Two weeks ago I discovered the
importance of the junction at
willoughby rd.

EXT. JUNCTION OF WILLOUGHBY RD - DAY

We are looking through the frame of a window high above the street below. The same girl as before is down on the street. She starts crying and sits on a wall next to a fence. The fence is broken and she runs her hand along it.

Eventually she runs off out of shot and Antony appears in frame from the other direction only just missing her.

CLIENT:
is that relevant to the
investigation?

ANTONY:
Yes of course. Its all relevant.
All the details. I can't complete
the investigation until i go over
the details ... can I?

We see antony standing at the same street junction holding his recording gear. He points it at the fence for a long time in silence then runs his hand along the broken fence. He cuts himself painfully.

CLIENT:
Only you know what is relevant...

CLOSE UP. NAKED COUPLE POST-COPITAL - DAY

The naked couple talk to each other lovingly.

ANTONY: (V.O.)

There is no evidence... what can we hope to have except for our memories? the memories she left.

Its the taste, the smell, the sensation of her not being there. It makes a hole.

it eats at me... Can i even remember being with her properly anymore? the feel of her hair

INT. SUNNY BEDROOM - DAY

The girl is near the window overlooking the sea. She is reading an old thumbed paperback copy, stained and faded. She finds a passage and turns to read it to her companion out of shot.

GIRL:

Listen - The remembrance of things past is not necessarily the remembrance of things as they were - is that not beautiful?

Antony's hand reaches out and strokes the girl's hair.

EXT. GRAVESTONE - DAY

The gravestone reads - 'Marcel Proust 1871 -1922

EXT. LAKESIDE PLANTS - DAY

We are close up on an outgrowth of plants at the edge of a murky lake.

GIRL:

This is your investigation...

ANTONY:

My investigation, yes, how long have I been following your trail? Chasing after memories. I feel like that is all my life has become, a series of frames in my investigation, retracing the same steps, the memories of me investigating muddle up with the investigation itself

INT. PRIMEVAL CAVE - DAY

A young boy stands in a dark cavern. The walls are covered in primitive paintings, similar to Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc, and the interior is lit by a flickering light.

The boy points a torch at the paintings, highlighting individual characters.

GIRL: (V.O.)
Are you close to a breakthrough?

ANTONY:
Close? Close yes perhaps I am. I'm on the edge of understanding. You were in those places touched them, felt them, but still something is just beyond my grasp

GIRL:
What? What is just beyond your grasp?

ANTONY:
I don't know. Memory?

The camera pans across the images of animals...

ANTONY: (CONT'D)
Why am I raking over these clues? Looking for the reasons behind a disappearance? She was. That is all I know. She's gone.

... and holds for a long time on what appears to be a depiction of a woman.

GIRL:
Perhaps you have become too involved in your case?

EXT. BEACH - SUNRISE

The boy exits the cavern on to a beach. He is now dressed in the same clothes as Antony was wearing and holds a miniature directional microphone.

Beneath him in the sand dunes there is a primal scene as the girl, naked, gets up from a dwindling fire and walks into the ocean to bathe.

ANTONY: (V.O.)
Is it our memories that are all that make up the story of our lives?

Antony, as an adult now, stands aloof on the edge of a distant dune watching tearfully with his recording gear in hand.

ANTONY: (V.O.)
But it can't go on for ever? can it?

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. CAFE BELLE EPOQUE - DAY

We see Antony alone again in the cafe a sketch book open in front of him. He has a thumbed up copy of Marcel Prousts *A la recherche de temps perdu*. He is drawing various different female hairstyles. It is the sheet of paper we saw earlier.

CLIENT:
Do you want to stop the investigation?

ANTONY:
Can I stop the investigation?

CLIENT:
I asked if you want to... I don't have authorization to say if you can or can't

ANTONY:
So I continue... Its only that, its such lonely work, always in the presence of a ghost, her ghost, the memories i find..

Across the street he catches sight of a woman with a red jacket. He starts at the sight and follows her with his head.

As she nears the corner he shakes himself and sprints out of the cafe but she is a good distance away by now.

EXT. STREET - DAY

He reaches the corner and she is already a lot further down the street.

He picks up speed but she has sensed him, and pulling her jacket close hurries away.

He rounds the corner and she is gone!

ANTONY:
She escaped

CLIENT:
You lost her?

Antony is out of breath, standing at the street corner, panting, doubled over, hands on his knees.

INT. OFFICE - SUNSET

We pan out on Antony sitting alone at the same desk. He is talking to the empty seat opposite him.

ANTONY:

Lost? What does that mean? LOST

I sometimes wonder, is it possible to lose anything? I mean really lose anything. Every atom, every molecule, resonates with its own memory does it not? Perhaps that vibration is a trace inside each of us that records everywhere we have been.

Perhaps the question we should be asking is how to forget? Can we learn to forget our lives? Should we?

FADE TO WHITE.