

R5e

FADE IN:

EXT. PARK - DAY

Twilight, a bright spotlight illuminates a form perched against a tree trunk. The form is a delicate bundle of charred flesh and bone... humanoid in shape.

On its face, encrusted into the hollow eye sockets are a pair of dark sunglasses, curiously they're unaffected and pristine compared to the organic remains around them.

A MALE VOICE calls out --

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Got something over here!

Figures in Foil-HazMat suits gather near another charred out body draped over a flower garden. This loose remain of ash holds an intact cellular phone in its hand.

INT. VAN - MOMENTS LATER

A high-tech vehicle with several computers.

The retrieved cell phone is placed on a charging cradle and quickly comes to life. A monitor array rapidly spools the hard drive's video clips by date and time.

An archived video image is click loaded: IMG-2385

POV: MONITOR FEED - IMG-2385

A tripod stationary CELL PHONE VIDEO FEED from inside a small white tent. The peripheral 16x9 view captures a small stage in front of several fold-up chairs.

A woman, CLAIRE (30), comes into view, impersonally close to the camera. She talks with a bit of a whisper.

CLAIRE

Hi, everyone. Okay, so as you all know, it's Greg's birthday, and...

She brings a pair of dark sunglasses into view.

CLAIRE

We hired a magician to put on a show for everyone.

She looks off camera to ensure no-one is listening in.

CLAIRE

But here's the fun part. We're all gonna be told to put on these cheap 3d glasses during the show, but honestly, that's just a ploy to get Greg to put these on.

She brings a box up to view.

CLAIRE

These are EnChroma Glasses, and are designed to correct color vision for people with anomalous trichromacy. Greg curiously falls into that category of color blindness, and if all goes well, he's about to see colors that he's never been able to see before!

She looks of camera as if she heard a noise, unnerving.

CLAIRE

Shit... here they come. Show's about to begin!

She quickly turns off the camera.

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

Another archived video image is click loaded: IMG-2386

POV: MONITOR FEED - IMG-2386

About twenty people (male and female) of various ages sit on the chairs chattering, waiting for the show to begin.

Everyone is dressed in washed out black and white clothes and look rather drab. Even the small stage has a washed out gray backdrop with a simple black and white sign:

`MOMO THE MAGIC MAN`

A burly man, GREG (35), sits front and center with a stupid grin on his face. Suddenly -- whoosh!

MOMO THE MAGIC MAN (40), appears from stage left as a cheesy pre-recorded sound effect goes off from behind the backdrop.

MOMO

Hello, everyone!

The audience claps erratically.

MOMO

I am Momo the Magic Man, and welcome to Greg's thirty-fifth birthday celebration!

More whoops and hollers from the audience. Greg just shakes his head and gives a lame golf clap. Momo heads down from the stage front and center. He crouches in Greg's face.

MOMO

You don't seem that enthused. Am I to assume you're the birthday boy of this marvelous spiegeltent spiel?

GREG

Yeah, that's me. What's a spiegeltent?

MOMO

Wouldn't you rather know what a spiel is?

Momo jumps back on stage.

GREG

Actually, I'm wondering why everyone's dressed in black like we're at a funeral.

The audience laughs.

MOMO

Ah, yes, I noticed that. Perhaps a little magic can reveal the meaning behind that troubling enigma.

He waves his hands about, nothing here, nothing there, then, draws some colorless faux flowers from a plastic wand.

MOMO

Ta-daaaaaaa!

Momo sniffs the display, contorts his face.

MOMO

Bummer... I think they're dead. Candy?!

A female assistant, CANDY (20s), dressed in an oversized floppy black dress appears from stage left.

CANDY

Yes, Momo?

MOMO

Why did you buy dead flowers?

CANDY

But, Momo, they we're alive when I bought them!

MOMO

Candy... it's insane how much money you keep spending on something that's just going to die.

CANDY

Tell me about it... and I have to keep buying him flowers too!

The crowd laughs. Momo tosses the flowers.

OMOM

Not funny. Give it up for the lovely Candy!

Everyone claps.

CANDY

And being not funny means you get to go into the even smaller spiegeltent within a spiegeltent; the 'spiegeltent of metamorphosis'!

Momo motions to a small 3 foot brass ring center stage.

CANDY

Oh ... you mean the change curtain.

MOMO

Ha ha, she's still learning the intricacies of magic mumbo jumbo.

More chuckles from the crowd as Candy steps into the ring and Momo gently lifts it, hiding her within a black curtain.

Then -- quickly drops it to reveal Candy in a different set of equally drab clothes. The audience claps.

MOMO

No, Candy... metamorphosis is full mind bending three dimensional change of reality!

CANDY

Well then, I'm gonna need a little help from the audience if you want to go that far! MOMO

How about it everyone, can we give Candy a little help here?

Cheers from the crowd.

MOMO

Okay, everyone. Time to put on your fantastic stupendous radical mind blowing three dimensional glasses!

Everyone dons their cheap 3D glasses, except Greg, who is fully unaware he's now looking through the lens of a brand new pair of EnChroma Glasses.

Candy steps into the ring as Momo lifts it once again.

MOMO

Are you ready?

Cheers from the crowd.

MOMO

Greg...? I can't hear you.

GREG

(uninvested)

Yes, I'm ready.

A long drawn out pause from Momo before the curtain quickly drops to reveal -- nothing. Candy's gone.

The crowd cheers as Greg sighs... really?

MOMO

Now that's metamorphosis!

CANDY (O.S.)

No!

The entire back wall of the tent tears away to reveal Candy in a vibrant red sequined dress, and behind her, a beautiful lush summer garden in full bloom.

CANDY

That's metamorphosis!

Greg leaps from his chair. He can barely stand as he trembles. Sobbing, he falls to his knees as the feed stops.

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

The last archived video image is click loaded: IMG-2387

POV: MONITOR FEED - IMG-2387

Video of party guests as they meander around the garden area, some here, some there.

For Greg, the initial blast of surrealism has subsided, but he's still as giddy as a school boy for this new-found sense of wonder. He gets close to a flower, sniffs it.

GREG

So that's what purple smells like.

Claire, behind the camera, laughs.

GREG

Thank you, Claire. This is by far the most amazing gift I've ever received.

Greg looks skyward. Through his glasses he sees something.

GREG

Oh, wow! What the hell is that!?

The camera PANS UP to the sky... there's nothing there, just blue ozone and fluffy white clouds.

CLAIRE

What? Where?

GREG

Seriously, you don't see it!?

He points skyward.

GREG

There! Right there! That amazing omni-colored light portal -- are you... are you seriously not seeing this?!

Suddenly, a noise, like a blaring trumpet draws the GUESTS' attention skyward. Everyone quickly chimes in to comment about the bizarre sound --

GUESTS

Did you hear that?!/ What the hell?!/Holy shit?!

GREG

Oh my God! They're coming, they're coming!?

GUESTS

What, what're you seeing?!/ I don't see shit?!/What's up there?!

Greg reaches out his hands, as if to make contact with an angelic interlude.

The camera PANS UP, again... nothing there but blue sky and fluffy white clouds.

CLAIRE

Greg! What?! What do you see --?!

GLITCH TO BLACK: