

JULIE AND THE LIGHT

ACT 1

Written by

Trevor S Gustafson

Trevorgillustrations@gmail.com
2304 Mansfield Drive
Burlington, ON CANADA
905 815 9745
www.TrevorGustafson.com
www.WhiteLightAnimationScreenplays.com

FADE IN:

EXT. REMOTE NORTHERN FOREST RIVER -- NIGHT

It is winter. A light SNOW falls on the moving river.

TEEN GIRL'S VOICE
*(Brazilian Portuguese,
 subtitled)
 I remember it all so clearly now...*

A 5 YEAR OLD GIRL lies unconscious on a BROKEN WOODEN RAFT, floating down the cold current.

She is dressed in thick martial-arts style clothes, her hair shaved short.

She is bleeding from a NASTY CUT on her cheek.

TEEN GIRL'S VOICE (CONT'D)
*Which is curious, because there was
 a time when I couldn't remember
 anything!*

Around the girl is a strange but beautiful WHITE LIGHT. It dances about, sparkling off the surface of the water.

The river lies at the bottom of a deep rocky FOREST CHASM. At the top of the chasm, the forest is ABLAZE.

TEEN GIRL'S VOICE (CONT'D)
And I liked it that way.

The STARS are clear in the NIGHT SKY ABOVE.

FADE OUT.

TEEN GIRL'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Or, at least I thought I did.

EXT. TOWNHOUSE PATIO -- NIGHT

FRANTIC VOICE
 Fight!

A single DROP OF WATER falls on the cheek of JULIE, 11, who awakens suddenly to a confused state of semi-consciousness, lying flat on her back on the interlocking patio bricks.

She is dressed in a torn hooded sweater riddled with worn-down punk patches, the seams held together by massive amounts of different sized aluminum safety pins.

Duct tape on her shoes, crappy headphones around her neck, a ridiculous punk/dread haircut, and a small scar across her cheek.

She is filthy. A skateboard lies next to her.

SUPER: "CANADA - 1993"

FRANTIC VOICE
Fight! Fight!! Fight!!!

There are COLORED LIGHTS twinkling everywhere. Julie is totally delirious.

She sees some BLURRY FIGURES huddling and standing over her;

- NUALA, a soft brown-skinned woman in her 40's, kneeling compassionately at Julie's side.

- OFFICER FRYE, a terribly huge and unsettling Police Officer with a mustache and a wicked scar across his forehead.

- PARAMEDIC ANNA, a rookie in her 20's, working to revive Julie.

- Another MEDIC, Paramedic Anna's partner.

AMBULANCE and POLICE LIGHTS flash just beyond the fenced back yard.

There are cheap decorations all around - apparently there was a birthday party going on here. Some WOMEN huddle in the doorway, gossiping violently.

PARAMEDIC ANNA
(Frantic Voice)
That's it, sweetie, keep fighting!
Come back to us now, honey! Vital
signs are returning - she's coming
around.

NUALA
(Caribbean accent)
Oh, thanks God. Thanks God!

OFFICER FRYE
Do you know this boy?

PARAMEDIC ANNA
I think its a girl. Are you a
girl, sweetie? Honey?

NUALA

She was just here for my
birthday...

OFFICER FRYE

What are you dealing, son? White
crosses?? -Lucy in the Sky?? You
got some of that sunshine that's
going around, don't you??

PARAMEDIC ANNA

Where are this child's parents?

NUALA

She doesn't have parents...

PARAMEDIC ANNA

What? No parents??

Officer Frye peeks over his sunglasses at Julie's face.

OFFICER FRYE

I think I've seen you before...
What's your name, boy?

PARAMEDIC ANNA

(to Nuala)

Are you her legal guardian? What
school does she go to? And why is
she so filthy?

OFFICER FRYE

What gang do you run with? Where's
your leader?

NUALA

She doesn't go to school, she -
well-

PARAMEDIC ANNA

Doesn't go to school?? What do you
mean, 'she doesn't go to school'?
How old is this child?

OFFICER FRYE

I'm going to need a NAME, son!

PARAMEDIC ANNA

Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear...

They all continue ARGUING about Julie's condition, but Julie
isn't paying any attention.

She rubs her head, sitting up, trying to re-gain her focus, but instead sees something VERY STRANGE;

Just a few feet beyond everyone fussing around her, Julie sees a *beautiful White Light, sparkling and floating gently in the air*. No one else seems to notice. Julie rubs her eyes, confused.

OFFICER FRYE

Name!

The White Light FADES AWAY.

JULIE

...Julie.

OFFICER FRYE

Last name? I know you, don't I?

PARAMEDIC ANNA

(to Nuala)

Look, if we find a child to be in a questionable situation, you must understand we have to contact Child Protection Services, Social Workers, we need to get her into a program, where people can -

Nuala INTERRUPTS Paramedic Anna with COMIC DREAD;

NUALA

No! That's not gonna work, trust me.

PARAMEDIC ANNA

Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear...

OFFICER FRYE

- What gang are you in?

JULIE

Gang?

OFFICER FRYE

OK, I'm gonna have to take this boy into custody.

JULIE

What? Custody??

This wakes her up.

JULIE (CONT'D)

No thank you! I'm fine. I was just here to say happy birthday to my friend!! Is there a law against saying happy birthday to your friend?

OFFICER FRYE

You have the right to remain silent.. Anything you say or do could be -

He begins to APPREHEND her.

PARAMEDIC ANNA

Officer? Sir? Are you sure that's really necessary?

JULIE

It's her birthday!! Look at the decorations!!!

Officer Frye SHOVES JULIE'S FACE into the interlocking bricks.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Aaugh! What the hell??

NUALA

Stop it!!

PARAMEDIC ANNA

OK! Lets all just calm our vibrations here! No need for violence... Does anyone else here do Yoga?

Paramedic Anna begins some kind of breathing technique, though clearly stressed.

OFFICER FRYE

You're not going anywhere until I get a last name, SON!

But Julie's had enough.

JULIE

-For chrissakes, I'm a GIRL!!

She somehow manages to KICK HERSELF LOOSE, grabs her SKATEBOARD and CRACKS it over Officer Frye's head.

Officer Frye TUMBLES backwards into the patio furniture. Paramedic Anna SCREAMS. The umbrella comes CRASHING down, and the hors d'oeuvres SPILL everywhere.

Suddenly Julie is hit with a *powerful, and completely disorienting FLASH-HALLUCINATION*; she instantly sees images right before her eyes of a FOREST, glowing RED, like a waking VISION.

The images are too fast for Julie to make sense of.

The Flash-Hallucination is so strong that it actually removes Julie from her reality for a second. But the sight of Officer Frye getting back to his feet WAKES HER UP AGAIN.

Julie regains her balance and scrambles up on top of the picnic table, skateboard in hand, and grabs a FULL CAN OF SODA from a cooler. The women all try desperately to save what's left of the DISASSEMBLED APPETIZERS.

Officer Frye is coming for her, a nasty GASH ON HIS HEAD swelling up.

JULIE (CONT'D)

You stay away from me or I swear to god I'll huck this Dr. Pepper right through your skull!!!

Officer Frye CHARGES TOWARDS her, full of anger.

OFFICER FRYE

Put your hands on your head, and get down on the ground! You are under arrest for th-

Julie THROWS the can. It PELTS Officer Frye right in the mouth, KNOCKING A TOOTH OUT.

The can BUSTS OPEN, and SPRAYS AROUND MADLY. Officer Frye is sent CRASHING back into the mayhem, his mouth BLEEDING wildly.

The party lights come tearing down, the food table tips over once more, and everyone COLLAPSES in a haphazard tangle of arms and legs.

Julie takes a moment to observe the comedy before her, and lets out a LAUGH.

Then she SEES THE WHITE LIGHT AGAIN, HOVERING towards the OPEN GATE, swinging ajar in the night breeze.

Julie blinks her eyes a few times, still not sure what she is seeing, but recognizes her chance for escape, and scrambles across the pile of people, following the White Light, grabbing her skateboard as she goes.

But as she exits, Julie feels Nuala's HAND on her shoulder. Julie stops. Nuala looks at her, concerned, but says nothing.

Julie SMILES coyly.

JULIE
Great party!

Nuala sees Officer Frye trying to get back to his feet among the chaos, RAGING with anger. Julie TAKES OFF on her skateboard into the night.

She looks back one last time, WAVING to Nuala.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Happy birthday!!!

Officer Frye points his GUN in the air, and FIRES.

- BANG! -

EXT. CITY BILLBOARD -- NIGHT

Julie is sitting on the narrow shelf of a OLD BILLBOARD, high up overlooking the city, SMOKING a CIGARETTE.

On the billboard is a tattered and faded image of a TROPICAL BEACH, with a few BAD GRAFFITI TAGS scattered about.

The view of her grungy city is spectacular.

She is holding a CASSETTE WALKMAN in her lap, which is in the midst of some street-style surgery, in an attempt to remove a TWISTED UP TAPE from the GEARS of the walkman.

Julie takes another PUFF of her cigarette. She INSERTS the FILTER END of her smoke into the wheel of the cassette tape labelled; 'BEST PUNK MIX #3'

She SPINS the cigarette, causing the ribbon to WIND BACK UP into the cassette. She hits a snag, where the ribbon is TANGLED. She removes a SAFETY PIN holding her sweater together at the side, and uses it to surgically UNTANGLE the ribbon. She PUFFS the cigarette again through the cassette wheel.

Julie replaces the safety pin to her sweater, winds the tape up snug, and slaps it back down into the walkman.

She presses PLAY. A song plays, but it still sounds WARPED. Julie STOPS it, OPENS it, FLIPS the tape over, and PRESSES PLAY again. Her music PLAYS, a favourite UPLIFTING PUNK TUNE.

Julie tucks the walkman into the front pocket of her hoodie, and adjusts her headphones. She takes one last puff of her smoke, and tosses the butt.

She puts her hood on, and starts CLIMBING DOWN.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CITY -- NIGHT

Julie skateboards comfortably through the streets of the city. She LISTENS to her headphones playing under her hood.

The city is actually quite peaceful at night, and Julie appears right at home, greeting a few BUMS and CANINES she knows along the way.

EXT. JULIE'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Julie arrives at a graffiti-covered OBSCURE DOOR at the back of some sketchy and unsuspecting buildings.

She digs some KEYS out of her pocket that are attached to her pants with a shoelace. She UNLOCKS the door, and ENTERS.

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

It is a tiny, very messy, one room high-ceiling apartment, filled with skate/punk posters, dirty clothes, garbage, and bad graffiti all over the walls. There are two low-rider couches, a coffee table, a bunk bed built into the wall, and some old mattresses on the floor.

A cheap inflatable palm tree is taped up in the corner, in need of some air. Some KIDS AND TEENAGERS are asleep, all passed out in their street/skate/punk clothing. Julie does her best to navigate through the mess without stepping on anyone.

Lastly, Julie passes by KID, the youngest, maybe only 7 or 8 years old, of ASIAN COMPLEXION. He looks WEAK and SICKLY, curled up on the couch, with a blanket and a stuffed toy.

Next to him is an open sketchbook and some felt pens; Drawings of FOXES, FROGS, SUMO WRESTLERS, and other things.

He is STARING intensely at her.

JULIE
Kid? ...what is it?

Kid smiles, fascinated by something. He COUGHS, painfully.

JULIE (CONT'D)
What are you seeing?

KID
Angels!

He COUGHS again. Julie smiles politely.

JULIE
Thanks, Kid.

KID
They're beautiful...

Julie tucks him back in.

JULIE
Just sleep good, alright?
Tomorrow's a new day.

Julie touches his forehead, and he goes off to sleep again, still smiling in ecstasy.

She climbs the ladder of her bunk-style bed and flops down on her pillow. She stares off vacantly for a while at the night sky out her window.

Another Flash-Hallucination hits her; more images of a FOREST, MOSSY ROCKS, WOODEN STEPS.

But this time, it is somehow not as jarring as the previous ones, not as imposing. Julie blinks it away.

She puts her head on her clumpy pillow, closes her eyes, and goes to sleep.

EXT. FOREST RIVER -- NIGHT

The 5 Year Old Girl is still sleeping on the RAFT, still bleeding, floating with the current.

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Julie's sleep is broken by the sound of something small HITTING her window. The daytime light is menacingly bright.

The noise hits again, as if something small and metal had been thrown at the glass. Julie is awake now, but tries to fall back asleep.

Then something flies solidly through the open part of the window, and knocks a GLASS off the counter with a CRASH!

EXT. JULIE'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Julie peers her head out the window. Below is Kid, carrying an OPEN EMPTY SUITCASE. He TOSSES ROCKS up at the pane as their homemade 'doorbell'. One HITS Julie in her forehead.

JULIE

Ow! Stop it! I'm here, I'm here!

KID

I wanna come up.

EXT. WINDOW LEDGE -- DAY

Julie and Kid are sitting on the oversized window ledge outside her apartment. A small cheap ghetto blaster plays some WARM MORNING TUNES.

Inside, all the other kids are still passed out.

JULIE

So what's with the suitcase?

Kid seems DISTANT.

KID

You ever get a feeling like this isn't your real life? Like it's all a dream or something, and we should wake up?

They watch a SCHOOL BUS stop on the far side of the street, CHILDREN no younger than Kid or Julie getting on board.

PARENTS kiss them goodbye as they get on the bus.

KID (CONT'D)

I think I need to go home, Julie.

Julie looks at him. He COUGHS again.

JULIE

Didn't know you had a home.

Julie CONSIDERS as she leans against the wall, when something catches her eye;

JULIE (CONT'D)

Hey!

She finds an UNFINISHED CIGARETTE BUTT among some spider webs and other junk. It looks disgusting.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Who left this here?

She dusts off the larger chunks of dirt.

She reaches comically back inside through the window for a second, and returns with a LIGHTER.

She SPARKS UP the disgusting cigarette butt, excitedly.

Kid watches in astonishment.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Oh, I'm sorry...

She realizes her rudeness, then offers it to Kid.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Did you want a drag?

Suddenly a HORRENDOUS CRASH blasts out from the front door inside the apartment. A SQUAD OF POLICE OFFICERS flood into the room, YELLING, guns out. Officer Frye is among them, clearly missing one of his front teeth.

They immediately begin HANDCUFFING her friends inside.

JULIE (CONT'D)

WHAT-th-FFFF- !!!

Kid and Julie scurry themselves further down the ledge out of view. Officer Frye PEERS out the window, but does not see them. He goes back inside, FURIOUS with rage.

OFFICER FRYE

-Find that little skateboard girl!!!!

EXT. ROOFTOP -- DAY

Julie and Kid are now up on the adjacent building's flat rooftop, peering down at the situation below.

Julie stands defiantly out in plain sight, watching as her APARTMENT is steadily DISMANTLED.

They watch as her FRIENDS are escorted outside, HANDCUFFED. A small CROWD has begun to gather out front to watch.

JULIE
SKATEBOARDING IS NOT A CRIME!!!

Kid grabs her arm and PULLS her back out of sight.

JULIE (CONT'D)
What ever happened to the good ol'
days, when everybody just pretended
we weren't there?

Kid tries in futility to hold her back out of view.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Why are they still going back in?
What are those boxes they're
carrying out? That's my stuff!!!

KID
Not anymore.

Julie looks at him, still in denial of the situation.

KID (CONT'D)
Face it Julie, we're homeless
again.

Julie looks back, incredulous.

JULIE
But look, they're cleaning
everything out! They're gonna take
my walkman, ... my tapes!? Oh my
god, my they're taking my TAPES!?
My MUSIC???

She turns to kid, desperate. Kid COUGHS, painfully.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Why would they take my music? How
can I be homeless again without
music?

Julie looks back at the scene, astonished. The cops shut the doors of their cruisers and DRIVE their friends AWAY.

KID
They're old enough now to go to
real jail, aren't they? I don't
think you can save them this time.

Kid's eyes begin to TEAR UP.

JULIE
Aw, geez... Kid.

KID
I think I need to go home.

He COUGHS AGAIN. He looks SICK.

JULIE
OK, OK... but listen, if you want,
you can stay with me too. I'll find
another way! Queen of the Streets,
remember?

KID
...Can I... I mean, can I...

He is having difficulty finding the words.

JULIE
What?

KID
Can I have one of your angels?

Kid breaks apart.

Julie frantically tries to calm him down.

JULIE
Kid, you were just dreaming last
night. Somebody probably just
spiked your root beer or
something...

KID
Just one, please! Oh please, they
were so beautiful!!

He starts to cry pretty bad now. Julie scrambles to hold him
together.

JULIE
OK, OK...!!

He stops for an instant.

JULIE (CONT'D)

-But just for you, all right?

Kid laughs a little under his emotion.

Julie has no choice but to continue the charade:

-She MIMES the action of taking two imaginary fistfuls of 'angels' from her chest, and placing them into Kid.

Kid is visibly SOOTHED, instantly in ecstasy.

KID

(hugging himself warmly)

Oh, thank you, thank you!

JULIE

No probs.

Back to business.

JULIE (CONT'D)

But now I gotta go get my stuff back. My tapes, my WALKMAN, my skateboard? My SWEATER!? ...My lucky sweater??? -Goddammit, they are NOT getting my lucky sweater.

Kid is clearly relieved, not crying anymore at all, almost ignoring Julie's jabbering.

Julie turns back to him.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Look. If it doesn't work, if you need me... meet me up on the billboard at sundown. You remember, the billboard?

Kid NODS.

KID

-What are you gonna do?

Julie looks back at her apartment with an icy determination.

JULIE

I'm gonna get my stuff back.

EXT. WINDOW LEDGE-- AFTERNOON

Julie has shimmied herself back down onto the ledge she was previously sitting on. It is narrow, just enough to walk along without falling.

Out of nowhere another Flash Hallucination hits her; images of a forest CLIFF, high and jagged, and a cold remote RIVER.

The Flash Hallucination vanishes in an instant. Julie gets dizzy for a second, but manages not to fall.

She peeks in the window.

The place is littered with Police, all of her friends cleared out. The remaining contents of the room are being SEARCHED very unprofessionally.

Officer Frye is standing nearest to the window, staring outside blankly. He turns around with his back to Julie, still unaware of her presence.

Julie takes a breath, and makes her move;

She DARTS IN through the window, and in a running glance locates and SNATCHES up her valuables: skateboard, sweater, a zipper backpack, her walkman, and a grocery bag full of cassette tapes.

She hits Officer Frye HARD in the shins with her skateboard.

She pulls a BED SHEET down from the bunk over another Officer's HEAD, and HIP-CHECKS yet another into the not-cleaned-in-4-months BATHROOM.

Julie laughs out loud at the sight, and ESCAPES.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAYS -- AFTERNOON

Julie is being CHASED by 3 cops through the maze of the dilapidated building. A few ODD TENANTS are scurrying about, witnessing the chase.

JULIE

(to her neighbor, running
by)

Hey, how ya doin? Sorry 'bout last
week, eh?

Julie grabs a FIRE EXTINGUISHER off the wall and tries to use it as a smokescreen.

JULIE (CONT'D)
FIRE!!!!!! FIRE!!!!!!

But she is having trouble activating it, and the dramatic effect is somewhat diminished.

But then suddenly, Julie *SEES fire - Another Flash Hallucination of FLAMES and FIRE!*

Julie shakes it off, and the Flash Hallucination VANISHES.

But the cops are right on her tail.

She KICKS OPEN the fire exit door, and HURLS the unused fire extinguisher at the nearest cop as he closes in, his skull CLANKING with a resonant ring.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE STAIRWELL -- AFTERNOON

Julie scrambles down onto the RUSTY STAIRCASE.

The thin metal frame is rickety - a symphony of CREAKS and CLANGS, a few too many bolts missing.

Julie shimmies down them as fast as she can, almost falling. One cop is trying to follow, but is having a really hard time with it.

Officer Frye is there now too, staring down at Julie.

Suddenly Julie's SOCK gets tangled on a loose piece of the iron stairs, and she gets twisted UPSIDE DOWN.

Another Flash Hallucination of the forested CLIFFS invades her consciousness.

Julie FALLS with a SMACK to the filthy pavement below. The Flash Hallucination ends.

Julie looks up and sees Officer Frye, still leaning over the fire escape, staring down at her.

She gets up hastily, gathers her stuff, and TAKES OFF.

EXT. OPEN CITY STREETS -- EARLY EVENING

Julie is still running, frantically. She keeps looking back in fear and panic, her heart rate sky high.

More Flash Hallucinations are bombarding her; more confusing images of a FOREST, of ROCKS and CLIFFS, and FIRE.

Julie is handling them bravely, trying to stay awake and alert, but her head is not clear at all. Nothing is visually stable.

The sheer height of the skyscrapers above her brings dizziness and vertigo, and the chaotic order of the city traffic and lights all around is almost too much to keep track of.

JULIE

What's happening?

Suddenly, Julie finds herself in the midst of trying to cross a busy 4 lane street, TRAFFIC whizzing on both sides, taxis competitively changing lanes without signals.

Another WAVE of Flash Hallucinations jars her mind; images of CABINS in the trees, TRAILS through the dense underbrush, TORCHES lighting the scenes.

Then, a LIMOUSINE drives slowly past her.

-And in this instant, the noise and craziness of the city just shuts off for a moment, and TIME SEEMS TO SLOW DOWN.

Through the tinted glass, a BEARDED SLENDER OLD MAN is looking at her, curiously. His gaze suddenly intensifies, a glimpse of recognition in his eyes. Julie is transfixed.

MORE Flash Hallucinations disorient Julie, immersing her completely; TORCHES, MARTIAL ARTS, and CABINS in a forest. She sees flashes of FACES, both kind and frightening.

One of the faces she sees in the Flash Hallucination MATCHES that of the Bearded Slender Old Man in the Limousine.

The Limousine DRIVES AWAY.

A HONKING HORN snaps Julie out of the hallucinations.

EXT. ALLEYWAY -- EVENING

Julie finds a secluded corner in an alley, and checks with paranoia if anyone has followed her.

She is breathing heavily, but is trying to calm down. Julie has managed to get most of her marbles back together, at least for now.

She puts on her 'lucky' hooded sweater, gathering her courage.

JULIE
Try to take my lucky sweater...

She begins to stuff her possessions into the BACKPACK.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Lock up my friends... Try to take
my music...

And for a moment, Julie finds herself breathing more normally. She begins to calm down.

JULIE (CONT'D)
You can do it, Julie You've been in
worse situations before. You're OK.

And for that brief moment, we see into Julie's world once again, the city night as seen through her eyes;

It is alive with playful beauty - shapes in the shadows, tracers of lights going every which way - the evening breeze making everything twinkle and dance.

JULIE (CONT'D)
You're OK.

She takes a deeper breath, and continues organizing her stuff into her backpack.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Stupid pigs.

Then suddenly Officer Frye BURSTS out of nowhere and GRABS hold of Julie's arm.

OFFICER FRYE
GOTCHA, you little freak!

JULIE
Aaaaugh!

OFFICER FRYE
I DO know you!

JULIE
No shit, Brainiac - you tried to
arrest me last night!!

OFFICER FRYE
No, don't play dumb. I know you...

He is becoming very weird, and starts to TREMBLE slightly.

Julie tries to run, but Officer Frye TIGHTENS his grip.

Julie manages to break free, but Officer Frye grabs her GROCERY BAG OF CASSETTE TAPES.

JULIE

What, you gonna arrest me for tapes?

Officer Frye holds firm, staring at her intensely.

JULIE (CONT'D)

(almost crying...)

-They're JUST TAPES!! They're MY MUSIC!!!

Julie YANKS on the bag. The bag SPLITS OPEN, and Julie's tapes go flying out, SCATTERING everywhere.

JULIE (CONT'D)

AAAUGH!!!

Suddenly two new POLICE CRUISERS pull up sharply at the far end of the alleyway.

OFFICER FRYE

I KNOW you.

Several COPS run out and flank the end of the alleyway.

Officer Frye DRAWS HIS GUN.

Julie's mind gets *HIT* again with more *Flash-Hallucinations*, *this time too fast to make sense of*. She shakes it off, trying to ignore them.

She tries to scoop some of her tapes up off the ground, but Officer Frye grabs her and forces his GUN into her NECK.

COPS

We can take it from here, Frye...
Let her go!!

Officer Frye nervously stands his ground.

OFFICER FRYE

Or what??

JULIE

He's trying to take my tapes away!!

Suddenly an AMBULANCE screeches up at the opposite end of the alleyway.

Paramedic Anna exits.

PARAMEDIC ANNA
Julie! Oh my God it's her.

COPS
Put the gun down, Frye!! She's
just a kid!

OFFICER FRYE
(crazily)
No!! She's not!!!

Officer Frye is TWITCHING abnormally now, full of adrenaline.

He holds the GUN tightly into Julie's temple.

OFFICER FRYE (CONT'D)
She's a devil!!

PARAMEDIC ANNA
Julie, sweetie come with me! I can
offer you legal asylum!

JULIE
Legal what??

But Officer Frye just GRIPS HER TIGHTER.

Julie is bombarded again by more Flash Hallucinations; images of FIGHTING and MARTIAL ARTS, confusing and too fast to follow.

OFFICER FRYE
No! She's coming with me!!

PARAMEDIC ANNA
You're hurting her!! What is wrong
with you??

COPS
Let her go, Frye!

Officer Frye LIFTS Julie backwards off her feet, still holding his GUN at her head as a hostage.

He moves away from the Cops and towards Paramedic Anna and the ambulance.

The Flash Hallucinations continue, and Julie is a mess of conscious distortion.

JULIE
Get out of my head!!!

PARAMEDIC ANNA

Oh somebody please stop this
violent man!

For a moment Julie gets her senses back, and in a bold surprise move she YANKS FREE of Officer Frye's grip.

Officer Frye tries to seize her again, but Julie TAKES THE GUN FROM HIS HANDS, to the shock of everyone.

She AIMS it at everybody all at once; Officer Frye, Paramedic Anna, the Cops at the other end of the alley.

The weapon is heavy in her little fingers. Her hands shake uncontrollably.

PARAMEDIC ANNA (CONT'D)

Oh Jesus! Julie put the gun down!
I'll get you out of here, I
promise! Oh child please listen to
me!!

JULIE

No! I ain't gonna listen to ANY of
you! Just get away!!

PARAMEDIC ANNA

Julie -

*Another Flash Hallucination hits her; BLOODY FISTS and
KNUCKLES.*

Officer Frye LUNGES at her, and she FIRES THE GUN, shooting Officer's Frye's hat off, barely missing his head.

- BANG! -

Julie is almost thrown off her feet from the kickback.
Officer Frye falls, checking his head.

PARAMEDIC ANNA

Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear...

Julie DISAPPEARS into the city. The Cops do not pursue her, more concerned with Officer Frye.

PARAMEDIC ANNA (CONT'D)

Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear...

EXT. CITY BILLBOARD -- EVENING

The SUN is almost setting. It is RAINING.

Julie is sitting atop the tiny LEDGE at the base of the billboard. She holds her last possessions awkwardly, TREMBLING in the rain.

The SUN finally SETS below the horizon.

Julie WAITS, and begins to ROCK BACK AND FORTH, slightly.

EXT. NUALA'S TOWNHOUSE -- NIGHT

The DOORBELL RINGS.

Nuala OPENS IT, revealing Julie on her doorstep, soaking wet, exhausted. Diluted hair dye and sweat stain her face.

Nuala GASPS.

NUALA

Oh Lord, what happened now?

Julie shows Nuala her WALKMAN, the little light out.

JULIE

...my batteries died.

Nuala takes Julie in, shutting the door.

NUALA

Come in. That's it. Enough is enough.

She shuts the door, LOCKING it tight.

NUALA (CONT'D)

Lord God take care... take care of her. Enough.

Julie experiences the next few moments in a half-daze, foggy images. Nuala takes Julie upstairs, helps her into some dry clothes, cleans her face and wounds, and puts her to BED.

She leaves the door open just a crack, and the warm hallway light seeps into the room. Nuala makes a subtle but nervous silent prayer, and leaves.

Julie lays awake for a moment, head still spinning...

Then closes her eyes, and FALLS ASLEEP.

EXT. DREAMSCAPE -- NIGHT

In a DREAM, Julie is FLYING over the landscape below.

A small concentration of the White Light is also FLYING just up ahead, leading the way.

The lakes, prairies and mountains pass beneath her as clear as a map. She sees a HIGHWAY, ribboning through the contours of the earth.

And upon closer inspection, Julie looks down and can see HERSELF, traveling across the land below.

She sees herself laying in the rear open bed of a PICK-UP TRUCK, laughing.

She sees herself riding a BICYCLE, on a long prairie road.

She sees herself ascending a MOUNTAIN TRAIL, about to reach the peak, an AWESOME VIEW awaiting on the other side.

And eventually, on the far West Coast of the country, Julie sees herself on a FERRY, heading towards a large forested ISLAND. Julie flies downwards towards it.

The Island is mostly forest and rock, with jagged mountains, and deep river valleys.

And amidst the highest jagged mountains, a RIVER CHASM slices through the rock.

Julie ENTERS the chasm, descending into its winding CLIFFS.

And there, at the top of a series of narrow plateaus along the cliffs, is a SMALL CLUSTER OF CABINS, secluded in among the trees, a slightly eastern design to them.

Warm light shines from the windows, and SMOKE puffs calmly from the roofs. Julie floats down INSIDE one of the cabins, RIGHT THROUGH THE ROOF and walls.

INT. CABIN -- NIGHT

Still dreaming deeply, Julie settles herself in the wooden rafters of the cabin. It is a small structure; just enough for a bed, a window, a wood stove, and a small adjacent cooking space. It is lit by kerosene lanterns.

Below, a CHILDBIRTH is taking place.

It is beautiful and slightly surreal, feelings of warmth and happiness amidst the natural tensions of giving birth.

There is the woman giving birth, MOM, and a man at her side, DAD, being supportive and loving. Both have shaved hairstyles.

Standing at the door in the shadows stands a mystical-looking old man, SIFU.

Everything goes smoothly, and relatively painless. Everybody is happy. They wrap the BABY in a soft blanket. Dad holds her, looking into her eyes with joy. Some small animals, including a fox, gather near the doorway, curious.

Dad gives the newborn back to Mom, who holds her up close to her face in a tender, loving private moment.

Dad gestures for Sifu to come closer, and he does. Julie sees Sifu more clearly now; He has a kind but stoic face, both ancient in wisdom and young in strength. He looks like the SAME FACE of the man Julie saw in the limousine.

Sifu watches with curiosity and bewilderment, as he witnesses the newborn enter this world.

Somehow, Mom looks up right at Julie, who is still floating above. The White Light shines around her.

MOM'S VOICE

Julie! Julie?

INT. NUALA'S TOWNHOUSE BEDROOM -- MORNING

NUALA

Julie?

Julie wakes up gently. The room is filled with morning light, and sounds of birds. Her head is clear. Nuala is standing in the doorway holding some clean towels and Julie's clothes - washed, fluff-dried and folded.

NUALA (CONT'D)

You okay?

Julie shrugs up to a seated position on the bed, noticing the clean clothes she already has on.

JULIE

Yeah.

Nuala smiles warmly. She sets the towels down on the dresser.

NUALA

Have a shower, come down. The rest of your clothes are clean. I'm making breakfast.

Nuala leaves softly. Julie just sits, the dream still fresh in her memory.

On the bedside table, Julie notices a PEN and a NOTEPAD. She immediately starts to draft out a CRUDE MAP, the vision from her dream as to the location of her birthplace almost visually projected onto the paper.

But the vision starts to FADE, and Julie only manages a few lines on the page.

INT. NUALA'S TOWNHOUSE -- MORNING

JULIE
-Give it back!!

Nuala is holding Julie's MAP up in the air defensively. Julie is in her own clothes again, only cleaner.

NUALA
It's crazy Julie, I can't let you do this!

JULIE
You don't understand!

Julie charges forward, trying to take her map back.

JULIE (CONT'D)
It was YOU who told the cops where I live didn't you? Tell the truth! You squealed! You broke our deal!! That cop is a monster! How dare you send him to my place!

NUALA
I didn't know they would send him! What would you have me do? You're killing yourself!

JULIE
This is different!!

NUALA
No it's not!! It's the same thing all over and over again!

Julie is stunned.

NUALA (CONT'D)
I have watched you since you were a little girl, Julie!
(MORE)

NUALA (CONT'D)

Every day, I see you getting deeper
and deeper into your street friends
and tattoos, all your crazy
haircuts... God knows what else!
Sicker and sicker!! Yes I broke
our deal and yes I told the police
where you live, because its gone
too far and I can't take it
anymore!

She calms herself down, somewhat.

NUALA (CONT'D)

Julie... you can't just make up
some fantasy, and then go chasing
across the country for-

JULIE

No, it WAS REAL!!!

Julie SNATCHES the map right out of Nuala's hand.

She collects the rest of her things and makes a beeline for
the door.

On her way, she grabs Nuala's CAR KEYS off the hook, and
looks back to Nuala one last time.

JULIE (CONT'D)

-And I know exactly where it is!!!

She yanks a pocket-sized TRAVEL FLASHLIGHT off the key-ring,
looking back at Nuala, betrayed.

JULIE (CONT'D)

You know, for someone who believes
in God and all that... you sure
don't have much faith in things.

Julie POCKETS the flashlight, but THROWS the rest of the keys
far off into some trees.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Hell, I'm standing right in front
of you!!

Julie takes off on her skateboard, DISAPPEARING eerily fast.

INT. BUS STATION -- MORNING

Julie is at the TICKET BOOTH, speaking through the tiny hole
in the bullet-proof window.

JULIE

Whaddya mean you won't sell me a ticket?? I want to buy a bus ticket!

A barely audible reply through the tiny hole.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Look, I have cash!

Julie opens NUALA'S WALLET, her driver's license displayed inside, a stupid smile on Nuala's face. Julie offers the cash, a considerable stack of mostly large bills.

Another barely audible reply.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Take my money!

Then a MAN IN STRAW HAT steps up, mid thirties, of a somewhat eastern complexion, with leathery skin.

MAN IN STRAW HAT

She's with me. Two tickets please.

More barely audible replies. But the Man In Straw Hat does not debate. His demeanor is steady.

The Ticket Lady reluctantly SELLS him two tickets. Julie puts up no resistance, surprised.

The Man In Straw Hat collects his tickets, and walks away from the Ticket booth. Julie FOLLOWS cautiously. He GIVES Julie a BOARDING TICKET.

JULIE

Uh -thanks?

The Man in Straw Hat just nods a bit, grunts, and WALKS AWAY, gathering his pack.

INT. BUS -- MORNING

Julie has boarded the bus, still vigilant that someone might be looking for her.

She passes the Man In Straw Hat, who pays her no attention. Julie keeps going and finds an empty seat near the back.

The bus DRIVES out of the hangar, and STOPS at a light. Julie reaches into her backpack, and retrieves the TRAVEL FLASHLIGHT she stole from Nuala. She twists open the end; inside are 2 AA BATTERIES.

JULIE
I'll show them...

Julie junks the flashlight, and LOADS the batteries into her walkman, discarding the dead ones.

She presses PLAY. It works. Julie lays back into her seat, and relaxes.

She takes out the MAP that she started to draw at Nuala's townhouse - some more of the details blurrily come into focus, and with a conveniently found pen attached to the seat in front of her, Julie manages to DRAW a few more lines.

Suddenly Julie's perceptions get a slight JOLT:

The sight of the Map taking place in front of her opens up another *Flash Hallucination*, but this time it is *CLEARER*, more controlled;

-It is no longer just a flash hallucination, but is now a waking, lucid, VISION-MEMORY, which comes alive right before Julie's waking eyes.

It is disorienting for a moment, but Julie looks down at her fingertips, and incredibly, she can see TINY SPARKLES of the White Light dancing about.

It soothes her, despite the extremely disorienting sensation.

The Vision-Memory comes stronger now, but rather than resisting, Julie closes her eyes, boldly ALLOWING it to come.

JULIE (CONT'D)
...I'll show them all.

EXT. FOREST RIVER -- AFTERNOON

It is a bright and sunny day. The RIVER shines beautifully as it winds its way through the FOREST CHASM.

At one spot along its high CLIFFS lies a naturally-constructed LOG STRUCTURE, a slightly eastern design to it.

It is nestled at the edge of the highest plateau. Inside, an instructional CLASS OF MARTIAL ARTS can be heard.

INT. DOJO -- AFTERNOON

It is a beautiful and well-cared for martial arts training dojo with mats for grappling, heavy-bags for boxing, and all sorts of training equipment. The class inside is small, maybe 7 or 8 STUDENTS.

BJORN, a large Fighter in his 30's with a large beard, is at the front. He is leading a controlled, slow striking KATA. The Students are all in a Karate-type horse-stance, breathing in pattern, eyes closed, practicing this simple punch technique.

But it is no ordinary punch; as they continue the kata, they are also creating a faint mystical-looking RED ENERGY around their arms and fists. Some stronger than others.

The only one not paying attention is YOUNG JULIE, 5, who sits at the back. Her hair is long and blonde. There is none of the Red Energy visible about her.

She watches outside through the open door, staring down-river, as far as the winding cliffs allow her to see.

Suddenly, she squints a bit, and sees something that makes her get up and RUN out the doorway with a LAUGH of excitement.

Everyone's state of mind is disturbed, and their Red Energy FADES AWAY. Bjorn RUNS AFTER HER, nervous.

BJORN

Julie! ...Julie wait! I'm not supposed to let you go yet!!

EXT. COMMUNE TRAIL -- AFTERNOON

Young Julie hurries excitedly down the COMMUNE TRAIL, which descends in levels, hugging the cliff.

Young Julie JUMPS and SKIPS off the rocks as she goes.

-She passes some CABINS settled among the trees, small and cozy - the same cabins from Julie's dream.

-She passes PEOPLE HANGING LAUNDRY on a line, and a budding VEGETABLE GARDEN.

-She passes a very formal-looking outdoor SPARRING COURT. It sits along the cliff-edge, a ceremonial FIRE PIT at the front, BENCHES around the perimeter.

Young Julie runs on by.

-Then suddenly she VEERS from the main trail, and heads down a smaller, less visible ROCKY PATH, much closer to the cliff-edge.

EXT. MOM'S POTTERY STUDIO -- AFTERNOON

Young Julie follows the path carefully along the cliff edge. There, among the bare rock, is a small and humble POTTERY STUDIO.

It is built almost entirely with the natural rocks, wood and clay from the surroundings. There are many LARGE CLAY DISCS stacked around, some fired, some not, along with some other traditional shaped pottery.

Attending the kiln, is Mom. Her hair is shaved short.

Young Julie bursts into the area, but Bjorn arrives not a moment behind, trying hard to catch his breath. He looks at Mom with a great shyness and respect.

BJORN

Your daughter... she-

But before he can say it, Young Julie blurts out the news:

YOUNG JULIE

-They're back!!!

Mom and Bjorn both jump, instantly looking down-river.

Indeed, a SMALL BOAT is moving its way up the current towards the Commune.

Mom tidies up in a flash, and disregarding whatever Young Julie may or may not have done, her and Bjorn run down towards the Main Hall.

Young Julie is way ahead of them.

EXT. MAIN HALL -- AFTERNOON

YOUNG JULIE, MOM, BJORN and the rest of the students from the dojo all gather at the MAIN HALL at the lowest level of the Commune.

The Main Hall is a proud but simple building of logs and wood, again with a distinctly eastern design to it. A COURTYARD has been cleared in front, the steps swept clean.

Along the edge of the cliff is a LARGE FENCE made of trees cut from the forest, the tips cut sharp at the top.

At the base of the Fence, at the entrance to the courtyard by the Main Hall, stands a HEAVY GATE.

Young Julie, Mom and Bjorn all watch the gate OPEN, bending and creaking with its weight.

Sifu, Dad, and 4 or 5 more FIGHTERS enter the Commune. These Fighters are far more impressive physically than the ones in Bjorn's class.

Walking alongside of Sifu, is ZHAN, a man of Himalayan features. He is clearly the fittest and strongest of all the fighters, even more than Dad.

Everyone in the group is loaded up with supplies, carrying all kinds of food and wrapped goods for the Commune and dojo.

The remaining members of the Commune all gather around, pleased and excited for the return of their teacher and friends. Most of the returning Fighters have SHINY MEDALS around their necks, among the many bruises to go with them.

Dad reaches into one of his side bags, and everyone pauses with nervous anticipation. From inside his pack, Dad humbly raises a huge and beautiful TROPHY for all to see.

Everyone CHEERS. Zhan, however, seems a bit out of sorts.

Sifu stays rather silent as well, a strange look on his face. Yet, he manages a smile, as not to disturb the celebration.

Dad, Mom and Young Julie share a loving reunion. Mom and Dad KISS romantically. Dad PICKS Young Julie up, and spins her around in the air.

He places her on his shoulders, letting her hold the trophy. Everyone CHEERS once more.

Mom sees that Dad's left eye is swollen and red, a small cut above it. Dad gestures to Mom that he is fine, and the celebration takes over. Everyone carries off in cheer, as the party has begun.