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**The Delights and Dangers of Ambiguity**

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**The Delights and Dangers of Ambiguity**

**by**

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**Report**

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## **Abstract**

### **The Delights and Dangers of Ambiguity**

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2013

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The following report describes the conception, pre-production, production, and post-production of my short-narrative thesis film. The film portrays a night in the life of three characters: a woman, her husband, and the limousine driver ferrying them around town. The film reveals the complex and ambiguous history that the characters share while exploring the intersections of dreams and memories. The report contains a discussion of the lessons I learned from previous films, goals for this project, and a daily accounting of the production process.

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# INTRODUCTION

## Foreword

I completed my Prethesis film, *Every Man A King* in May of 2011, and I entered the summer of 2011 with no real idea of what I wanted my thesis film to be. My prethesis was, in my estimation, a decidedly mixed bag. I succeeded in many respects, mostly having to do with the process: I made a technically ambitious movie by the standards of my previous work, and, largely due to working with a crew of technically skilled and capable collaborators, I was able to realize most of the visual ideas that I had set out to execute.

But it became clear to me during the post-production process that I had missed something along the way. The film functioned properly: it conformed to a traditional three-act structure and was conspicuously plotted. Even the core contradiction that I worked to illustrate, the juxtaposition between the tone and tension of the story and the fundamental silliness of its subject matter, came off. I failed, however, to effectively address the real ideas I was after: the distinction between the stated rules of polite society and the actual, more malleable and selective rules that govern day-to-day life. I had hoped to make a comedy that devolved into something more stark and unsettling, but judging by audience reaction, I had made something that was consistently neither funny nor thought provoking.

## **Unfinished Ideas**

From the fall of 2011 through the summer of 2012 I pursued, in turn, three ideas. The first was a structurally ambitious story that would combine a genre I love (spy stories in the John Le Carre tradition), subject matter I was interested in (a failing marriage) and a theme that has become more and more resonant for me as I've grown older (the relationships between individuals and institutions).

The spy film would have been structured around a real-time, or near real-time, present tense event, like a cocktail party, which would become the culmination of a larger plot revealed through a series of flashbacks. The project progressed to the point of having meetings with potential collaborators, and several drafts of a story outline. It became clear that the story did not suit the constraints of a thesis short film. The production schedule would be too long, the film would be too long, and would require significantly more money than I was prepared to spend. To condense the story enough that it would become viable to actually make would gut it of its intended meaning and render it trite and perfunctory. I abandoned the project, though I still have some ambitions to make it in the future.

The second idea I pursued abandoned the genre aspirations of the first, but involved in a much more pointed way the relationships between individuals and institutions. The story involved an elementary school aged child and an authority figure at school; a teacher or a guidance counselor. In the story, the adult betrays the child's confidence, despite promises not to do so. While I initially thought about the story from the child's point of view, it became obvious that the story

was really about the adult. Did the adult act in bad faith when they made the promise? (No). Why did the adult betray the child? (ultimately not out of direct self-interest, but out of a desire to follow the rules). I wanted to portray a situation where every individual person involved can have a clear sense of what the right thing to do is, and choose to do otherwise because they can do so and hide behind rules and the power of the institution they work for.

Instead of immediately beginning to outline or write this idea, I started by doing everything else first: looking for locations, having discussions with an actress I wanted to cast as the teacher, and beginning preliminary casting for the child. In the fall of 2011 I shot a test with a young female actress to begin to explore how to visually express the content of the child's interior life.

While the testing and preliminary casting were creatively fruitful, they ultimately did not help me get any purchase on the idea I was pursuing. I could not conceive a story that did not fall into the traps of melodrama, or even emotional exploitation that are so common in stories about children in crisis.

I circled back around to the idea of doing something more conspicuously plotted, but this time with an eye towards a project that would be more manageable, structurally and logistically. I brought the teacher character along into the new project, but turned her into a middle manager in an office, and tried to build a story around her about personal and institutional loyalty in a corporate setting. To the end of economy, I set the bulk of the story in a nondescript parking structure. Before moving to Austin I had lived in New York City for



something approaching eight years, and while I had seen and been inside a multi-level parking garage before, I'd never seen so many of them or found them as fascinating as I did when I moved here. They're full of parallel and perpendicular lines, stairs, ramps, elevators, and blind corner after blind corner. I can't think of a more suitable place to stage a suspense story.

Even still, a workable story eluded me. I wrote three full drafts of the parking garage movie before I abandoned it. I couldn't find a sufficiently natural way to establish a sense of personal loyalty between the main characters. I wanted to create stakes that were tangible and substantive, but I didn't want to do it through a ham-fisted storytelling gimmick like expository voiceover. The parking garage movie became another project I decided was too big and too complex to be able to do effectively as a short film.

Several months of dead ends left me in the fall of 2012 without a viable project for my Master's thesis film. I took a step back from the set of ideas and themes that I had been circling for over a year, and looked back at notes, notebooks, and short stories I had written going back as far as the late 1990s. I landed on a relatively recent idea, sparked by seeing a limousine in a small town with a big, ostentatious advertisement for itself in the rear window. There was a fundamental contradiction there-- if you were looking for a classy evening out, why would you hire a limo with an ad on it? Who drove this thing, and who were their clientele?

I quickly came up with a rough sketch for a feature-length film about a small town limo driver and a middle-aged couple who he drives on their monthly date night. The movie would be structured around three separate date nights, each a month apart, wherein the driver and the wife meet and develop a relationship that remains unconsummated. Inspired somewhat by the Woody Allen-Mia Farrow 'B' plot in *Crimes and Misdemeanors*, the movie would end with the woman choosing to stay with her husband, despite being unhappy in her marriage, for reasons that defy the conventional logic of movie romances.

I fixated on this story, and for a long time avoided trying to adapt it as a short film because I was excited by the prospect of making it as a feature. It had an enormous amount of potential for nighttime atmospherics, and it was a way to make an emotionally resonant film that wouldn't rely on dialogue. I also liked the idea of making a movie that involved driving at night. By November of 2012, however, I realized that the most important thing I could do would be to make a movie I wanted to make, short or otherwise, so I set out to re-frame the limo driver movie as a short film.

### **Condensation, Iteration**

The first issue I encountered with reducing a feature-scale idea to a short was, quite literally, how to begin. The conceit of building the story around three separate evenings, each a month apart lent itself naturally to three-act structure. The first evening would be largely expository, reflecting the nature of the

husband and wife's relationship and planting the seeds for the driver and the wife to connect with each other. The second would develop that relationship, and propel it towards a decisive action. The third would be the heartbreaker, the woman's rejection of the driver.

As a short, the whole story had to take place over the course of one night. Doing so helped me constrain the logistical needs of the movie: no wardrobe changes, fewer locations, and a shorter shooting schedule. However, now that there weren't major breaks in time between the acts of the movie, doing the expository business of the story became more challenging.

The topic of my final paper for Charles Ramirez-Berg's History of Film class in the fall of 2010 was the thematic and structural similarities between David Lynch's *Lost Highway* and *Mulholland Drive*. In both films the main character escapes into a fantasy world as a way of coping with the trauma of romantic rejection. *Lost Highway* frames the dream space in the second act, making it clear that we are in an other-than-real world until we return to reality in the third act. *Mulholland Drive*, however, effectively opens into a fantasy, exploiting the audience's tendency to buy into the reality presented to them. Only near the end do we shift into the true, more grim world the protagonist truly exists in, and while the reveal is momentarily disorienting, it brings the audience into a world of more familiar and comprehensible narrative logic.

Both *Lost Highway* and *Mulholland Drive* influence the structure of my thesis film. From the former I took the three-part structure, a fantasy space bookended

by reality. From the latter I took a sense of uncertainty about reality, and the notion of a 3rd act reveal that pulls the story back to reality and definitively re-frames the previous series of scenes as a dream of some sort. Those basic structural and tonal elements have been present since the first script drafts for this project.

In November of 2012 I had an unusually long discussion with two recent MFA graduates, Jaime Cano and Erin Randall, about the television series *Mad Men*. Its fifth season had ended earlier in the year, and we talked about how that season had ended. The last episode of the fifth season ended with a montage set to the theme from *You Only Live Twice*, the fifth James Bond film. The opening verse from that song:

*You only live twice, or so it seems*

*One life for yourself and one for your dreams*

*You drift through the years and life seems tame*

*Then one dream appears and love is its name*

The lyric struck a chord with me, and pulled me back to the ideas I was drawing on from Lynch-- fantasy as a cure to the disappointments of life. My first drafts were titled, as something of a joke to myself, *You Only Live Twice*. I began sending drafts to Producer Monique Walton and Cinematographer Ellie Ann Fenton shortly after Christmas 2012. The script would be continuously revised over the next several weeks, but based on initial feedback, Monique and I began pre-production with an eye towards completing principal photography in early

March, before spring break and the South By Southwest conference. We began working in earnest just after New Year's Day, giving us less than two months before we needed to begin shooting.

## **Crew**

Monique Walton was attached to this project before it existed. She produced my prethesis film, I gaffed and color corrected her prethesis film, and we had worked together on many other projects inside and outside of the department. She's a gifted multitasker, capable both as a logistical manager of a production and a creative collaborator. We have similar styles of working and communicating, perhaps due to our shared background as New Yorkers, and we have broadly overlapping sensibilities about movies. Without her I would not have felt at all comfortable with taking a project from script to production in less than two months.

The most important principle that guided me in finding a cinematographer for this film had to do with light. Light, unto itself, can have emotional force, and that force can be intensely powerful and wholly subconscious. I wanted to work with a cinematographer who would keep working on lighting a scene until you forced them to stop. On my prethesis, that person was cinematographer Tomasz Werner, aided by Therese Tran as gaffer. Tomasz and Therese were, at the outset, the only people I seriously considered to shoot my thesis film. They both entered the MFA program a year ahead of me, and both had graduated and left

Austin by the summer of 2012, but I was prepared to bring either of them in to Austin. Therese would ultimately come out to Austin from Los Angeles to work on my thesis film, but as the camera operator.

I had worked with Ellie Ann Fenton in the spring of 2012 on Roy Rutngamlug's thesis film. When I saw her in December of 2012, at the department's end-of-semester screenings, we started talking about thesis projects, both mine and those of my classmates. I said, half jokingly, that Roy's film was probably the last UT student project she was going to shoot--earlier in the year she had shot her first feature. I made this remark more in regards to my classmates' projects. At that time there were several MFA thesis films in preproduction, and some of them didn't have a cinematographer attached. I remarked, as I often do, that most of the cinematographers in the department tended to focus on operating the camera first, and lighting second. Ellie concurred, and asked me about what my movie was about. I gave her a brief pitch that partly dealt with the story but mostly had to do with visual style. I knew at that point that I wanted a fairly locked-off movie, with no handheld and minimal camera movement, and that I wanted a meticulously lit movie. A couple weeks later I sent her a script and some more fleshed out thoughts on visual style. She agreed to come on board.

I did not know Tony Costello particularly well until the spring of 2012, when he asked me to do the final color grade on his prethesis film. After seeing his film and talking with him about movies in general, I realized that we had

similar sensibilities about style and storytelling. By early 2013, when I was gathering key crew for my thesis, I immediately thought of Tony as a possible Production Designer, and then just as quickly dismissed the thought. Tony and his wife had just had a baby, and he was also working full-time as a researcher in Terrence Malick's production apparatus. I did, however, send Tony the script in mid January to solicit his feedback on it in general and from a production design standpoint. Tony responded with a long and detailed email:

It's all about maximizing the value of our resources to achieve an aesthetic that will impact our movies on an emotional level. So much can be said through locations, props, and wardrobe decisions, and the effect is instantaneous. Sometimes it's subtle. Sometimes it's loud, but it should always be considered.

(T. Costello, personal communication, 1/29/2013)

The bulk of the email was a series of ideas and questions about the script, broken down scene-by-scene. Tony clearly appreciated what I was trying to do, but he also saw the holes and the places where ideas were not fully fleshed out. He seemed to have read the script for its details as well as its broad strokes, and his questions made me re-examine the choices I had made and decide whether specific elements were perfunctory or genuinely meaningful. Tony and I had a long meeting in person shortly after our email exchange, where he presented the idea of dressing the couple's house as though they were getting ready to paint.

The idea immediately appealed to me. Being set up to paint underlined the woman's sense of searching and indecision-- she's stuck in an in-between state, unable to make an affirmative choice to change her life. The ubiquitous blue painter's tape matched the blue Lincoln Towncar that we had found to serve as the primary picture car, and underlined a blue/orange color palette for the movie. Finally, as a pragmatic matter, blue painter's tape and clear plastic sheeting was fairly inexpensive-- it was an inexpensive way to execute a memorable and meaningful design for the end of the movie. Tony felt confident that he would have the time to commit to the project. He came on board as Production Designer, and I immediately integrated the imagery we had discussed into the script.

## **Cast**

For my previous two narrative films I had casted through the means popular among students seeking actors who would work for free: internet resources like AustinActors.net, Short Film Texas, and the Austin Film Casting email list. Over the span of three years of casting my own projects, helping cast other students' projects, and seeing dozens of undergraduate and graduate student films, I came to realize that I had been drawing from a fairly shallow pool of talent. There is a class of actor that has no interest in working on unpaid student projects. This is, I've found, not usually because of money. Rather, the fact of paying actors, even if the fee is nominal or nearly so, tends to indicate some level of seriousness. As



such, I budgeted to pay the principal performers a modest amount, and to work with a casting director in order to gain access to a broader pool of hopefully more experienced and skilled actors.

Monique and I took meetings with Vicky Boone, an established Austin casting director for whom Monique had interned in the past, and Brad Burton and Kimberley Williams, a husband-and-wife team who had been in Austin for less than a year after working in Chicago. While Vicky Boone's history and track record in Austin might give her more access to more talent, based on existing relationships with talent agents, we chose to work with Brad and Kim. While certain practical considerations like scheduling played into the decision, Brad and Kim were clearly interested in the project in a way that Vicky didn't seem to be. They had read the script and began our meeting by peppering me with thoughts and questions about it, including things that didn't necessarily have to do with casting. Not unlike my interactions with Monique, Ellie, and Tony, the meeting forced me to keep thinking harder about the choices I had made in the script, and their interest and excitement help motivate more revisions and clarifications in later drafts of the script.

I approached casting by trying to evaluate performers in three different ways: whether they suited the role physically, whether their initial performance seemed to capture what I was after, and whether they were able to make adjustments to their performance based on my notes. We did casting over two weekends, reading actors individually on the first weekend and in pairs on the second. As

the script is not particularly rich in dialogue, I had to find a scene to audition people with that was dialogue driven but still captured the traits I was looking for. Once again, I turned to Lynch. The scene I chose was a simple, restrained dialogue scene from *Twin Peaks*, season two, episode 18. Agent Dale Cooper and Annie Blackburn meet in the bar of the Great Northern Hotel. The scene functions well outside the context of the episode or the series; each character tries, in turn to draw the other out, navigating around the suggestions of the other's troubled pasts. The dialogue is pointed to the text of the scene but oblique to the subtext. The inherent sense of hesitation and awkwardness in the interaction provides room for performers to play the scene in a bunch of different ways. I transcribed the scene, changing the characters' names and eliminating any stage direction that might give away its source so I could be sure the actors' reads would not be influenced by the performances in the show. We saw about a dozen actors for each role on the first day, and I asked them to play variations of the scene based on different ideas about the characters' relationship prior to the scene.

Of each group of actors, about two thirds could be immediately eliminated from consideration. Some of them didn't look right, others gave an initial read that was far from what I was looking for and couldn't show enough of a change in repeated reads. A small handful gave such wooden, stilted initial reads that they could be eliminated within moments of beginning to speak. Even in those cases I

gave some direction and asked for a second read before thanking them for their time.

Christia Madasci immediately emerged as the first choice for the female lead. She looked right for the part, but more importantly her first read was almost exactly what I was looking for. I considered casting her on the spot and not calling any other women back, but I was talked down from that choice by Brad and Kim. I had a less specific sense of what I wanted for the driver. We saw actors who projected weariness, confidence, and bitterness, and these were all things I was intrigued by. David Lee Hess was something of a dark horse based on his first read. It was a quiet, introspective performance, bordering on sullenness. I found it very interesting, but I was concerned that his performance would be too interior and subtle, and the rest of the movie might swallow up that it.

Callbacks took less time than the first round. We brought in two women and four men, and had them read from a new draft of the actual script, to which I had added a couple of pages of dialogue just so actors would have something to perform in auditions. While the first round of auditions focused on finding the best individual performers for the roles, the callbacks were all about finding the best possible pairing. We saw some combinations that definitely didn't work, where one performer's energy didn't match the other, or where just the sight of two people standing next to each other was enough to tell you that they wouldn't work as a pair. We also saw what were, in effect, alternate reality versions of the

movie: pairings that worked in interesting, unexpected ways. The ambiguity of the text left much more room for interpretation than I had expected, and later, during production, I found myself drawing on things I had seen during auditions from actors whom I ultimately chose not to cast

I decided to cast Christia Madasci and David Lee Hess for two reasons: they showed an interesting chemistry together, and more importantly they each had first readings that were very close to what I had initially envisioned. They seemed to understand the characters and what there was of a story, and they seemed excited by the ambiguities of the script rather than being confused or put off by them. By the first week of February, we had our principals cast.

## **Production**

### **Saturday February 23rd, Production Day One**

A full cast and crew day for us-- 20 people or so, all in. We're at 4632 Moose Drive, a house on a cul-de-sac in a South Austin subdivision. We need to get the ending sequence of the movie: a wide exterior of the characters getting out of the car and entering the house, a static wide of them coming up the stairs, and a medium and two closeups in the bedroom. Before we break for our meal. Tony and Jing arrived to the house early to start dressing the stairs, hallway, and bedroom. First day shakedown is going okay, and we get up on our first setup, the stairway, pretty quickly. Eight takes, the first few are just me remembering how to direct and getting into the headspace of focusing on the monitor to make sure I'm getting what I want. Donald, playing the drunk husband, is eager to please, but he's looking a little unnatural.

Inside the bedroom I ask for skeleton crew only. This is the emotional climax of the movie, and I kind of wish that I had scheduled it later because I'm still not in any kind of groove. Christia and David seem to be, though. We'd worked out the emotional content of the scene well in advance and they seem to be able to access it. We get a couple of variations and move on to the exterior, on which pre-lighting has already begun, but not finished. We spend another hour, lighting before we get the shot off. It's a beautifully lit static wide, but it will ultimately not make it into the final cut of the movie.

## **Sunday February 24th, Production Day Two**

We start our night at Fabi + Rosi, a restaurant in West Austin. Monique knows the owners, and they've been kind enough to let us shoot there even though they're in the middle of renovating their house and are generally very busy. We're working with a full cast and crew again tonight, plus three extras. The cold is a little less severe tonight, and we're mostly working inside. The crew is starting to adjust to working overnights; on our first night some people were nodding off on set. Once again we light a wide exterior, a match for the one we shot the night before; now the characters exit the building and get into the car. Once again it's a time consuming setup that results in a beautiful shot that is ultimately entirely from the movie. We break for our meal around midnight, release most of the crew and move up north for our hostess tray shot, after which we need to shoot our rear projection plates so they can be ready in time for our studio night. John and Therese stay on with me and Ellie in order to get those shots done, and wrap up just as it's about to start raining. So far we have not had a twelve-hour day.

## **Monday February 25th, Production Day Three**

This is our biggest full-crew night. After being denied an exception to the city's 10 P.M. curfew for public parks, we're now on the grounds of Hosteling International's location off of East Riverside Drive. It's an acre or so of waterfront on the south shores of Town Lake, directly across from the old Holly Street

power plant. They've been nice enough to let us use the common room of their building for cast and crew holding, which is especially important on this night because there is a memorably powerful windstorm going on. It has been chilly and a little blustery the past couple nights, but this is dramatically worse. Any production sound we would record would be completely useless, and picture would be problematic-- there are choppy waves in Town Lake, and we wouldn't be able to keep Christia's hair from flying all over the place. I decide to push cast call by an hour and have the crew cool their heels inside while Monique, Ellie, Evan, and I try to find a solution. Evan remembers a potential interior location- an abandoned movie theater that another student had once shot in, but the circumstances (walking into a building we've never been to at night and trying to figure out how to light it on the spot) were not realistic. I drove to the other side of Town Lake and walked the area around the end of Holly Street, near the entrance to the power plant, and the surrounding park. We came up with shots, and decided to go for it. The grip truck came over and we started to light, but within another half hour we changed our minds. While the wind wasn't as bad on the street, it was still pretty gusty, and we were taking shots that we had specifically planned for one location and trying to transpose them to another. It wasn't going to work. We scratched the day and sent everyone home. We would need to reconfigure the schedule.

## **Tuesday February 26th, Production Day Four**

We're on the roof of Speedway Garage at the north end of campus. Two generators are running at full tilt. The camera is on a high hat, strapped to the top of a twelve-step ladder, and Therese is up there with it. Between the existing lights and the ones we've set, everything is the apricot-orange of sodium vapor lamps. Once the high angle wide is done, we move on to the closeups. We're moving along at a steady clip tonight, but it's cold and windy on the roof of the parking garage. We're keeping the car running with the heater on between takes for David and Christia, but the crew has to suck it up. We make sure that there is always hot coffee, and batches of hot chocolate appear every couple hours, having a very positive effect on morale. We get through our ten setups for the night in around eleven hours, but the grip truck is too tall to get into the garage. We bring equipment down to street level in the bed of Ellie's pickup truck, making for a time consuming load-out.

## **Wednesday February 27th, Production Day Five**

All of our car interiors are tonight. It's dialogue inside a moving car, which is always a challenge. I knew from very early on that I didn't even want to try to shoot this scene with the car actually moving on the road. To do it cheaply would be dangerous, and to do it safely would be prohibitively expensive. Ellie had experience shooting with rear projection backgrounds on another project, and felt



like it would be the ideal solution. We could get a realistic looking result and work in a controlled environment without having the picture car actually moving.

Cars are strictly prohibited in RTF studio spaces, so we had to find somewhere else. East Side Stages had availability and was flexible with pricing, but their studio doors aren't big enough to get a full-sized sedan through. Spiderwood Studios was booked solid, as was Austin Studios. At one point our best offer was to set up in a parking lot in front of Austin Studios and shoot outdoors. However, the only amenities available to us there would be a single porta-potty, with no interior space at all for cast or crew holding. After four cold nights, and with one more ahead of us, this was not an option. St. Elmo Soundstage had recently opened in South Austin, and after some phone tag, I was able to visit the facility and meet with the owners. They were very accommodating and gave us a heavily discounted rate to be able to shoot overnight. We rolled the Towncar into the studio and set up our rear projection screen.

In the moment, it was absolutely ideal. We were inside and warm, and we had a place to eat and for the cast to sit down and relax between setups. Eliminating the logistical concerns of shooting dialogue in a moving car gave us the opportunity to be patient with performances and be free with lighting and camera positioning. After watching the dailies, I was very pleased with the result. It looks natural, or at least not so unnatural as to be conspicuously false. We were able to rig moving lights to mimic streetlamps and passing traffic, and David

and Christia were able to stay comfortable and focused on their performances. After shooting this scene I can't imagine shooting a driving dialogue scene any other way.

### **Thursday February 28th, Production Day Six**

This was supposed to be a skeleton crew day, just the camera department shooting second-unit type material of the car. Since we lost day three to weather, however, we still had to do the waterfront scene. We had big lighting setups on deck, and I called in every favor I had to get extra hands for grip and electric. Our largest setups had as many as thirteen individual lights running, all off of generators. For the closeups near the waterfront we sent someone to the other side of Town Lake with a small generator and two lights so there would be out-of-focus points of light in the deep background. It was another cold night, but it was the last night with a full crew, and the only night where we wrapped out our location as the sun came up. Around 6 A.M. I went home to get some sleep before I had to return the grip truck. We would have to hold on to the camera in order to get the footage we had initially intended to get on Thursday night.

### **Friday, March 1st, Production Day Seven**

Skeleton crew day, just Ellie, Therese, Carlos Boillat (standing in for John Knudsen), and me. Our first stop is to meet Mike Gillespie, a local union grip, in North Austin. He's helping us build a special low mount rig to get the 'phantom ride' shots indicated in the script. When we first talked about the script, I had said

that it would be nice to get lower than a normal hood mount would allow for those shots, but I didn't think it would be practical. Ellie sought out a solution, however, which was to enlist Mike to build out a tray for the camera that was bolted to the sub frame of her pickup truck. We built out the rig, mounted and secured the camera, and started driving down some back roads. Once we had what we needed, we broke down the rig, thanked Mike, and went out to shoot static shots of the car driving on and off of highway onramps. We shot two to three setups at each of three locations, each one a specifically composed frame lit only by the existing light at the location. It is a testament to the light sensitivity of the Arri Alexa that we got images that were not just usable but beautiful, even with relatively slow lenses.

## POST PRODUCTION

I returned the camera and the last of the remaining rented and borrowed equipment on Monday March 4th, and then did my laundry. After making sure all my footage was backed up, I flew to New York on Wednesday the 6th in order to visit with my family and decompress from the shoot. I returned on the night of Sunday March 10th, just as South By Southwest was ramping up.

In any other year I would normally put some effort into trying to book freelance work during the festival; work is plentiful and day rates are good. This year, as I'd been absorbed with my film, I had not even considered it. Somehow, however, by the time I got back to Austin, I had booked five full days of work over the next seven. My plan to avoid downtown Austin and spend the week holed up on campus getting a rough cut together was not going to work out. I was able to come in to school on an off day and do one-light color correction and transcoding on my dailies, so that once I was ready to start working my footage would be ready too.

The assembly edit of the movie came together quickly. I didn't shoot that many setups overall, and there was really only one true dialogue scene to edit. I've found that I'm not the sort of director who shoots to give myself options in the editing room. Rather, I tend to shoot to eliminate options, making decisive choices about how to shoot scenes so that deciding how to cut a scene is mostly about selecting takes for performance instead of choosing between a multitude of

angles. The first assembly edit of the movie was nearly twenty-two minutes long, and crushingly dull. I stepped away from the movie for a day before going back in to start to cut it down. For about a month beginning on March 20th I edited for about four hours a day, four to six days a week.

The first three minutes came out of the movie fairly easily, just by trimming slack chunks out of takes that I had let play for their full length. After that it got harder; by mid-April I was still working with a fifteen-minute movie and only getting ten to fifteen seconds out of it a day. During production I had talked about definitely staying under twelve minutes, and ideally getting under ten, but at this point I was gunning for fourteen. Even though the script was just ten pages long, it was full of one-line descriptions of action that sometimes played as long as a minute each.

I had set a goal of reaching a picture lock by April 22nd, one week before my mix began, in order to allow time for sound design, color correction, and scoring. On the evening of April 21st I showed a fourteen minute cut to Daniel Stuyck, who had been giving me notes throughout my writing process. He talked about narrative economy and identified more than two minutes of material that he felt could be cut. Mostly he saw as redundant or uninteresting the long, tableau-style takes of the characters getting into or out of cars. These takes were long, more than forty-five seconds each. I had resisting removing them in part because of the amount of effort we put into shooting them-- each took nearly two hours to light. Those sorts of considerations are always part of editing your own material,

as it's difficult to look at a shot as a director/editor and separate it from everything that happened on set. But there's a necessary element of brutality in editing, more so when editing your own footage. Every shot has to be looked at as an element of a whole, and even if it was a difficult shot to get, or even if it's beautifully lit, perfectly executed shot, it has to be sacrificed if it doesn't help the movie work. I locked picture on April 23rd, one day late, but with a movie that came in under twelve minutes.

## CONCLUSION

The title of this report, *The Delights and Dangers of Ambiguity*, is borrowed from a lecture given at Harvard University in 1973 by the composer and conductor Leonard Bernstein. That lecture, part of a series of lectures he gave dealing with musical syntax, dealt specifically with chords and structures that had the potential to resolve in multiple ways. He cites Hector Berlioz' *Romeo et Julietta* as an example of a piece where a Minor 7th chord can, and does, resolve in 4 different ways in different parts of the piece.

Ambiguity is at the center of my thesis film. There are two people, but we don't know who they are to each other, how they might know each other, or how long they might have known each other. The sense of reality changes throughout the story: my goal was to establish something slightly unreal as real, build on it, and then confirm the audience's simmering suspicions all along, that it was all a dream. This is all a tricky business, and it remains unclear to me whether I achieved my goals. Some people who have watched the movie find it deeply confusing, while others seem to have a sense that parts of the story were real and parts were not.

In a way, however, the audience's reading of the story is irrelevant. There is an element of watching movies that is totally experiential and fixed in the moment. The non-story elements of a movie-- lighting, sound, composition, and the subtle inflections of performance, have emotional content independent of the story. You

can have an emotional response to the sound of a car driving, the timing of an edit, or the way light falls off into shadow.

In making my thesis film I wanted to bring all the tools of moviemaking I could to bear to that end. I made a point of working with a crew that was skilled and experienced, and a cast that could emote without saying a word. I don't expect all, or even that many, members of the audience will connect with the whole of my movie. The story is vague and idiosyncratic, and comes out of memories and emotions that I don't have a complete handle on. However, I hope that I've made images and sounds that are sticky, ones that grab hold to people's memory and stay there for a while because they act on their own memories and emotions, even if they don't understand why.



Appendix A: 1st Draft Script "You Only Live Twice"

YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE (WORKING TITLE)

By

Anand Modi

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

HENRY, mid-30's, dressed in a well-worn black suit, white shirt, and black tie, leans on the hood of his limousine.

Through the restaurant window, CLARK, mid-40's, well-built but only a little overweight, with a graying goatee-- in a sportcoat and khakis, he's dressed like a college football player on travel day-- and JUNE, early 40's, trim, brunette, and doing a good job of holding on to her youthful good looks, finish up dessert.

Henry glances at the couple inside to see how far along they are;

He holds his gaze a moment too long and June catches him as she looks out the window distractedly.

Henry averts his eyes and walks down the sidewalk aimlessly.

INT. RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

June turns back to Clark as he finishes off an after-dinner scotch.

Clark pulls a pair of reading glasses out of his breast pocket and inspects the check.

JUNE  
Everything alright?

Clark pauses a moment, distracted, and replies without looking away from the check

CLARK  
Uh-Huh. Let's go.

June and Clark both push their chairs away from the table.

June quickly reaches over to steady Clark as he stumbles a bit getting to his feet.

The plates and silverware on their table clatter a bit, and the murmur of the restaurant quiets momentarily while the staff and other patrons turn and look.

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

June valiantly props Clark up as they make their way out of the restaurant.

Henry stands next to the open rear door as Clark and June get in.

He closes the door behind them and walks around the limo to get into the drivers seat.

INT. LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

HENRY  
Where to next, sir?

CLARK  
Hmm? Uhh . .

Clark is a little disoriented

JUNE  
The Ashton Hotel, please?

Clark perks up a bit

CLARK  
Hotel?

JUNE  
I like the bar there.

HENRY  
Okay, Ashton Hotel.

Henry puts the limo in gear and pulls away.

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

The limo pulls up outside an upscale hotel

Henry gets out of the drivers seat and walks around the car to open the passenger door.

INT. LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

June, blocked in on the side of the car facing the curb by a dozing Clark, nudges Clark and urges him to wake up.

Henry comes around and opens the passenger door. He peers inside when no one steps out of the limo.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY  
Is he okay?

JUNE  
I don't know. Can you give me a  
hand?

Henry reaches into the back seat and attempts to pull Clark  
out by the waist

Clark grunts and flails his arm, catching Henry in the face.

JUNE  
Are you alright?

HENRY  
Yes, I'm fine.

A DOORMAN steps over.

DOORMAN  
Is everything alright, sir?

June pokes her head forward to look at the doorman

JUNE  
Everything's fine, he just needs a  
minute.

June tries to nudge Clark awake again. He doesn't budge.

The Doorman looks to Henry

DOORMAN  
I'm sorry, but if no one's getting  
out, you can't block the entrance  
to the hotel.

Henry looks in at June, as though to ask what to do.

June, defeated, shrugs.

She slumps back in her seat as Henry closes the door. Clark  
groans and lays his head on June's lap.

EXT GAS STATION NIGHT.

The limo pulls up at the pump.

INT. LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

Henry kills the engine

HENRY  
I was planning on getting gas while  
you were out at your next stop.

JUNE  
That's alright.

HENRY  
It'll just be a minute

EXT. GAS STATION - CONTINUOUS

Henry gets out of the drivers' seat and starts pumping gas.

He leaves the pump running while he goes inside to use the  
bathroom

EXT GAS STATION NIGHT.

Henry returns from inside the station. June is outside of  
the limo, sitting on the trunk and watching the numbers  
climb on the pump.

JUNE  
Big tank.

HENRY  
. . . Yes.

JUNE  
It must cost an arm and a leg to  
fill this thing up.

HENRY  
It does.

An awkward pause as Henry fails to come up with anything  
witty to say.

The two wait in silence until the pump clicks off.

Henry starts to put the pump back in place and replace the  
gas cap

JUNE  
Would it be alright if I rode up  
front with you for a while?

(CONTINUED)

Henry is a little dumbfounded. June notices this

JUNE (CONT'D)

I don't think he's going to be such  
good company the rest of the way.

She gestures toward the back seat.

HENRY

Sure.

INT. LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

June settles into the front passenger seat of the limo, and Henry closes the door for her.

A moment later Henry opens the driver's door and gets in.

They look at each other, awkwardly smiling, before Henry starts up the car and they pull away from the station.

They drive along in awkward silence until June notices a photo on the dashboard

JUNE

Is this you wife?

She pulls the photo from its place, tearing it slightly at the corner.

JUNE (CONT'D)

Oh no! I'm sorry.

The photo shows a dark-haired woman captured candidly, as she turns toward the camera. In the background water rushes over a dam, barely visible in the dense gray mist.

HENRY

That's okay. No, ex-wife.

JUNE

Oh. You took this picture, though?

HENRY

Yes.

JUNE

It's beautiful. Is it from your  
honeymoon? It looks like Niagra  
Falls or something.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY

No, it's a dam, not too far from here. I was visiting her at work; she's a civil engineer.

JUNE

It's nice that you still keep a picture of her. How long were you married?

HENRY

Eight years.

JUNE

And you're still friendly?

HENRY

I guess so. It's tough to tell, I haven't spoken to her since the divorce.

JUNE

Oh.

June sits back in her chair, not sure what to say.

JUNE (CONT'D)

This is really beautiful, though. Do you show them anywhere? A gallery or something?

HENRY

No.

JUNE

Do you have anything else I can see?

EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The limo pulls up, and Henry leaves it running as he gets out.

HENRY

I'll be right back.

He runs into the house

INT. LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

June sits in the passenger seat, waiting.

We hear the sounds of the door to the house opening, then closing and footsteps coming back towards the car

Henry climbs back into the drivers seat and turns on the dome light.

He opens up a binder full of proof sheets (?)

HENRY

Here we go.

June pages through the book silently.

Henry starts the limo and pulls away

JUNE

These are beautiful

June flips further through the book and stops at a series.

JUNE (CONT'D)

What are these?

Henry looks over briefly and squints. He can't tell.

HENRY

Hold on.

He reaches into the pocket in the front cover of the binder.

HENRY (CONT'D)

There's a white card in there . . .

The limo swerves a bit as Henry's attention is split.

JUNE

I can find it.

June pulls out the card and places it behind the sheet of negatives.

We see, in negative (?????)

JUNE (CONT'D)

Is this the same place as this one

She points at the photo of Henry's ex-wife.

(CONTINUED)



HENRY

Yes.

JUNE

Can you take me there?

EXT. DAM/RESERVOIR - NIGHT

(THE KEY INTERACTION. I DON'T HAVE THE MECHANICS OF THIS SCENE FIGURED OUT YET)

Henry and June walk back towards the car. As they near it, June heads for the driver's side.

She reaches for Henry's arm and stops him.

They speak briefly

Henry walks around to the passenger side as June gets into the driver's seat.

INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

June is driving

EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The limo stops, parked across several parking spaces. June kills the engine but leaves the headlights on.

June gets out of the car and stands in the beams of the headlights. Henry gets out and walks towards her.

June holds out her hand, and they dance.

CUT TO:

INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

Henry is driving, alone in the front.

June sits in the back with a dozing Clark's head on her lap.

INT. JUNE AND CLARK'S HOUSE - STAIRWAY

Clark, groggy, makes it up the stairs with Henry and June's help,

INT. JUNE AND CLARK'S HOUSE - BEDROOM

Henry and June help Clark into the bedroom, and he collapses face-first into bed.

June starts taking Clark's shoes off.

Henry backs up a couple steps, standing in the doorway, unsure of what to do.

June looks back at Henry

CUT TO BLACK

THE END

## Appendix B: Shooting Script "Tell Me"

Tell Me (WORKING TITLE) February 18, 2013

By

Anand Modi

1 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Opening title bed: a black limousine drives through a maze of freeway onramps and offramps-- it never seems to be going anywhere, just getting on and off the freeway.

2 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A group of well-dressed people, six or seven, pose at their table as a WAITER frames them in a cell phone camera.

Through the blurry, pixelated, slow-shutter smear of the cellphone screen we see in the background:

The MAN, mid-40's,

and The WOMAN, early 40's, finishing dessert.

Through the restaurant window, we see The DRIVER, 40's, dressed in a well-worn black suit, white shirt, and black tie, wiping the hood of his limousine with a white towel.

The Woman looks out the window distractedly; the Driver looks up and their eyes meet.

The Woman averts her eyes; the Driver walks around the limo and starts wiping down the trunk.

3 EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The Driver and the Woman valiantly prop the Man up as they make their way out of the restaurant

The Driver opens the rear door as the Man and the Woman get in.

He closes the door behind them and walks around the limo to get into the drivers seat.

4 EXT. BAR - NIGHT

The limo approaches an upscale bar

the Woman looks out the window at it, the lights reflecting in the window.

The limo stops.

The Driver looks in his rearview mirror

In the backseat, the Man is fast asleep with his head against the window.

the Woman looks up at The Driver. Seeing her face in his rearview mirror, he puts the limo in gear and drives away.

5 EXT. LIMOUSINE DRIVING - NIGHT

A phantom ride shot from the hood of the limousine

6 EXT. PARKING GARAGE ROOF - NIGHT

The limo is parked at an angle across several parking spaces on the otherwise empty roof of a parking structure.

The Driver and the Woman stand at the edge of the roof, looking out on the city

He turns and looks back at the limo

DIRECTOR

I don't think I've ever seen him  
this drunk before

WOMAN

He's done it before; he'll be fine  
in a couple of hours.

The Driver looks at her, then down at the sidewalk

DIRECTOR

Do you remember Mike and Deanna?

WOMAN

Sure. They were joined at the hip.

DIRECTOR

Are they still together?

WOMAN

(annoyed)

I don't know. How should I know?

DIRECTOR

I think someone told me they're  
still together.

WOMAN

When they moved in together, they  
started throwing these dinner  
parties like they were grown ups.

DIRECTOR

I remember.

She looks at him

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN

Did you ever get invited to one of those?

DRIVER

Just once. I showed up with a case of Budweiser, and I was never invited back.

WOMAN

Those parties were terrible.

DRIVER

Do you think they still throw terrible dinner parties?

WOMAN

No.

DRIVER

Do you think they don't throw dinner parties anymore, or that they're not terrible?

The moment turns quiet. She doesn't want to go down this road.

the Woman turns and walks back to the limo,

The Driver turns and looks at her.

7 INT. LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

the Woman leans into the backseat of the limo

She nudges the Man's arm out of the way; his snoring is only briefly disturbed

the Woman fishes a couple of tiny bottles out of the minibar.

She gets out of the car and shuts the door

8 EXT. PARKING GARAGE ROOF - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

the Woman walks back towards The Driver with the two little bottles.

WOMAN

Your pick.

One bottle has clear liquor, one bottle brown.

(CONTINUED)

The Driver reaches for the brown one; the Woman snatches it back.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Try again.

The Driver takes the clear bottle.

the Woman opens her bottle and takes a little swig; she coughs a bit.

They both look out at the city, then down at the street.

She takes the rest of her bottle and slowly pours it over the ledge.

A little shriek coming from the sidewalk below; the woman ducks down to hide while the driver looks down at the sidewalk.

A young woman is touching her head. She looks up. The Driver looks back down at her.

She stands there looking at him for a moment, then continues on her way, catching up with her group of friends.

The woman looks up at the driver.

WOMAN

Is the coast clear?

He reaches down and helps her up. They walk together back to the limo.

The Driver opens the passenger door for the Woman, with a bit of mock elegance.

the Woman smiles and starts to get in, then stops.

She says something, we can't hear it.

The Driver closes the rear door and opens the front passenger door, this time with no ceremonial fuss.

9 INT. LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

the Woman settles into the front passenger seat of the limo, and The Driver closes the door for her.

She looks around the inside of the car. It's very neat, with only a notepad and a bottle of water in the center console.

A moment later The Driver opens the driver's door and gets in. He starts up the car and they pull away.

(CONTINUED)

They drive along in awkward silence until the Woman notices a photo taped to the dashboard around all four sides with blue painter's tape.

WOMAN

Is this her? Your ex?

The photo shows a dark-haired woman standing on a riverbank. Everything in the frame is nearly dark, except for her face, illuminated by otherworldly streaks of light.

(The woman in the photo is played by the same actress as THE WOMAN; with different hair, clothes, etc.)

DRIVER

Yes.

WOMAN

Did you take this?

DRIVER

Yes.

WOMAN

It's beautiful. Is it from your honeymoon?

DRIVER

No, it's around here. Do you see that bridge back there?

The Driver leans over and points at the faintest trace of a bridge in the background of the photo.

the Woman doesn't see the bridge, but she lets it go.

WOMAN

I don't think I ever met her

DRIVER

No, I don't think you did.

the Woman sits back in her chair, not sure what to say.

WOMAN

This is really beautiful, though.

DRIVER

Thank you.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

You know I had a weird dream about you once.

(CONTINUED)



WOMAN  
Uh oh.

DRIVER  
What?

WOMAN  
Nothing. Tell me about your dream.

DRIVER  
I was driving--

WOMAN  
You were driving in your dream?

DRIVER  
Yes.

WOMAN  
Okay, go on.

DRIVER  
I pulled up at a stop light and  
there was another car next to me.

WOMAN  
Was I in the car?

CUT TO:

10 EXT. STREET - DAY

An image from the Driver's dream:

The Driver sits in the driver's seat of his car, looking to his right, smiling broadly-- we see him alone from the Woman's direct POV.

The woman is sitting in the rear seat of a car, without sunglasses on. She looks straight ahead.

CUT TO:

11 INT. LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

DRIVER  
Yes you were. I rolled down the window, then the driver of the other car rolled down the window, and it was you, and you had big sunglasses on, and you started shooting me with a water pistol.

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN

Ha! So what did you do?

DRIVER

I took out my water pistol and shot back.

WOMAN

So we had a water pistol fight.  
What do you think that means.

DRIVER

I don't know--

The moment suddenly turns awkward, and the Driver swallows whatever it is he was about to say.

DRIVER

(suddenly detached)

It's not much further.

12

EXT. RIVERBANK - NIGHT

The limo is parked on a small paved outcropping near a riverbank.

The Driver and the Woman struggle down the bank.

The woman carefully navigates the slope, reaching out to tree trunks to brace herself.

The driver tries to do the same but slips and gracelessly skids down the incline.

The woman extends her hand to help him up, he takes it.

WOMAN

I don't see a bridge anywhere

DRIVER

It's right over there.

The Driver points off in the distance, down the river. A couple of faint, blinking lights hover over the water. They start walking.

WOMAN

I have a car dream too. I've had it a couple of times.

DRIVER

Yeah?

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN

It's never exactly the same. I'll be driving pretty fast, feeling like I'm in control. And then suddenly I lose it and I go off the road, flying through the air.

A long pause.

DRIVER

Off a cliff?

WOMAN

Yeah, or an onramp or something.

DRIVER

And then what?

WOMAN

And then nothing. I wake up.

The walk further, occasionally stumbling in the dark.

WOMAN

Is this where you took that picture?

DRIVER

Yeah.

WOMAN

Why here?

DRIVER

I don't know. I don't remember it looking like this. I think she was working somewhere around here, or maybe I was.

WOMAN

How did you take a picture in the dark?

DRIVER

Like this.

The Driver stops and reaches over to the Woman. He poses her, touching and turning her arms, shoulders, neck.

WOMAN

I don't get it. What do--

--A single still image, very blurry, of the woman

(CONTINUED)

DIVER

No, no. See, you ruined it. You  
have to stay perfectly still. Think  
about something else-- what's  
fourteen times thirty-eight?

They stand silently, perfectly still, for a few seconds.

WOMAN (WHISPERING)

Nineteen hundred something. How  
much longer?

The Driver takes a step forward towards the Woman. They are  
less than arm's length from each other.

A narrow flashlight beam plays across the Woman's face. She  
squints a bit.

A shutter sound, though neither of them has a camera. We see  
a series of still images, the ones The Driver is taking:

-the Woman looking at the camera, smiling

-the Woman looking at the camera, not smiling

-the Woman looking down at her feet

Now the woman becomes a little blurry in each of the  
images-- she begins to move just before the shutter closes.

-the Woman looking at the camera, taking a step backwards

-the Woman's back partly turned to the camera

-the Woman is gone

(Back to full motion): the Woman is gone

The driver stares at the empty space.

The Driver walks back up the embankment to where the limo is  
parked, but it's not there anymore.

13 INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

the Woman is driving the limousine.

There is no one in the passenger seat or in the back

14 EXT. LIMOUSINE DRIVING - NIGHT

The limo drives up a freeway onramp.

15 EXT. LIMOUSINE DRIVING - NIGHT

Phantom ride shot.

16 INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

The Driver is driving, alone in the front.

the Woman sits in the back, the Man's head on her lap.

17 EXT THE COUPLE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The Driver and the Woman help the Man to the door.

18 INT. THE COUPLE'S HOUSE - STAIRWAY

The carpets are covered with plastic drop cloth.

the Man, groggy, makes it up the stairs with The Driver and the Woman's help,

19 INT. THE COUPLE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM

The bedroom is set up to be painted-- the floors and furniture are covered with plastic sheeting, held in place with blue masking tape. Several paint swatch cards are taped to a wall, showing multiple variations on multiple colors.

The Driver and the Woman help the Man into the bedroom, and he collapses face-first into bed.

the Woman starts taking the Man's shoes off.

The Driver backs up a couple steps, standing in the doorway, unsure of what to do.

the Woman looks back at The Driver

CUT TO BLACK

THE END

# Appendix C: Shotlist

SCENE	DESCRIPTION	SETUP	DESCRIPTION	SYNC/MOS
1 / 14	Car driving	A-H	<b>Wide, static-</b> car enters frame and drives up onramp, clears frame (many variations of similar action)	MOS
2	Restaurant Interior	A	Camera POV *Schmear cam - group photo couple in shot	
		B	2-Shot Man & Woman, she turns to look out the window	
		C	Limo & Driver wiping car, see woman's reflection	
		D	Driver's POV of woman, dirty with window edge (long lens)	
3	Restaurant Exterior	A	Wide - limo in f/g across width of frame (see full car), Man walking towards limo/camera supported on either side by woman & driver. Action completes through driver getting into drivers seat	SYNC
4	Bar Exterior	A	MCU Woman leaning head against window, looking out. lights from bar reflecting on window - hostess tray (passenger side looking back to her) - car's moving	SYNC
		B	ECU - driver's pov of backseat in rearview mirror	SYNC
		C	wide - Woman & man seated in backseat on opposite sides. Man is asleep. Camera pointing straight back from between two front seats	SYNC
		D	WS - Limo drives up to club, stops and drives away	
		E	ECU Driver's eyes in mirror from back seat. He see the woman looking at him and drives away	
5	Phantom Ride	A-D	Phantom ride - extremely low, if possible	MOS
6 / 8	Parking Garage roof	A	EWS Parking Garage Rooftop (High Angle, Wide Lens)	
		B	WS 2-shot to their backs, centered on them (Full Body)	
		C	MS 45degree Driver (Longer Lens)(slightly Higher Angle)	
		D	MS 45degree Woman (Longer Lens) (slightly Higher Angle)	
		E	MS 30degree Driver (maybe move camera a little closer, more neutral height	
		F	MS 30degree Woman (maybe move camera a little closer, more neutral height	
	(woman grabs bottles)			
		G	WS of Limo, Pan to MS of Driver/Woman depending on blocking (little lower than E&F)	
		H	MS Driver/Woman (Little lower than E&F)	
		J	MS 2-shot to their backs (little lower than before)	
		K	WS person below (dirty w/ parking garage ledge)	
		L	WS walking back towards Limo, hood in FG	
		M	MS Woman settles into the car (from driver's side)	
		N	MS Driver gets in (from passenger side)	

		P	WS Limo leaving (same as G)	
7	Woman grabs bottles	A	MS back seat from center of front seat	SYNC
9 / 11	Woman in front - dialogue scene	A	MS Woman in front seat (from driver's seat)	
		B	MS Driver (from Passenger seat)	
		C	2-shot from back seat	
		D	Insert photo from driver's side	
		W	Rear projection plate - driver's side	
		X	Rear projection plate - passenger's side	
		Y	Rear projection plate - front	
		Z	Rear projection plate - back	
10	Dream insert	A	MCU Man sitting in driver's seat, looking at camera. camera looking across passenger seat through open passenger window	MOS
		B	reverse of A	
12	Riverbank	A	WS Limo	
		B	WS Driver & Woman walking thru open space	
		C	WS Driver & Woman walking thru space	
		D	MS Driver & Woman make their way thru trees - track/pan with them? end in profile with power plant behind them	
		E	MCU Woman, Man steps in and adjusts her, she slowly walks backwards and disappears into darkness *shoot stills in exact position	
		F	MCU Man, steps back and looks at her	
		G	MCU woman has disappeared (same set up as E but HH)	
		H	MCU Driver (same set up as F but HH)	
		J	WS Driver walking to missing Limo (high angle)	
13	Woman driving	A	MS Woman driving from Passenger seat	
		B	MS Empty passenger seat from Driver's Seat	
		C	MS backseat of car - empty (spotlight on empty center of back seat)	
15	Phantom Ride		See scene 5	
16	Driver driving	A	Wide - driver and empty passenger seat, square-on from hood, through windshield, couple is back in the car. Actual Hood Mount shot on Burnet	
17	House exterior	A	Wide - matching action/composition of 3A	

18	House Stairway	A	Wide, 3 characters climbing directly towards the camera, stairs 1/3rd off center. full height	
19	Bedroom	A	WS bedroom from doorway, lower angle	
		B	MS Driver backs away from them, lower angle	
		C	MCU Woman looks at Driver as she tends to husband	



## References

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## **Vita**

Anand Modi was born in Springfield, Illinois and raised in Poughkeepsie New York. In 2004 he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal Arts from Eugene Lang College at the New School For Social Research. He remained in New York city for several years working as a freelancer in the Film and Television industry, ultimately gravitation towards post-production. In the fall of 2009 he entered the Graduate School at the University of Texas at Austin.

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