

"CONFIDENTIAL DO NOT DUPLICATE"

A screenplay for video by

DONNA CAMERON

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"CONFIDENTIAL DO NOT DUPLICATE"

BLACK

BEGIN TITLES.

SOUND:DOG BARKING AND CRICKETS CHIRPING IN A SUBURBAN FOREST. FARAWAY SOUND OF RAIN DRIPPING IN A METAL BUCKET.

FADE IN TITLE:

TO BETH

FADE OUT TITLE.

FADE IN TITLE:

**Produced by Phil Sloan and Donna
Cameron**

FADE OUT TITLE.

FADE IN TITLE:

CONFIDENTIAL DO NOT DUPLICATE

A VIDEO BY DONNA CAMERON

FADE OUT TITLE.

FADE IN TEXT:

**THE FOLLOWING IS A PERSONAL
STATEMENT OF GRIEF. IT IS A
STATEMENT MADE USING THE HOME
VIDEO MEDIUM AND IT EXPRESSES THE
VIEWPOINT OF THE FILMMAKER, NOT
NECESSARILY THOSE PERSONS
APPEARING IN THE TAPE.**

FADE OUT TEXT.

*SOUND BRIDGE:FISH
TANK PUMP HUMMING*

CUT IN:

INT/EXT. FISH TANK - FLUORESCENT TANK LIGHT

EXTREME CLOSEUP/SOFT FOCUS

SOUND:WHINING WHIR OF CAMERA MOTOR AND FISH TANK PUMP MIX

Two red goldfish float in a tank with blue and red pebbles and a green plastic plant. Reflection of video lens cap and camera in the tank glass.

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

I remember the day that I found out that my sister was dead.

CAMERA ADJUSTS FOCUS

My mother called. She said,
"I have bad news, Donna."
"Beth is dead."

CUT TO:

INT. MY HOUSE- DAY

HIGH ANGLE ON BLACK CHAIR--ARC LEFT TO RIGHT AROUND CHAIR

SOUND: MY FOOTSTEPS.

It is a dark room, typical Brooklyn Brownstone light. HAND-HELD shaky shots are shaky but sure. They confirm the authority of the storyteller, in the voice of the first-person. They reflect my GRIEF and confused state of mind.

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

For two weeks I sat in this black chair. I was convinced that they were coming to get me, too. Whomever it was- *we weren't quite sure who it was!* But then- nobody was sure. Nobody knew what happened to her- at least, that's what they told us.

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. FISH TANK - SAME

CLOSE SHOT: HOLD STEADY; SHARPER FOCUS

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

I couldn't distinguish myself from
my sister. It was a shocking death.

CUT TO:

INT. NECROPSY REPORT - SAME

SOUND: SAME

EXTREME CLOSEUP- CAMERA SCROLL DOWN, JUMP-CUT/SCROLL DOWN

(V.O. FILMMAKER)

I began to forget things. **I was
trying to forget things.** I was
trying to forget my sister. And so
I began to forget everything else.
*At times I couldn't even remember
my own telephone number. People
would say, "Gee, I didn't know you
were dislexic!"*

I had a new problem. I would skip
or misspell words and sentences,
transpose numbers. I could no
longer freelance as an editor or a
proofreader. I was a social
cripple. AND, I had no answers.

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. WHITE FIELD OVER LENS - DAY

SUPER- SHADOW OF MY HAND MOVING TOWARD CAMERA LENS

WE HEAR: FOOTSTEPS, SINGING IN A BROKEN VOICE

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

I was having to bury my young
sister without knowing how she
died.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR FROM CIRCLE LINE - DAY

The water is choppy. Waves are tossing to and from the side of the boat. It is an overcast day in late summer, similar to the day of our last visit. We took the same boat ride, saw the same sites.

MEDIUM SHOT- ANGLE DOWN, OVER THE SHOULDER EFFECT--CAMERA FINDS MISCELLANEOUS WAVES, NOTHING.

SOUND:LOCATION. WIND RUSHING THE CAMERA MIKE.

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

I was having to bury my young sister without knowing how she died. This is a difficult(if not impossible) thing to do.

Knowledge is comfort. Is control. Is a manner of healing. Is self-reconciliation. Without knowledge, all is lost.

*She disappeared in Charleston,
South Carolina December 16, 1987.*

PAN UP&ACROSS TO:

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR/ CIRCLE FERRY RIDE - DAY

CLOSE ON: WAVES IN HARBOR AGAINST SIDE OF FERRY

SOUND: LOCATION. WIND RUSHING THE CAMERA MICROPHONE.

The camera, fixed on the choppy waves, swings up and right and then left across the landscape of harbor, passengers and sky. It sways for an instant as the Statue of Liberty comes into view. It pans into blackness, a shadowy place (to later become the loc. EXT. BLACK SHADOW FIELD - DAY) on the boat, too dark for the camera's footcandle capacity. This disruptive gesture reflects my confusion and inner turmoil.

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

The last time I saw her, we went to the Statue of Liberty. We took the train and the ferry and we got stuck there for two hours.

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR/ CIRCLE LINE, PASSING VIEW OF STATUE OF LIBERTY, ELLIS ISLAND, OTHER VESSELS PASSING- DAY

LONG SHOT

M.O.S./SOUND: Location. Wind rushing the camera microphone.

The camera finds the Statue, then allows other sites and vessel to pass horizontally through the field. I feel the flow of time in the flow of the river. Familiar tourist pleasures of sea and sky become sinister omens.

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

After she disappeared her cigarettes and her half-finished drink were found in an off base apartment behind an open screen door. Her military ID was found on the road to the base. Her keys were found in the women's locker room. Her motorcycle was stolen from the base parking lot. And her much loved collection of Beatles' tapes just disappeared. On New Year's Day, a stranger walking his dog in the woods behind his house found a decomposed human body on a pile of garbage. It had no face. It had no flesh.

CAMERA ZOOMS OUT

SLAM CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR/ CIRCLE LINE/ GRAPHIC POSTER OF NEW YORK ON SITE - DAY

SUPER- PASSENGERS ON FERRY

M.O.S.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK SHADOW FIELD - DAY

SOUND: LOCATION. INSIDE FERRY CABIN.

There is the sound of a cigarette lighter clicking, tape recorder being turned on, microphone being picked up.

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

She loved New York. She always wanted to identify with it. When people asked her where she was from she would tell them she was from New York.

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR/ CIRCLE LINE/ GRAPHIC POSTER OF NEW YORK ON SITE - DAY

SUPER- PASSENGERS ON FERRY

SOUND: SAME LOCATION/M.O.S.

FADE IN:

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

Mysteriously enough the body had hands. The hands were shipped to the FBI for fingerprint identification...

We could never figure that out.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK SHADOW FRAME - DAY

SOUND: SAME LOCATION

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

I did see the Coroner's Report.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR/ CIRCLE LINE/ GRAPHIC POSTER OF NEW YORK ON SITE - DAY

SUPER- PASSENGERS ON FERRY

SOUND: SAME LOCATION/M.O.S.

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

And the Coroner's Report reports finding a body that when reconstructed was at least *five-foot-four-inches in height.*

FADE OUT.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK SHADOW FRAME - DAY

FREEZE FRAME.

SOUND: SAME LOCATION

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

My sister was just five feet tall. She was stationed aboard the USS Holland at the time that she disappeared.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR/ CIRCLE LINE - DAY

CAMERA ZOOMS IN ON PASSING VIEW OF THE INTREPID, HOLDS, ZOOMS OUT, HOLDS, ZOOMS IN, PANS RIGHT ACROSS SKYLINE.

SOUND: M.O.S.

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

One can reconstruct dinosaur skeletons from millions of years ago. How is this height discrepancy, on record, **believable?**

And what of the multitude of other
 dead/missing young women whose
 floating identities all vyed for
 that one found body? I wonder.
 What happened? I wonder where she
 is...

CUT TO:

EXT. BW CAROUSEL TENT TOP TURNING - DAY

MEDIUM SHOT: STEADY ON

SOUND: M.O.S.

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

It was Christmas. people were
 trying to contact her. Then they
 found the body. none of us have
 been the same since. You never
 forget. There is no stopping the
 pain...

CUT TO:

INT. CHRISTMAS TREE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: ORNAMENTS IN BRANCHES, FESTIVE TREE LIGHTS

SOUND: SAME LOCATION

(V.O. FILMMAKER)

Everywhere I go, every image
 reminds me of the person who was
 suddenly taken away from me.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR/ CIRCLE LINE - DAY

PAN DOWN, ZIG-ZAG ACROSS R--L, ZOOM OUT, PAN LEFT BECOMING
 INCREASINGLY MORE STEADY

SOUND: LOCATION.

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

Detectives seem to think that it was a serial killer. *Really?* Why were her cigarettes and half-finished drink in an open off-base apartment. Why were her keys on the ship. Why was her military ID on the road to the base. And where is her music?

My sister was just twenty-four years old when she died. She was proud to serve in the armed forces. She put her faith in the Navy way of life.

PAN DOWN TO WATER

I guess I'm not my sister.

FOLLOW WATER PATTERN FROM BOAT

SLAM CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR/ CIRCLE LINE WATER FOAM- DAY

CAMERA ADJUSTS

SOUND:LOCATION. WIND INTO CAMERA MIKE.

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

My parents were supposed to have seen her for Christmas. For two weeks they called. People said that she couldn't come to the phone. Their calls became more frantic and frequent.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK SHADOW FRAME - DAY

SOUND:SAME

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

Even the Chaplain lied...

Later we were told that she was thought to have been AWOL and that lying this way was Navy policy. I don't know...

is it? The civilian detective on the case discreetly told us that:

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR/ CIRCLE LINE - DAY

LONG SHOT

SOUND: SAME

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

"Beth, you know- went out with them there coloreds". And that there were a lot of KKK in the area. The navy detective told us that he was fat- young and new on the job and just trying to make a name for himself...

(CAMERA ZOOMS IN)

That explains it, I guess:

(M.O.S)

Fat detective competing with the FBI and the Navy. The whole case was botched!

(CAMERA ZOOMS OUT)

(pause; END M.O.S)

The priest at her funeral service said,
"No matter what happened, Beth never gave up on herself."

(PAN DOWN TO WATER)

I won't give up on Beth either. You know,
this is a true story:

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR/ CIRCLE LINE - DAY

TWO SHOT: ANGLE UP, CLOSE ON MY HUSBAND AND SON ON THE FERRY

SOUND: LOCATION.

My young son has never met his
 aunt. Beth is a victim. The kind
 of victim that the media exploits
 with a cold and calculating rigor.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK SHADOW FRAME - DAY

SOUND: LOCATION. M.O.S.

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

As a member of the media I
 protest!...

There were still no answers. The
 Navy did it's investigation. We
 were given numerous apologies, no
 facts. Somebody knows something.
 The fact that somebody knows
 something and is not communicating
 that something to my family is
very difficult to live with.
 What happened. Where is she? I

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR/ CIRCLE LINE - DAY

PAN DOWN USING SPEEDING CLOSE SHOT OF WATER

SOUND: LOCATION. WIND IN CAMERA MIKE.

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

wonder where she is...

(PAN UP TO VIEW OF TOURIST
 SITE, FERRY PASSENGERS,

IMPROVISE CAMERA AT THIS
POINT)

Confidential Do Not Duplicate-
final necropsy diagnosis. Young,
decomposing white female.

Reason for autopsy: found in
wooded area.

Probable cause of death:
undetermined.

This white female was found at the
crossroads in North Charleston on
the morning of January 1, 1988.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK SHADOW FRAME - DAY

SOUND: SAME

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

She was found by a man at
approximately 10:30am as he was
taking a walk through the woods.
At the scene the body was that of
a young female lying in a clump of
dried leaves. The skull was
detached from the body.
Approximation of the skull gives a
body length of 64 inches.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR/ CIRCLE LINE - DAY

PICK UP IMPROVE CAMERA WORK, CROSS CUT IN-CAMERA W/ BLACK

SOUND: SAME

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

All teeth are present. There is no
evidence of trauma to the skull.

We were told that the Navy has

very good dental records. BUT A RECORD'S A RECORD. The records disappeared on the way to the FBI for several weeks. But they were found again, we *think*.

On the way to the burial my father said,
 "Well, I buried a mother and I've buried a father. There is nothing so painful as my burying my child."

What happened? Where is she?

I wonder where she is...

Where is she?

What is this violence?
 Violence against women.
 Violence with intent to exploit and capitalize.
 Violence on the TV News.
 The glamorizing and glorification of **violence** in the movies.
 I protest...

I wonder where she is?
You never forget. There is no stopping the pain.
 The victim has a family.
 We are the victim.
 We the people. The victim...

What happened. Where is she?

CUT TO: BLACK

FADE IN:

(NOTE:I WROTE THIS PART OF THIS SCRIPT AS I SHOT IT, IN THE CAR. I (WILL) USE IT TO MAINTAIN TOUCH WITH SOME KIND OF OBJECTIVE REALITY. MY CAMERA THUS BECOMES "THE" CAMERA. IN A WAY, IT'S TRANSCRIPT/SCRIPT IN THIS THIRD OF THE FILM TRULY FULFILL THE DOCUMENTARY REQUIREMENT OF THIS WORK. THE ACTION

NOTES ARE QUOTES FROM MY FIELD OBSERVATIONS/DIARY ON THIS DAY. THE VO'S AND SOUND EDL ARE SCRIPTED, LIKE THE OTHER TWO THIRDS OF THE FILM.--DC, 1990)

INT/EXT. INSIDE MY CAR/APPROACHING ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY - DAY/A TIME THAT HAPPENED BEFORE THE FIRST SCENES. IT IS A DISPLACEMENT, NOT A FLASHBACK.

ECU/MLS- NONDESCRIPT- INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE MOVING CAR

The camera adjusts; finds focus on miscellaneous objects both in the interior and on the exterior of the car. The hand-held again is representing my inability to direct attention to the matter at hand. I am about to see my sister's tombstone for the first time.

SOUND: CAR RADIO. MY SON AND HUSBAND'S VOICES. LOCATION.

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

You can't help it. That's just the way it is...

CUT TO:

EXT. ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY - DAY

LONG SHOT-

Focus is on the approach to the cemetery. The gates, the sign, the granite edifice. The uniformed guards are directing traffic in, and, in the road, there are the tourists.

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. INSIDE CAR, VIEW OUTSIDE THROUGH WINDSHIELD - DAY

CAMERA ZOOMS IN TO GRANITE ARCH

SOUND: MY SON AND HUSBAND'S VOICES. LOCATION.

My husband and son are visible in the front seat. My son is so small that his feet stick out straight in front of him in the chair. His fright is apparent in the manner in which he clutches a little present in a plastic bag. I am numb with terror. It is Springtime, the cherry blossoms are in bloom. My son doesn't see them, instead, he's convinced that it's Halloween. He insists upon holding a conversation about

Halloween cemeteries. My husband comforts him, gives him a logical, fatherly explanation of what's happening. He talks about loss and sorrow. I remember now that his uncle was murdered during his junior year at Yale, and that they never found the body. Just a pool of his uncle's blood(they think) in a car trunk. But that's another time... We're being waved through the gate by the guard.

SOUND: CAR RADIO. MY SON AND HUSBAND'S VOICES. LOCATION.

PHIL
(TO ANDREW)

It's sad for people when other people die, because then you don't see them anymore.

The car moves through the final set of gates.

ANDREW
I see the cemetery.

PHIL
Yep. And there's going to be one of them that says Beth Cameron. That's your Aunt. That's mommy's sister.

PHIL
(O.S. TO FILMMAKER)
Are you *filming* this?

CUT TO:

EXT. ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY - SAME

CAMERA FINDS SOMETHING, ANYTHING, TO FOCUS ON

SOUND: CAR RADIO. MY SON AND HUSBAND'S VOICES. LOCATION.

The first tombstones appear. The camera turns left, allowing the ever increasing number of tomstones to flow through the camera lens. The car picks up speed. The number of stones flowing through the lens increases proportionally. There is the feeling of a tumultuous green plane- turning, spinning, following, leading- and the cemetery as a kind of grassy, rocky, roofless carousel.

(V.O./FILMMAKER)

When memory returns, reality splits. You can't help it, that's just the way it is. There's the reality of the cemetery and there's the reality of your home. In the cemetery there's an inscribed stone. In your home there are photographs. In between there's the highway and it's a long painful road.

This morning my son said to me, "Mommy, yesterday in school we learned about roads. Some roads go to the castle and some roads go to the witches' house. Some roads go to the grocery store and some roads have a big surprise at the end. They go home!"

This is the highway that goes home.

(HERE IMPROV CAMERA WORK FOR HOWEVER LONG IT TAKES IN REAL TIME--AND EDIT IN CAMERA: DRIVING AROUND FINDING THE RIGHT SECTION OF THE CEMETERY...)

(real travel time passes)

ANDREW

(OFF SCREEN)

But there are Halloween cemeteries, right Daddy? Right Daddy?

(real travel time passes again)

(WE'VE FOUND THE SECTION. THE CAR STOPS. WE GET OUT.)

CUT TO:

EXT. ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY - DAY

MCU- CAMERA FINDS ANDREW UNDER A CHERRY TREE.

SOUND: WIND IN THE CAMERA MIKE.

ANDREW

It stopped raining.

He gets up and looks around. He begins to run through the rows of graves, looking for Phil. I haven't anticipated this. I run after him, wanting to protect him. He trips and falls. My heart is on my sleeve. This isn't just a cemetery yet. He gets up and keeps running.

ANDREW

Daddyyyyy!

LONG SHOT- FOLLOW

PAN UP AS

A jet flies overhead. Catch it.

PAN DOWN

LONG SHOT- FOLLOW ANDREW

Phil is visible just ahead. There is a patch of dirt marking a newly turned grave. There are empty spots on the grassy hill. I know this is the one. Something is freezing inside me. Still a kind of joy arises, as though I'm about to have some kind of sisterly reunion when I find the stone. So, my emotions are torn inside me. My psyche is projected beyond my body, with my husband. My feet are some kind of leaden numb things that are plodding uselessly along, always behind. I don't want to go there. But I do.

FILMMAKER

What's the number?

PHIL

What?

PAN ACROSS

CAMERA ZOOMS IN- HAND-HELD

DOLLY CLOSE UP on
tombstones

FILMMAKER

The graves have numbers on them-
on the back of the gravestones
there are numbers. 691513,
691512....this one's turned
around-

CUT TO:

EXT. ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY/ PHIL FINDS BETH'S GRAVE -
SAME

LONG SHOT

SOUND: WIND IN CAMERA MIKE. LOCATION.

Phil has circled the area and is kneeling on one knee, at the
grave. His arm is around Andrew. I approach and meet them.
There's a Roman cross on the stone. There are dying flowers
in pots on either side. My parents must have just been
here. Phil parts the flowers and reads the inscription to
Andrew.

ANDREW

What does that say?

PHIL

It says, "United States Navy".

ANDREW

Yay. (Sing-song three year-old
gobble-de-gook.) Cheese!

FILMMAKER

(sobbing)

Andy, you don't understand.

PHIL

See Andy, this is where your nice
Aunt Beth, uh- see, there's
something that says nice Aunt
Beth..."

ANDREW

(MAKING MARCHING GESTURES)

Huh?

PHIL

(TO ANDREW)

Are you cold? Do you want to go
back to the car?
We're going to be waiting in the
car.

FILMMAKER

Alright.

CAMERA ADJUSTS

ANGLE ON: FRONT OF TOMBSTONE; ZOOMS IN SLOWLY

SOUND: WIND IN THE CAMERA MIKE. LOCATION. MY VOICE.

It's getting impossible to write notes. My hands are
trembling. My eye-hand co-ordination is going. All I can do
now is hold the camera tightly against my body and cry. I have
to leave my pen behind. I have to become my camera. There's
nothing here now but the wind, the grave, and me (the camera).

CAMERA ZOOMS OUT

(V.O. FILMMAKER)

There's the Pentagon.

Last night, my son had a
nightmare. He awoke sobbing,
saying that he'd had "a horrible
dream in which there were rows and
rows of boxes and as he walked by
with his schoolmates on some kind
of tour all at once a single hand
with a large grey claw shot up
from each box and pulled them all
at once down into the ground. The
children were imprisoned and were
very sad but then, in the end,
they were saved by a good guy and
released.

There's the Pentagon. There's your
grave...

CAMERA ZOOMS IN

(V.0. FILMMAKER)

Coronor's Field Report, by Doctor
Clay Nichols of the North
Charleston Police Department:

*The badly decomposed body of
a white female was discovered
by the above witness around 9:15
AM 1.1.'88. The victim had light
brown hair and appeared to be **at
least** five-feet-four inches and
sort of on the average build side
noted was what looked like some
kind of bruise on the victim's
back near her buttocks that would
also be an indication that the
victim was dragged some distance
before being killed that would
also be an indication that the
victim has been dead for **at least**
three weeks...*

Whose grave is this?

CAMERA ADJUSTS TO

EXT. WHITE SHADOW FRAME - SAME

(V.0.FILMMAKER)

I have to believe that it's my
sister's.

CUT TO:

ANGLE ON: THE PENTAGON, THE ROWS OF STRANGER'S GRAVES-
IMPROV. IN CAMERA EDITS- REAL TIME PASSING

(V.O. FILMMAKER)

My parents leave flowers. They
always leave flowers. They have
arranged to be buried in the same
grave as their daughter.

There's the whoosh of cars
on the highway. I am wishing, hard
for silence.

Who's next? Who's next?

CUT TO:

EXT. WHITE SHADOW FRAME - SAME

FADE IN:

EXT. ROAD OUT OF ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY; TO WASHINGTON
D.C. - SAME

ANGLE ON: WINDOW AND PASSING SIGHTS.

SOUND: CAR RADIO, MY HUSBAND'S AND SON'S VOICES. LOCATION.

It is starting to rain again. I am relieved to be out of the cemetery. I feel guilty about being relieved to be out of the cemetery. I am entering a newer, more critical stage of inner turmoil and confusion. All of a sudden, I don't care about the camera anymore. I can't find a level plane in my head. I resort to opening and closing the window and scribbling on my field notes. The window shuts just to catch this first drop of rain. I open it to let in the Washington Monument. I alternately open it close it. As if it were a camera shutter on a frame. We are headed for the Hirschorn Museum and the Washington Mall. I know this. The Potomac River becomes my center of focus. I realize that I must take a trip on the Circle Line around Manhattan. It is at this point that this film is born.

FILMMAKER

It's starting to rain.

(V.O. FILMMAKER)

It was starting to rain.

I felt like singing.

Early in the evening of December 16, 1987, my sister Beth called me. She was in tears. She was in an off-base apartment she said. She said, "Listen!" And she played me a Beatles' song. The song was "You're Going To Lose That Girl". We had a brief conversation. She gave me a number to call her back at. Then we hung up. I was the last person in my family to speak to her.

We never heard from her again.

I checked out the number. For several days I tried to call, but it was disconnected. My mother kept calling and calling that ship all that Christmas. Finally around New Year's she got some ship's hand who said, "I'm afraid I have bad news Mrs. Cameron.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK SHADOW FRAME - SAME

(V.O. FILMMAKER)

The news isn't very good."

FADE IN:

INT. SMITHSONIAN MUSEUM - LATER

PAN ACROSS LOBBY EXHIBITION SPACE

SOUND:LOCATION. STRAINS OF ED SULLIVAN ANNOUNCING THE BEATLES ON HIS TELEVISION SHOW IN 1964. STRAINS OF BEATLES MUSIC ARE JUMP CUT IN AND OUT OF THE LOCATION SOUND.

The histories of objects like trains, guns and fountains take on new significance. A new reality is forming in my head. For the first time, I look at a locomotive and imagine pushing

someone(my sister's killer)underneath it. I look at the guns and for the first time, picking one up to use. I want to annihilate my sister's murderer. These JOLTS give me a nautious, dark feeling in my gut.I don't like it. I can't shake it. I am driven.

(V.O.FILMMAKER)

Whatever happened to first to be notified is next of kin?

CUT TO:

EXT. COLOR CAROUSEL TENT TOP TURNING - LATER SAME DAY

CAMERA ZOOMS IN SLOWLY

SOUND:LOCATION CAROUSEL MUSIC.

I envision the flowing river, the turning of the cemetery's grass & earth in the turning of the carousel. It becomes important to frame the tent top with the small circlular mirrors at it's lip riding the bottom horizontal of the video frame. Thus alluding to sprocket holes and continuing this metaphor through to my artist's medium. Thus creating a post-modern allusion to my earlier filmwork. Thus making this work truly mine. Other on-site thoughts: the sorrow I feel in front of the carousel. The importance of witness, the importance of freedom of choice.

(CAMERA ADJUSTS; CAMERA ZOOMS IN TO PONIES)

CUT TO:

EXT. WASHINGTON MONUMENT - SAME

PAN UP; LOW ANGLE; JUMP CUT THE SAME- IN CAMERA EDIT

SOUND:LOCATION. CAROUSEL MUSIC.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOT DOG VENDOR/ WASHINGTON MALL - SAME

CLOSE SHOT ON SERVING WINDOW

SOUND: LOCATION. CAROUSEL MUSIC.

Phil and Andrew are getting lunch. I am too disturbed to eat. Everything has taken on strange significance: even the money exchange through the window for their hot dog. ANDREW COMES TOWARD MY CAMERA.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAROUSEL TURNING - SAME

MEDIUM SHOT: CAROUSEL WITH PONIES

SOUND: SAME

Real time recording of movement. Small mirrors like sprocket holes line the top horizontal of the frame. Camera pans across riders l-r, then r-l, pans up, holds on top of carousel tent turning. This starts to resemble the Capitol Dome. Those days of marching on Washington during the late 1960s.

CUT TO:

EXT. PATH TO CAPITOL - SAME

CAMERA ZOOMS IN TO CAPITOL DOME. PAN UP TO SKY; REVERSE ANGLE ON: WASHINGTON MONUMENT. SWING BACK AROUND IN A FULL CIRCLE. USE FULL LENGTH OF ARMS.

SOUND: SAME. WIND IN CAMERA MIKE. AND MY FOOTSTEPS.

The camera movement must give the viewer the feeling of being dragged along the ground. Things appear to lose their normal, safe bearing. The monument and clouds turn upside down. The sense of gravity is disrupted.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIRSCHORN SCULPTURE GARDEN - SAME

MEDIUM SHOT: USE ZOOM AND IN-CAMERA EDITS; IMPROV MONTAGE

SOUND: SAME. STRAINS OF BEATLES' MUSIC & FANS SCREAMING.

The medium and medium close shots focus on broken elements of the human form in the context of the spring landscape of the garden. A foot is isolated above a brick path. A hand is isolated against an ivy-covered wall. The wind is seen in the moving pink cherry blossoms. Giant goldfish in a deep blue

garden pond appear to be dead stiff. But they move. This galls me. The most ominous item in the garden is the patch of a ship's hull, with a porthole, on an open frame. Shipwreck?

CUT TO:

INT. DRAWINGS ON EXHIBIT AT HIRSCHORN MUSEUM - LATER

CLOSE UP; EDIT IN-CAMERA

SOUND: STRAINS OF BEATLES' MUSIC & FANS SCREAMING.M.O.S.

There is a picture of a man within a target eying a target, pistol in hand. There is a picture of the Grim Reaper, juggling a split reel which seems to evolve around him, in the path of the juggle, through a series of skulls. THERE IS A NEGATIVE OF THE INTERIOR OF A FLOODED SHIP.

(V.O.FILMMAKER)
The eye... The eye...

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACK SHADOW FRAME -SAME

SOUND: MIKE BEING DROPPED INTO AN UNDERWATER BOX.

(V.O. FILMMAKER)
The eye has no shadow.
All children
of the moon, and of the sun
the earth, the water
the air
own no shadow.

FADE IN:

INT. COLLAGE OF DEAD LEAVES, GARBAGE, BETH'S PHOTO -SAME

CLOSE UP ON LEAVES, DIRTY RUBBER COCK TOY

(V.O. FILMMAKER)
Shadow itself has no shadow.

Shadow lives in the forest. It often gets knocked, torn. It trips again and again. It falls it's full length on the ground. But it does not cry out. Shadow has no voice. It goes back to the forest. It is always wathcing. If you open your eyes in your sleep, shadow is there. It has already stolen back like a thief. It comes sliding right up behing the storyteller. *It has already stolen back like a thief.* And now it is spying on you. *And now it is spying on you.* The eye has no shadow. But it sees shadow.

FADE OUT.

EXT. BLACK SHADOW FRAME - NIGHT

(V.O. FILMMAKER)

The eye has no shadow, but it sees shadow- stirring the embers until the log on the hearth crumbles without a sound and falls to ash. Ash has no shadow either. That is why shadow is blind.

FADE IN:

Ash has no shadow either. That is why shadow is blind.

CUT TO:

EXT. WHITE SHADOW FRAME - SAME

(V.O. FILMMAKER)

For it's eyes are two small heaps of ash. Shadow is a fall. And so, when the fires are out, shadow is blind. That is why a person keeps and eye on his shadow.

CUT TO:

INT. COLLAGE OF DEAD LEAVES, GARBAGE, BETH'S PHOTO -SAME
 CLOSE UP ON BETH'S PHOTO UNDER THE LEAVES

(V.O. FILMMAKER)

When he wakes up. He is careful
 not to step on it when he gets up.
 It could prick him. Or bite him.
 But shadow says nothing. It has no
 voice. But there is no need to
 fear. It is not death. That's
 clear, because every morning ther
 is a shadow. And shadow never says
 a thing. While death, when it
 comes, cries out.

FADE OUT.

EXT. BLACK SHADOW FRAME - SAME

SOUND: JET FLYING OVERHEAD.

(V.O. FILMMAKER)

Here it is in a mask.

It follows men, everywhere, even
 to war. But no one can fight
 shadow.

FADE IN:

INT. COLLAGE OF DEAD LEAVES, GARBAGE, BETH'S PHOTO - SAME

CLOSE UP ON SHELLS AND FACELESS OBJECTS WITH HAIR.

(V.O. FILMMAKER)

It needs no ornament.

*But no one can fight shadow.
 But no one, but no one, but no one
 can fight shadow.
 Shadow, shadow.*

FADE OUT.

EXT. BLACK SHADOW FRAME - SAME

(V.O. FILMMAKER)

What is shadow? In the vcrackling
coals, is it the spark? What is
shadow? The spark has no shadow.

FADE IN:

INT. COLLAGE OF DEAD LEAVES, GARBAGE, BETH'S PHOTO - SAME

CLOSE UP ON PHOTO OF BETH UNDER THE LEAVES.

(V.O. FILMMAKER)

The eye has no shadow. But shadow
is in the eye. It is the pupil.
Every breath stirs to life. It is
a game. It is a dance. Go home and
build a fire. The eye has no
shadow. But shadow is in the eye.
Behold once more: shadow. *Shadow.*

FADE OUT.

EXT. BLACK SHADOW FRAME - SAME

SOUND:Voice. Crickets in the forest.

FLASH FADE IN:

INT. COLLAGE OF DEAD LEAVES, GARBAGE, BETH'S PHOTO - SAME

CLOSE UP ON SHELLS AND FACELESS OBJECTS WITH HAIR.

(V.O. FILMMAKER)

Shadow

FLASH FADE OUT.

EXT. BLACK SHADOW FRAME - SAME

SOUND: CRICKETS IN FOREST

(V.O. FILMMAKER)

Shadow

FADE IN:

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FADE OUT.

BLACK

SOUND: JET FLYING OVERHEAD-- R-L SCREEN

DISSOLVE TO:

BLACK

SOUND: SILENCE

The Museum of Modern Art Department of Film

"WHAT'S HAPPENING"

A weekly program (Thursdays at 3:00 and 6:00) of films and videos dealing with domestic and foreign social and political issues.

October 22 at 3:00 and 6:00 PM Program in Titus 2

CONFIDENTIAL: DO NOT DUPLICATE. 1991. By Donna Cameron. Courtesy of The Circulating Film & Video Library, MoMA. 55 minutes. Video.

Donna Cameron is a recognized avant-garde filmmaker who, for the past thirteen years, has been creating what she terms "paper emulsion films -- made by gluing photographs and other visual fragments onto chemically treated acetate. She has also worked as a photojournalist for The Miami Herald and other newspapers.

In CONFIDENTIAL: DO NOT DUPLICATE, which is a personal documentary/meditation on the death of her sister, she describes the film as "what one feels, having to survive a loved one who is violently murdered, whose body is found with nothing to identify it but teeth and fingerprints." It is deliberately filmed as a home video and incorporates the familiar elemental sounds and sights (wind, water, traffic) into the picture and dialogue, alluding to the many levels on which a person is affected by such a tragedy.

WHAT'S HAPPENING? provides an opportunity for independent films and videos dealing with current issues, often from particular points of view, to be made available to the public. The opinions and interpretations expressed in these films and videos are those of the makers as are the statements in the program notes. The screening of the films and videos and the distribution of the notes do not constitute an endorsement of the maker's views by The Museum of Modern Art.

The Museum's film program is made possible in part through the support of the Roy and Niuta Titus Fund, the National Endowment of the Arts, and with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.

A Video by Donna Cameron
(Distributed by The Museum of
Modern Art, Circulating
Film and Video Library)

"Confidential: Do Not Duplicate" is a powerful and moving experience. In my general understanding the artist works alone and rarely achieves any level of synergy with the sum total of all the aims of an exhibit.

Your work superseded our general expectations for the show. It surprised and astounded many of us with its Chills of Truth. It's time we got back on track in the context of Art and Content. Bravery, fortitude, generosity and wisdom are important values to share with the art public...

Rationally, the very personal topic of the death of a loved one is a difficult subject for one to image in a work of fine art. It is obvious to me that you succeeded, with grace. Thank you for sharing this with us."

Charles Mingus III
Artist-Curator
"Reflections:
A Legacy Unearthed,
Discovery of the
Duane St. Burial Site"
New York

"Donna Cameron's film "Confidential: Do Not Duplicate", a story of murder--her sister's unexplained disappearance from the U.S. Navy-- is so insistently honest about how this affected her, that to see it is to enter it with her and experience personally an almost unbearable sadness.

Cameron's unguarded honesty shows how a life is lived with pain, sometimes heavy, sometimes just an echo. The survivor knows it will be there always. Yet, in all this, Cameron begs no pity, pulls no cliched heartstrings. The viewer must react alone.

Closing scenes of the search through the obscene white maze of Arlington Cemetery to find the numbered marker of 22-year-old Beth are stunning---and true horror."

Therese Schwartz
Artist

"It is rare to see a personal work that is this innovative and captivating as well as emotionally powerful."

Lorie Novak
Artist

"A very moving work!"

Larry Kardish
Film Curator and
Director of Exhibitions
The Museum Of Modern Art
New York

"It is so powerful, I felt heartsick afterwards."

Kathryn Rodgers
Film Publicist
Canadian Filmmakers'
Distribution Center
Toronto, Canada

"Powerful!"

Richard Herskowitz
Curator
Cornell Cinema
Ithaca, NY