

THE STUFF OF LIFE

TREATMENT

BEFORE READING THE TREATMENT:

Imagine being on a runway looking down the tarmac facing an aeroplane in the distance. It's out of focus the heated air around it shimmering, the sound distant, muffled. It doesn't feel in real time. It's heading towards you. As the plane picks up speed the noise becomes more distinct. The image of the plane becomes more and more clear. It's now screaming towards you, the speed picking up incredible velocity. As it takes off and rockets just over your head, everything is immediately clear, details distinct, the noise crashing, the impact overwhelming. The plane now feels in real time, every detail jumps into focus. In an instant it's over your head and away. You are left standing.

That's how we imagine the film will feel like.

THE PLOT:

The camera is pointing up to the ceiling. It's a stationary, locked off view, wide angled but indistinct. Out of focus. The space is white. Tiled. We are aware there are people but only as blurred visions. Peripheral visions. Drops of water in ultra slow motion, slowly becoming a beautiful viscous plume gradually cascading down towards you. It's beautiful, the light shimmering. This is the stuff of life. It splashes down, all around your vision, gorgeous. Magnificent. Life giving.

Far in the distance there is a sound. It's indistinct, a rumbling force, but it's growing, like the plane on the runway. Relentless.

The camera gently explores the slow-motion water. Water and light. Strange, enchanting shapes. Side view, the water hits the side profile. We make out a face masked by stretched, black material. The face moves up into the water, we think it is an embrace, drinking the water in. The sound grows. Becoming more distinct. Tense. Gurgles. Slowly speeding up. Shouting behind the strange breathing, some kind of spluttering. It begins to sound like drowning, but you are not quite sure. Building. Building. Speeding up. Gagging. We begin to hear distinct sounds for the first time.

"I want names!" crashes out of the accelerating muffled noise.

For the first time the camera shudders. "**NAMES!**" The sound is racing to a screaming climax. Now we can hear everything – the water, the retching, the screaming, the gagging, the choking, the struggling, and the shouting. The water speeds up exponentially, slowly at first but then rapidly faster, faster, faster! Crashing into real time.

Bang!!!

We jump into real time.

Now the sound of water is the ugliest sound in the world. The camera jumps back in an instant. This is now going to be a 10 sec sequence. No more. But it's like a runaway train - unstoppable. No longer stationary. No longer blurred. Everything in detail. Crashing into the scene. Suddenly we are looking from above, the side. All angles. Balaclavad men are screaming, shouting. Forcing water over the spluttering, struggling, shackled prisoner.

The prisoner forced onto his back, arching, gasping for life. Water pouring over his gauzed face. His body thrashing. Heaving for breath. The camera tries to force its way in but is knocked back.

“Names! Names! Names! Names!”

Crash to black.

Unsubscribe.

The unsubscribe logo counts down the list and stops on Waterboarding. All we hear is unsteady, shallow breathing.

Silence

FILM CONCEPT

Following *Waiting For The Guards*, this film brings interrogator and prisoner together in a shocking and violent way. As it is, for real. The dramatic concept is to lull the viewer into something and then bring them into a very different reality.

We start with something beautiful. Water is the stuff of life. Our most precious thing. We spend time visually being entranced by the water in slow motion as the sound creeps up on us. As we still see the beauty, the sound increasingly, rapidly becomes more frantic. Getting faster and faster till we hit real time and jump out of the beauty into the shocking brutality that is waterboarding.

We actually only see the interrogation for a fraction of time at the end but we become slowly aware of what is happening from the beginning. Even though we can't see we see it, we see it in our imagination making it all the more a stronger experience.

MUSIC/ SOUND CONCEPT

Taking the sound of the water, the gurgles, gasps for breath, the muffled shouting and slowing down, finding beautiful sounds, harmonics, creating a tantalising ambient sound that gradually but then exponentially grows faster like a screaming jet coming at you, becoming thunderous like a tidal wave rushing past till we jump into real time. The sound hits us, and is past us in a second. Leaving us in silence that is broken by sonic residue vanishing into the distance.

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