

FUTURE PAST

by

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FADE IN:

INT. AN OLD APARTMENT BLOCK - DAY

A narrow corridor, numbered rooms on either side. The walls are painted off-white. One of the doors is marked "308".

A telephone shrills offscreen.

DEE DEE (VO)
Hello? Oh, hi! You got my
message?

INT. DEE DEE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The apartment walls on the other side of the door are covered with dozens of posters - pop stars, models, cars, sports, films. A shaded lamp stands on a green card table. A bamboo chair stands at each of three sides of the table.

DEE DEE (VO)
Yeah? He turned up? I didn't
think he had the balls. Maybe I
should cross my own palm with
silver!

A bead curtain shifts in a draft. On the other side:

INT. DEE DEE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

DEE DEE lazes on a bed in sunlight from a window. She is slim, wears bright clothes. Her hair, long and WHITE, is fastened with a DISTINCTIVE HAIR BAND. She holds a telephone to one ear. Watches a monitor on the wall.

DEE DEE
Listen, they got some nice stuff
in at that bamboo place. Yeah,
I got some chairs. Easy to
move. Next to nothing.

INSERT - THE MONITOR

Shows a black-and-white view of the entrance door to the apartment block and intercom.

DEE DEE (OS)
I suppose. It doesn't look like
much is going to - hang on -

A shadow moves across the scene. The shape of a man bulks into view. He wears a heavy coat and a brimmed hat. His gloved fingers peruse the intercom buttons.

DEE DEE (OS)

Come on... come on... yes!

BACK TO SCENE

The intercom buzzes. Dee Dee leans forward, presses a button.

DEE DEE

Yes? Who is it?

TRAFFIC NOISE can be heard through the intercom.

STRANGER (VO)

You should know.

DEE DEE

(into the phone)

I've got a right one here. What the hell. Can't afford to say no, can we?

She presses another button.

On the monitor: the man pushes open the door, disappears inside.

Dee Dee glances at a clock.

DEE DEE

Listen, I got two minutes before this guy - yeah, on his way up. Sounded young. From up North, maybe.

As she talks, Dee Dee gets up from the bed, moves to a dressing table mirror, uses her free hand to comb her hair. Glances at the clock again.

DEE DEE

Something funny about - just listen, will ya! He's wearing a coat, gloves, and it must be - what, twenty degrees? What? Never mind that. Ring me in half an hour, all right? Gotta go.

She puts down the phone and the comb, smooths down her clothes, looking critically in the mirror.

DEE DEE
 (to herself)
 Yeah, lift's out.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - SAME

Through the door is a gloomy hallway. An elevator has an "out of order" sign on it. TRAFFIC NOISE is muted. Our view moves towards a

STAIRWELL

DEE DEE (VO)
 Watch the steps. Mind the rail.

Half way up a flight of stone steps, the handrail has broken away from the wall, leaving a jagged edge protruding.

DEE DEE (VO)
 Turn left, not right. That's it.

At the top of the third flight of steps is a SIGN, arrow left rooms 300-310, arrow right rooms 311-320. Our view turns left into the narrow corridor.

INT. DEE DEE'S APARTMENT - SAME

Dee Dee walks through the bead curtain, across the postered room, to the main apartment door.

DEE DEE
 ... nine... eight....seven....
 don't disturb Mrs T for Christ's
 sake, we'll have no peace....
 three... two....

She flings open the door. A man is approaching, just a pace away. Doorframe, the man's shape, and the white corridor beyond flash negative. White turns black; dark turns white.

Dee Dee staggers.

DEE DEE
 Shit. Christ, not.....

Her hair swings wildly, black against a white floor.

EXT/INT. BIG HOUSE ENTRANCE (FLASHBACK)

Young Dee Dee, long dark hair swinging wildly, staggers through the entrance door into the arms of a POLICEMAN. She wears the same type of DISTINCTIVE HAIRBAND as she is in the present.

DEE DEE (VO)
..... again.

POLICEMAN
Careful, careful. What's it
you're after?

An OLDER MAN enters the entrance hall behind the policeman. His face is drawn, worried. Young Dee Dee jerks away from the policeman. Reaches behind to steady herself.

OLDER MAN
Who is it? Is it.....? Oh, Dee
Dee. Have you - have you heard
the news?

Young Dee Dee's hand presses against a row of hanging coats. Her eyes widen in shock.

YOUNG DEE DEE'S CLAIRVOYANT VISION - A FOREST

A thin arm, bent awkwardly, juts up from the ground. The ground is covered with leaves. The arm is bare apart from a torn scrap of white blouse, smeared with earth or blood.

OLD MAN (VO)
We can't find Lucy.

YOUNG DEE DEE (VO)
Lucy?

Two fingernails are torn, hanging from broken fingers.

OLD MAN (VO)
(with sudden hope)
Yes. She disappeared last
night. Do you know where she
is, Dee Dee? Have you seen her?

BACK TO FLASHBACK

Young Dee Dee squeezes her eyes shut and shakes her head.

OLD MAN

No?

POLICEMAN

You all right, miss?

OLD MAN

Jeff said he saw her going
towards the town.

(an afterthought)

Jeff's my son.

POLICEMAN

Yes, sir.

OLD MAN

If some bastard's.....

POLICEMAN

Yes, sir. I'll take care of
this, sir, if I may. Would you
come with me, miss, Dee Dee, is
it? I just want to ask a few
questions.

The old man turns away. Young Dee Dee levers herself upright unsteadily.

POLICEMAN

Let's go in here.

He pushes open a door, which swings open and BUMPS against the wall. BRIGHT LIGHT floods through from the other side of the doorway.

END FLASHBACK

INT. DEE DEE'S APARTMENT - DAY

The door to the apartment swings open and BUMPS against the wall. The BRIGHT LIGHT of Dee Dee's flashback fades. Dee Dee levers herself upright unsteadily and forces a smile.

STRANGER

You Deborah?

DEE DEE

Yes. Please come in.

She stands to one side as the stranger pushes past. Her nose wrinkles as she smells him.

DEE DEE
Please sit down. Can I take
your coat?

STRANGER
No.

DEE DEE
Have you come far?

He gazes incuriously about the room as Dee closes the door.

DEE DEE
It's very warm, isn't it?

Still no answer. He sits down, carefully places gloved hands on the green card table. Dee Dee sits opposite, switches on the table lamp.

STRANGER
I want -

A sudden raucous blare of horns from the street below.

DEE DEE
- to know your future. Of
course.

STRANGER
No. Not exactly.

He glances down at his hands, catches sight of a stack of calling cards.

INSERT - THE CALLING CARD

"Mme Dupres
Psychic and Clairvoyant
308 High View
Tel: 444 7012
No appointment necessary"

BACK TO SCENE

DEE DEE
You called me Deborah.

STRANGER

Yes.

DEE DEE

It doesn't say Deborah on my card. It doesn't say Deborah in the phone book, either.

STRANGER

Yes, uh, a friend recommended you to me.

DEE DEE

A friend? That's nice. Fame but no fortune, that's what you get in this business. A friend? I think you are missing someone, right?

His eyes widen and he freezes momentarily.

STRANGER

What makes you think that?

DEE DEE

Because it's my business to know. I should know, isn't that what you told me? But....

She looks down, picks at the material of her dress.

DEE DEE

.... you need to cross my palm. It doesn't have to be silver these days.

He stares at her but she doesn't look up. He makes an impatient gesture, fumbles awkwardly in his inside pocket.

STRANGER

Fuck.

And then pulls off his left glove and tries again. This time he retrieves a wallet and opens it.

Dee Dee glances up as he opens the wallet to extract some notes, then quickly looks down again.

STRANGER

This do?

Dee looks up, reaches out and grasps the notes. Her eyes widen and she gives a strangled cry.

DEE DEE'S VISION

Something black streaked with red swirls closer very quickly. A bright glint flashes top left of the vision.

INT. CINEMA (FLASHBACK)

In silence, the scene flashes negative: white is black, black turns white. The seats, carpets and walls are white. The movie screen is dark. Cinema-goers, leaving at the end of a performance, are silhouetted.

Young Dee Dee stumbles, almost falls. Her hair, dark with white streaks, swings wildly. She is wearing a distinctive hair band.

YOUNG MAN

Y'all right?

Sound and normal vision rush back, a hubbub of voices over muted music.

YOUNG DEE DEE

Lucy? No.

YOUNG MAN

What?

YOUNG DEE DEE

It's another bastard negative.

YOUNG MAN

(uneasily)

Sure.

Young Dee Dee stumbles again, slides to a sitting position against a wall, clasps her arms round her knees. Her eyes are wide and staring.

YOUNG DEE DEE

It's dark. There's no room. No room. There's something. It's.... it's.....

She strains as if she is trying to see.

YOUNG DEE DEE

It's a watch. Oh, sweet Jesus.

YOUNG MAN

I'll go get someone, shall I?

He makes as if to leave, but Dee Dee clutches at his arm. The few remaining cinema-leavers look at them curiously as they exit.

YOUNG DEE DEE

It's a watch. There's the hand.
There's the arm. It's inside a
car trunk. Not Lucy, no, not
Lucy, that was years ago, don't
you see?

Her eyes momentarily focus on the young man, who swallows nervously and nods.

YOUNG DEE DEE

There's no room. She's all
folded up. Oh Jesus, her
throat, the blood.

Moving jerkily, eyes staring, she mimics holding someone's head and drawing a knife across their throat, left-handed, right to left.

YOUNG DEE DEE

That's it. Oh no, no, not
another one.

She gags, bangs her head on her knees, and starts to wail. The young man, freed from her grasp, takes a step back.

YOUNG MAN

I'll go - I'll go -

He turns and runs out of the now deserted cinema, followed by young Dee Dee's screams.

END FLASHBACK

INT. DEE DEE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Dee Dee is grasping the notes in her hand, shaking her head violently.

STRANGER

No? Not enough?

DEE DEE

What? Oh, yes. Yes, sorry. I was thinking about something else.

She rubs the back of her hand shakily across her forehead.

DEE DEE

This is fine. Excuse me a minute, will you?

She stands, slips back through the bead curtain, winces in the brighter light. Thrusts the notes into a box at the bottom of the bed. Stands for a moment, leaning heavily on her arms, head down. TRAFFIC NOISE is louder than in the interview room.

DEE DEE

The car boot fucking murder. What was her name? Jesus, I better give this up.

She sighs, straightens, and turns to look through a small hole in the wall where she sees

The stranger sitting motionless, staring at his gloved hands resting on the table.

DEE DEE

Don't like posters, huh? Okay, better get to it.

She returns through the bead curtain, sits back down, holds out her hands, palm up.

DEE DEE

Okay, give me your hands.

He slowly lifts his hands and places them in hers.

DEE DEE

That's it. Mmmm. It usually works better without gloves, but never mind. Let's try anyway.

She pretends to close her eyes, but she can still see the stranger through her lashes.

STRANGER

What can you see?

DEE DEE

There's something missing. Yes?
No, not something, someone.
Someone is missing, yes?
Someone.... not old. It could
be a woman.

She continues to watch him through fluttering lashes. He does not react.

DEE DEE

It could be a woman. It's
not... not clear. A woman,
maybe. A friend, for sure. Am
I right?

STRANGER

You tell me.

DEE DEE

A friend, then. You want to
know if.... this friend, is in
your future. Am I right?

An expression of satisfaction crosses his face.

STRANGER

You're fishing. You can't see
her, can you?

Dee Dee's eyes spring open.

DEE DEE

What?

STRANGER

It doesn't matter.

DEE DEE

What do you mean?

STRANGER

It doesn't matter.

DEE DEE

But, but you paid me.

STRANGER

I said, it doesn't matter!

DEE DEE

It's your money.

The stranger gets up from the chair and starts to turn away. Dee Dee starts in sudden shock.

DEE DEE'S VISION

The old man, turning away behind the policeman. The shape of his face, seen sideways, is almost identical to that of the stranger.

BACK TO SCENE

DEE DEE

Carline.

The stranger turns back sharply.

STRANGER

What did you say?

DEE DEE

I - nothing.

STRANGER

You said a name.

DEE DEE

Did I?

He takes a stride towards her, and she scrambles up and backs warily so that her bamboo chair is between them.

STRANGER

Don't play games, bitch. You said a name. What was it?

DEE DEE

I -

(sighs)

- Carline. I said Carline. I didn't know I said it.

STRANGER

Carline's in hell.

DEE DEE

Jeff said he saw her going
towards the town.

STRANGER

I was tired of Carline.

DEE DEE

But she wasn't found anywhere
near the town. She was down by
the river, under the leaves.

STRANGER

Why the fuck did you have to go
to that cinema? I saw you
there, you know. Nearly got to
you in the crowd. Follow that
car, I told the fucking taxi-
driver, just like in the films.

DEE DEE

You bastard. You utter bastard.
It was you.

He grins.

DEE DEE

She was your sister! She was a
little girl!

He blinks, momentarily disconcerted, then grins again.

STRANGER

Oh, you mean poor little Lucy.
I remember she struggled and
screamed for quite a while after
- you know.

He bunches his right hand and makes a slashing movement with
his left. Then fumbles in his coat pocket.

STRANGER

Anyway, I needed to know whether
you were going to screw me up
again. And you weren't going
to, were you? You should never
of said that name. Shit. Where
is it?

Angrily, he pulls at buttons to open his coat. As it swings
open, a blood-splattered t-shirt comes into view.

DEE DEE

Jesus.

STRANGER

Yeah, practice makes perfect.

He looks down, fumbling with his gloved hand, starts to draw out a black-hilted knife. Dee Dee suddenly picks up the bamboo chair and brings it down on him just as he looks up. One leg of the chair bounces off his head, another gouges out his left eye.

The stranger screams and falls back. The knife flies out of his hand. Dee Dee steps forward and kicks viciously at his crotch. The stranger gags and clutches at himself, falling to the floor. Dee Dee kicks at his face.

DEE DEE

For Lucy!

The stranger writhes, trying to escape her kicks.

DEE DEE

For Lucy!

The stranger curls into a foetal position, trying to protect his head and groin.

DEE DEE

For the
 (kicks him)
 fucking car boot
 (kicks him)
 murder victim!

She kicks him once more then, panting, falls back against the table. The stranger, sobbing and groaning, cautiously unwraps enough of his arms to watch her.

DEE DEE

You turned my hair white, you
 bastard!

Loud knocking on the wall.

NEIGHBOUR (OS)

Hey, keep it down in there!

Dee Dee presses the back of her hand to her mouth, suppressing hysterical giggles. She and the stranger stare at each other, sharing a moment of empathy.

Dee Dee steps forward again, half-raising her arm. The stranger scrabbles weakly, smearing blood on the floor.

DEE DEE

Get out.

He sits, pushes with his feet. When his back meets the door he levers himself upright. Retches, doubled over, then slowly straightens. His one eye bulges fearfully.

DEE DEE

Go on, get out!

He turns sideways and pulls open the door. Lunges through, tripping and almost falling. Lurches, crablike, down the corridor, leaving a bloody trail on wall and carpet. Reaches the stairwell.

DEE DEE

(murmuring to herself)

Mind the step.

He vanishes down the stairwell in a confusion of limbs and long coat. Slowly, she reaches out, closes her apartment door.

SERIES OF SHOTS

- A) Dee Dee stares sightlessly at the closed door. She wrinkles her nostrils and looks down at her feet, painted in drying gore. Purses her lips disapprovingly.
- B) The stranger plunges down the stairwell, caroming from side to side. He keens with pain.
- C) Dee Dee turns slowly, sees the bamboo chair lying on its side. She moves forward and picks it up carefully, then stands motionless looking at the light pooling on the green card table.

DEE DEE

Mind the rail.

- D) The stranger crashes round a corner into the broken handrail. It lances into his side and he screams. He yanks backward frantically, falls onto the steps.

- E) Dee Dee catches sight of something on the floor. Approaches cautiously, bends down. It is the stranger's knife. She reaches out, then changes her mind. Lets her arm fall to her side. Straightens, stands motionless again, staring down at the knife.
- F) The stranger retches, spitting blood. Hauls himself to his feet using the broken rail. Staggeres down the last few steps into the entrance hall.
- G) Dee Dee starts to shiver uncontrollably. Backs away from the knife, shaking her head.
- H) The stranger rests briefly against the door, then braces himself, pulls it open. Staggeres out into bright sun and roaring TRAFFIC NOISE.
- I) Dee Dee tugs open the blinds, letting in sunlight. Presses her forehead against the window.

DEE DEE

Mind the traffic.

- J) Dee Dee sees the stranger lurching into view in the street below. His long coat swirls. He hides his wrecked features behind his forearms. The long coat trips him and he flails wildly into the road.
- K) Before he falls onto the tarmac, a car hits him and he somersaults into the air. For a moment, he sees a kaleidoscope of traffic, sky, buildings. Then he sees a reprise of Dee Dee's earlier vision:
- Something black (the tarmac) streaked with red (blood) swirls closer very quickly. A bright glint flashes at the top left of the vision (sun glinting on nearby car).
- L) Silence. The traffic has stopped. Dee Dee can see the stranger's spread-eagled body in the middle of a circle of stationary cars and shocked onlookers.

INT. DEE DEE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Dee Dee closes her eyes.

FADE TO BLACK.

The telephone shrills. It rings half a dozen times before it is picked up.

DEE DEE (VO)
Hello? Oh yes. Yes, he's gone
now. Yes, he's gone.

In the distance, a siren wails, coming closer and louder.