

Analog Music Armor

Travis Rime Brooks / Crankstrap LLC

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT — BEDROOM — DAWN

A YOUNG WOMAN is sitting upright on the edge of a bed. She's soaking wet -- a damp white nightgown clings to her body and her dark hair is messy and matted to her forehead.

Water is dripping down her face and limbs onto the floor, where her feet are resting in a small puddle. Her hands are folded in her lap and she's staring straight ahead at a large grandfather clock on the far wall.

Soft, pre-dawn light fills the small space through translucent drapes. Other than the clock and the bed, the room is entirely bare of any furnishings or decorations.

She remains motionless. She does not blink.

The grandfather clock suddenly pierces the silence with a series of loud abrasive CHIMES but the YOUNG WOMAN does not react.

After the clock falls silent again, she finally stirs to life, takes a few deep breaths, then stands and walks out of the room.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT — BATHROOM SHOWER — A FEW MOMENTS LATER

The YOUNG WOMAN is showering. She stares straight ahead, like before, as water flows through her hair and down her body.

Suddenly, she reaches for her abdomen, clearly in discomfort. The pain swells, moves from her stomach (her womb) up her torso, which she traces externally with her hands. As it passes across her chest and nears her throat, she starts to gag – subtly at first, then more and more violently – until a white object emerges between her lips. She raises her hand to her mouth to extract it, revealing a pair of white iPhone earbuds.

She pulls them all the way out, along with the attached cord, and drops it all to her feet. She turns off the water and exits the frame.

We follow the remaining drips of water slowly downward to the bottom of the tub . . . and see that the YOUNG WOMAN was standing amongst countless pairs of identical iPhone earbuds, all clumped together in tangled white heaps around the drain.

We continue downward, through the web of cords and earbuds, into the darkness of the drain . . .

INTO:

INT. APARTMENT – SHOWER DRAIN – CONTINUOUS

We descend deeper, leaving the light of the bathroom behind as an abrasive noise crescendos . . .

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT — KITCHEN TABLE — LATER

The YOUNG WOMAN is sitting at the kitchen table, still wet from the shower and without clothes. There are a number of pots in front of her, all filled with soil, and a flower is growing out of the one closest to her.

The table is also set with plates and utensils.

After a moment, she reaches for the flower, uproots it, places it onto the plate in front of her. She raises her utensils and cuts the flower into pieces, then starts to eat them with her fork.

We notice some ambient musical tones have started to fill her space.

INT. APARTMENT — ENTRYWAY — LATER

The YOUNG WOMAN, still damp from the shower, is putting on her clothes. They are black and contrast sharply against the surrounding whiteness of the apartment.

Next to her, on the floor, we notice several thick spindles of vinyl records, also black, along with a clunky portable record player and matching, equally clunky headphones.

She gets fully dressed, picks up the spindles – which, given her amount of strain to lift them, are obviously heavy – and puts them on her body in such a way that allows them to be worn, like a fat suit, cumbersome and restrictive.

Somehow, with all the vinyl now in place, she manages to retrieve the record player from the floor and hang it around her neck [so that it's positioned in front of her and resting perpendicularly against her abdomen like a food vendor's tray], along with the headphones, which she places securely over her ears.

With everything in position, she laboriously searches for, locates, and retrieves a specific album from the spindles, then puts it into the player. The vinyl starts to rotate and we hear music. She adjusts her headphones.

CUT TO:

INT. APT BUILDING – COMMON HALLWAY – CONTINUOUS

The YOUNG WOMAN, now VINYL LADY, emerges from behind her apartment door at the end of the hallway -- a lengthy plain corridor with doors positioned equidistantly on both sides, suggesting lots of apartments identical to hers.

She closes the door behind her, locks it, double-locks it, triple-locks it, turns around, and then, due to the awkward

size and weight of her records, begins a slow, laborious walk down the hallway.

NEIGHBORS start to emerge one by one (never in pairs or groups) from behind their respective doorways, and they're all looking down at the iPhones in their hands. The screens illuminate their faces and the familiar white earbuds connect their ears to their devices, which they hold uniformly against their stomachs like umbilical chords.

The NEIGHBORS move lightly, effortlessly on their feet. Without ever looking up, they weave quickly around VINYL LADY, often bumping into her as they pass, but never acknowledging her (nor anyone else) otherwise.

CUT TO:

INT. APT BUILDING — CROWDED ELEVATOR — MINUTES LATER

VINYL LADY is standing in the middle of a crowded elevator, taking up a disproportionately large amount of space. NEIGHBORS are crammed in around her, still looking down at their screens resting against their stomachs.

With no room to walk, we notice that the NEIGHBORS have started shifting their weight from one foot to the other in unison, back and forth, back and forth, like zombified marching soldiers.

No one interacts or raises their line of sight except VINYL LADY, who is staring forward, like before, listening to the music.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBWAY — MINUTES LATER

VINYL LADY is standing in the middle of a crowded train. COMMUTERS are crammed in around her, all looking down at their screens. Again, no one interacts or raises their line of sight except VINYL LADY, who is staring forward, listening to the music.

CUT TO:

INT. STATION — ESCALATOR / STAIRS — MINUTES LATER

A narrow escalator ascends on one side of the frame, packed single-file with COMMUTERS, all looking down at their belly-button-level screens. On the other side of the frame, VINYL LADY is struggling up the stairs, alone, because she is obviously too wide for the escalator.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE BUILDING — ENTRYWAY — REVOLVING DOOR — LATER

VINYL LADY is slowly rotating through the revolving door, into which she has somehow managed to wedge her record collection.

As she emerges out the other side and enters the lobby, COWORKERS, like the NEIGHBORS & COMMUTERS, rush briskly around her.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE BUILDING — MAIL ROOM — LATER

VINYL LADY — still wearing the record collection, record player, and headphones — is standing alone in the mail room next to a small empty cart.

Packages of various shapes and sizes fall from an opening in the high ceiling and accumulate into a bulging, disorderly pile of manila packaging next to her.

She switches out the record that is currently in the player for a new one — a slow, inefficient process — and then, as she presses play, new music begins.

She begins to load the cart with things from the pile as additional packages continue to fall from above and tumble downward.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE BUILDING — CUBICLE FARM MONTAGE — LATER

A series of shots: VINYL LADY is pushing her cart through a maze of cubicles, delivering packages to all of her



COWORKERS. They already have mounds of unopened boxes of various sizes on their desks, piling up towards the florescent ceilings and reinforcing the tight claustrophobic boundaries of their workspaces.

VINYL LADY makes the overflowing piles even bigger with her new deliveries as music continues to play.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE BUILDING — MAIL ROOM — LATER

VINYL LADY is refilling her cart with packages for another round of deliveries when she uncovers a large irregular box in a shape she seems to recognize. As she contemplates it, she seems to go somewhere else for a moment, as if reaching deep down inside to the point of losing herself in it.

She suddenly decides to open it, acquiring a kind of energy we haven't seen from her before, which confirms her suspicions -- it's a guitar.

She wanders out of the mail room with it, dragging the cart behind her.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE BUILDING — CUBICLE FARM — CONTINUOUS

VINYL LADY emerges from the mail room and faces all of her COWORKERS in their cubicles. She removes her headphones,

takes off her record player, and sheds her heavy vinyl spindles, then creates an impromptu small platform by overturning the mail cart.

Picking up the guitar, she climbs on top of it and surveys the cubicles extending out in front of her. She pauses a moment, takes a deep breath, and begins to play a song that has been foreshadowed in her headphones . . .

INTO:

INT. OFFICE -- [SONG] LIVE PERFORMANCE -- CONTINUOUS

While VINYL LADY is playing her [SONG], the COWORKERS gradually start to notice something out of the ordinary is happening and remove their earbuds, breaking their trance.

They rise from their chairs, one by one, and start to appear above their cubicles and unopened piles of mail.

VINYL LADY continues her song as the COWORKERS march across the office and gather around her.

They stare at her blankly until the last note of the song rings out and VINYL LADY becomes aware of her surroundings again. The COWORKERS have no visible reaction to the song finishing. They just stand there, staring, rocking from one foot to the other in unison.

She looks at them, hoping for something, vulnerable and exposed, but there is just a long, intense, cryptic moment while her COWORKERS stare her down.

VINYL LADY, losing hope, grows increasingly uncomfortable and eventually starts putting her records back in place on her body, as if to protect herself.

As she reaches for the record player and headphones, a COWORKER, without warning, kicks them violently out of her hands, knocking everything to the floor. Suddenly more COWORKERS start to stomp on them and smash them to pieces.

VINYL LADY tries to stop them but it's too late -- the damage has been done.

The COWORKERS redirect their attention from the remnants of the record player back to her, continuing their intense stare down, but there is more anger in their faces now, threatening that she's next.

VINYL LADY freezes with fear.

In unison, the COWORKERS start to move in on her. Several of them grab hold of some of the records, scrambling to get to her, but she breaks free and runs away as quickly as the weight of her records allow.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE BUILDING — REVOLVING DOOR — A MOMENT LATER

VINYL LADY is rushing through the revolving door. All of the COWORKERS visible behind throughout the building are staring her down, moving slowly in her direction as she exits the lobby.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE OFFICE – CONTINUOUS

Out on the sidewalk in front of the building, VINYL LADY is terrified to realize that all the cars on the street have stopped and the COMMUTERS who were driving them are standing next to their vehicles, staring at her, shifting their weight from one foot to the other.

Then they start to move in her direction. She runs.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY INTO FOREST MONTAGE – LATER

In a sequence of shots: VINYL LADY escapes through a series of increasingly less-populated landscapes, from urban to rural, and everywhere she passes through, there are OTHER PEOPLE staring her down.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST – LATER

VINYL LADY is laboriously making her way through a thick forest, struggling and exhausted . . . but finally, she realizes she is alone, and no one else is left staring at her.

Finally. Alone.

She takes a moment to contemplate what she's done, what this means, and she reacts . . .

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST — EDGE OF FOREST / WATERFRONT — LATER

It's difficult for VINYL LADY to maneuver through the rough terrain, but she continues sluggishly onward until she arrives at edge of a large body of water that blocks her path forward.

The grandfather clock, which we recognize from earlier, is laying near the water's edge, as if it has just washed up on shore.

VINYL LADY approaches it, cautiously tests its stability, and then awkwardly climbs aboard, doing her best to fit inside with all of her records.

She sets off into the water . . .

CUT TO:

EXT. BODY OF WATER - LATER

VINYL LADY is adrift inside the grandfather clock, with no sign of land . . .

She scans the horizon and is shocked to see another woman, VINYL LADY #2, drifting across the water in an identical grandfather clock, just like her.

They make eye contact.

They seem to be perfectly equal counterparts, complete with matching record collections worn in the same way over their clothes, and without a record player nor headphones, except that VINYL LADY #2 is older (as if she could be VINYL LADY #1's mother, perhaps, or another version of herself from the future).

Their respective grandfather clocks float towards each other slowly and eventually make contact.

They stand in unison, as if it's too good to be true, moving cautiously like mirror images. They stare into each other's eyes for a passing moment of shared empathy, of vague recognition, of something . . . and then suddenly begin to remove each other's records, one by one, dropping them down into the water below.

More and more vinyl records get thrown into the water around them and we follow them down below the surface with

a splash. Then, submerged, we watch it sink down into the depths.

A moment later, we resurface to find VINYL LADY #2 all alone, looking frantically about her, terrified by the sudden disappearance of VINYL LADY #1 and struggling in tangled clumps of iPhone earbuds and wires that she is pulling from her body like cobwebs.

She is surprised to suddenly hear CHIME, CHIME, CHIME, start rising from the grandfather clock in which she stands, knocking her more and more off balance as she continues to claw at the white cords.

She falls into the water -

INTO:

INT. HIGHRISE STUDIO APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS / CONTIGUOUS

- and out onto the floor, now VINYL LADY #1, gasping for air. She sits up, soaking wet. She looks around frantically, but there is no sign of VINYL LADY #2.

VINYL LADY #1 is wearing a damp white nightgown that clings to her body and her dark hair is messy and matted to her forehead.

After a few deep breaths, she calms her breathing down and stands. She closes the front panel of the grandfather

clock, which is standing upright across from her, and settles onto the edge of the bed.

Water is dripping down her face and limbs onto the floor, where her feet are now resting in a small puddle. Her hands are folded in her lap. She's staring straight ahead.

Soft, pre-dawn light fills the small space through translucent drapes. Other than the clock and the bed, the room is entirely bare of any furnishings or decorations.

She folds her hands in her lap, staring at the large grandfather clock on the far wall, now closed, and waits.

She remains motionless. She does not blink.

THE END