

THE DREAMS OF THE NIGHT CLEANERS

Exterior. Point of view of a plane moving through clouds. Summer day.

Aerial view of mountains along with forests on the sides of the mountains.

The STORYTELLER in VOICEOVER
Sheltered in the space of a Canadian forest are secrets...stories of the times of public darkness, where the cameras haven't gone...This is a story about dreams and waking nightmares. This is a story about death.

Cut to Exterior. A small plane from late 40's vintage seen flying. Black and white footage.

The STORYTELLER in VOICEOVER continues
...perhaps an unremarkable death.

Interior. Airport hanger. Summer night. Canada

A pan of the interior of the hanger showing a large passenger plane dominating the frame.

Cut to reveal a woman, the STORYTELLER, dressed in overalls, spraying the plane, a large 737. She is a cleaner, but a highly specialized one, washing and buffing not only the exteriors of planes but also the engines, the flaps, and other mechanical workings of the plane. She is talking to someone whose face we don't see.

The STORYTELLER
It's a story about secrets: family secrets, historical secrets.

Interior. Airport terminal.

High angle shot showing activity in the terminal.

Interior. Airlines office. Winter night.

DEVIKA mopping the floor of the office, and USHA, Jeanne's daughter, is working at a computer scheduling crew flight patterns. These two young women are together in the office, but separate, each occupied in their tasks: one at a computer screen, the other, windexing, then eventually, dumping out garbage. Glowing monitors show airlines schedules.

The two women at their work become a series of still images, like paintings, dissolving in costume **from winter, to summer** to imply a sequence of time taking place across distance and time.

The STORYTELLER in VOICEOVER:

This is a story about Usha, who is working as a crew scheduler. As the threat of job loss comes closer, so do the shadows...haunted by the images of her mother, lying in a pool of blood. Haunted by the shadow of her father who died in a plane crash.

Interior. Hallway at night.

DEVIKA moving along, sweeping and pushing her cleaning cart.

The STORYTELLER continues in VOICEOVER

This is a story about Devika, who is working now as a night shift cleaner. It's not what she dreamed of, this work which makes her highly visible, yet invisible. The demands on her and the other workers growing steadily every day.

Interior. Airport terminal. Fall/winter night.

SOUNDS OF AN AIRPORT. A woman, USHA, in her thirties who is Asian but not clearly so, is looking at a monitor showing flight

schedules and time, giving a sense of the relentless, massive scheduling, its electronic timing, as the schedule changes even as we're looking at it. She moves to a telephone booth. USHA is a crew scheduler for a national airline.

The STORYTELLER in VOICEOVER continues:
And the secrets, you see, keep building, until
to not tell it may lose you your life, but to
tell is dangerous, because the telling brings
with it shame...

Interior. The airport hanger. Summer night.

Moving shot panning along the wing of a 767 passenger plane. See again the woman, the STORYTELLER, whose voice we've been hearing. There's a small worktable where she's looking at the objects in front of her--a small statue of Shiva, a number of household and industrial cleansers--piled on a worktable.

The STORYTELLER in VOICEOVER continues:
...job loss...difficulty.

She picks up one of the cleansers, then one of the statues, stops, then picks up the statue. Close-up of the cleanser bottle she's picked up, then extreme close-up. A statue of Shiva is seen beside the cleanser bottle.

The STORYTELLER appears, as if part of a moving label from the cleanser bottle:

The STORYTELLER
A Story of Perseverance
A Story of Visibility and Invisibility
Or is it cleansers? Is this how to begin? With
those figures who change the world?

Full shot of the STORYTELLER mopping seen within a decorative border.

The STORYTELLER continues in VOICEOVER
And one of my household gods, Shiva, the dancing Natarajah, encircled in fire, beside the sink, hears this story unravel as I pace around and around, mop in my hand...thinking and cleaning, cleaning and thinking.

Interior. Kitchen. Summer night. Canada.

A woman, JEANNE, a retired writer/researcher in her sixties, is looking at the screen of a microfilm reader which is old but still clearly functional. Her face shows sadness and horror.

The STORYTELLER continues in VOICEOVER
This is a story about Jeanne, who is writing a speech, about the past which is haunting the present. It's the same story now--she's finding--as the one written in the newspaper headlines so many years ago... And now, her own past too is re-appearing. She's seeing, no, remembering herself lying there...a pool of blood...a story she's never talked about.

Close-up of JEANNE and microfilm reader showing a **Flash of Interior. Tiled floor in a room. Tropical summer day. India (not shown but implied)**. A high angle shot of a woman in blood on a tiled floor (a memory sequence--JEANNE at a younger age) dissolving to a small plane (40's vintage, b & w) seen earlier.

Interior. The airport hanger. Summer night.

The STORYTELLER is making a series of mudras (hand gestures) now directly addressing the fates.

The STORYTELLER continues

Shiva has not yet been named as a cleanser although he's known as the destroyer, the one who changes the nature of matter. What matters.

The scene of the narrator begins to move back in space, bordered now by a starry sky.

The STORYTELLER continues

What matters. Shiva, who dances a new world in with a beat on his drum.

End of introduction.

Interior. Airport terminal. Fall/winter night.

SOUNDS OF AN AIRPORT. A woman, USHA, in her thirties who is Asian but not clearly so, is on the phone. She is looking at her face in the reflection of the phone booth.

USHA
Hi, Ma.

JEANNE
Hello.

USHA
I just thought I'd call before I left. I'll be back in a week....

Interior, Jeanne's Kitchen. Fall/winter night.

JEANNE is on the phone, listening, distractedly.

USHA continues in VOICEOVER
No, it's not such good news.

Interior. Airport terminal. Fall/winter night.

USHA continues

I'm...I'm going off on that training program
that I told you about.

JEANNE

Uhhuh. Yes.

USHA

And my colleagues tell me that there's every
possibility that this is going to be the last
trip that I get to go on.

JEANNE

Oh dear. Do you think you'll try something else
then?

USHA

No, I don't know what I am going to do.

JEANNE

Poor thing.

USHA

Well, it depends on whether we still have jobs.

JEANNE

Mmhh. I understand.

USHA

If we sign with the American airline...

Return to Interior, Jeanne's Kitchen.

JEANNE is on the phone, listening, distractedly.

USHA continues in voiceover
then all of scheduling will go, and we'll all
lose our jobs.

Return to Interior. Airport terminal.

USHA is talking on the phone.

USHA
Anyway, I have to go now--I don't want to miss
my flight.

JEANNE
Yes dear.

USHA
You take care, Ma.

JEANNE
Yes dear. Thank you. I love you.

USHA
Bye.

JEANNE
Bye.

Return to Interior, Jeanne's Kitchen.

JEANNE puts down the phone. Frowns.

Interior. Tiled floor in a room. Tropical summer day. India (not shown but implied).

High angle on WOMAN 1 (JEANNE thirty years ago now looking Usha's present age) lying on a tiled floor, a pool of blood around her waist and legs, a memory image reminiscent of Jeanne at a time when she was in her thirties.

Exterior. Parking lot outside office building.

DEVIKA walks out of the office, across a parking lot to a car, early eighties model Chevy with WOMAN 2 (an extra from the University of Calgary cleaning staff, ESTEL L., who is West Indian), one of Devika's co-workers, also a night cleaner.

Exterior. Car. Dawn.

DEVIKA and WOMAN 2 driving through almost rural looking landscape extending out into prairies of long fields with grasses, but situated close to the airport with a view of the urban downtown sector in the distance and the industrial section of the city closeby.

Hear COUNTRY MUSIC (K. Moses "Chasing Dreams").

DEVIKA, the driver, in VOICEOVER
And you know if they go to contract work. They
say they have to be "competitive."

Interior. Car. Day.

DEVIKA continues
And you know what that means...It means really
cheap labour. So, they'll get rid of us. Then
they'll bring in the contract labour. And
remember what Mike said -- about that second
job he does...

From the point of view of the driver, DEVIKA, see an airplane swoop down crossing the path of the car.

CLOSE-UP on DEVIKA'S face, then pan across horizon to sun just beginning to come up, to reaction shot of WOMAN 2 as DEVIKA speaks.

DEVIKA continues

He said--when they shifted to contract, the white workers were complaining that we are taking their jobs.

See birds in flight along with another plane crossing.

Cut to small plane, 40's vintage, b & w footage in an oval surrounded by family pictures from India, USHA's father's (and Jeanne's husband's) family.

Interior. JEANNE'S Kitchen.

JEANNE & USHA have finished eating and are talking. USHA feels that she is on a trajectory which will repeat her father's story: his movement into job loss, not fitting in, then accident and death. Although she is outwardly calm and very capable, she is like a bomb waiting to go off, ticking. She sees the headline that her mother has been working on. They are having a disagreement about the "Roger" in the headline reporting his death.

Full shot of headline showing age, "Pilot Missing in B.C. Believed to Be Roger Sujir".

USHA in VOICEOVER
Why have they called him "Roger"

Master two shot favouring USHA.

USHA continues
here? His name wasn't Roger.

JEANNE
That's the name he went by here. His name was too difficult for people to pronounce. He liked the name "Roger."

USHA
Why didn't you tell me all of this--all these little secrets.

Master two shot favouring JEANNE.

JEANNE

It wasn't a secret, Usha. We just haven't talked about it.

Close up on USHA.

USHA

I wish I'd known...I wish I could talk to him now, about everything that I'm going through at work.

Close up on JEANNE.

JEANNE (musing not really talking anymore to Usha but now thinking about a speech she's preparing using the archival newspapers)
I wonder how a person feels when they've lost their name.

Close up on USHA.

JEANNE continues in VOICEOVER
I wonder.

Close up on JEANNE.

JEANNE continues

When your father came to Canada, there weren't many people from India here...it was in the early fifties, he was something of a novelty.

Close up on USHA.

USHA

Yes, well maybe that novelty is beginning to wear off.

Close up on JEANNE.

JEANNE

He had such dreams, such hopes, such dreams...Or illusions--

Close up on USHA.

JEANNE continues in VOICEOVER

the dreams that killed him, brought him crashing down.

Close up on JEANNE.

JEANNE continues

He knew the words, but didn't know the signals. He made mistakes. All the familiar signs were missing. It was like--flying blind.

Close up on USHA.

JEANNE continues in VOICEOVER

He seemed to go from disaster, from one to another,

Close up on JEANNE.

JEANNE continues
then finally, he crashed.

Close up on USHA

JEANNE continues in VOICEOVER
Into the mountain.

USHA

I wonder if the same thing will happen to me
too. You know, sometimes when I think that I'm
finally beginning to feel at home, I run into
something that proves me wrong. That tells me

Close up on JEANNE.

USHA continues in VOICEOVER
I will never be at home here. That I am

Close up on USHA.

USHA continues
a stranger here. 'Where are you really from?'
they say to me...

Close up on JEANNE.

USHA continues in VOICEOVER
Wasn't there anyone

Close up on USHA.

USHA continues
he could talk to?

JEANNE turns away, gets up, walks to the stove.
Two shot favouring Jeanne.

JEANNE
He could talk to me. But I didn't understand

Close up on USHA.
Close up on JEANNE.

JEANNE continues in VOICEOVER
still ...don't understand now...

USHA, distracted, moves from the counter over to a table where
JEANNE keeps her research clippings. USHA starts looking at some of
the news-clippings.
Two shot favouring JEANNE.

JEANNE continues
The report from Mackenzie King.

Close up on JEANNE.

JEANNE continues
Direct passage ruling...kept immigration from
India

Close up on USHA.

JEANNE continues in VOICEOVER
restricted from early 1900's to the late
1940's...

Two shot favouring JEANNE.

JEANNE continues
People came here hoping for so much...This
country, at a distance, is a wonderful dream.
Close-up, I began to see the nightmares.

Reverse angle favouring USHA.

JEANNE continues in VOICEOVER
Went through the nightmares.

**Flash of Interior. Tiled floor in a room. Tropical summer day.
India (not shown but implied).**

Low angle on WOMAN 1 (JEANNE thirty years ago now looking Usha's
present age) lying on a tiled floor, a pool of blood around her
waist and legs, a memory image reminiscent of Jeanne at a time
when she was in her thirties.

The STORYTELLER in VOICEOVER
And suddenly a crack of thunder in this summer
night in Canada. This crack of thunder

Cut to a composite image of an aerial shot of green trees with a
lushness to them and at the centre of the image, a mixing bowl. Now
in the mixing bowl is the low angle shot of the WOMAN 1 (JEANNE
thirty years ago--looking Usha's present age). In the background is
a rolling headline from the microfiche reader.

The STORYTELLER continues in VOICEOVER

a call for ... this call

Slow DISSOLVE in the mixing bowl to a winter sky, a blizzard of snow on a dark night enclosed in the mixing bowl.

The STORYTELLER continues in VOICEOVER
a story with diaphanous folds which move and
shudder, roar, echoing the vacuum.

The blizzard of snow becomes full frame.

The STORYTELLER continues in VOICEOVER
The folds of the story

The blizzard DISSOLVES to the pages of an open book. On the right side of the book is the STORYTELLER within the airport hanger. On the left side of the book is a drawing of the Indian goddess, Durga wrestling a buffalo demon.

The STORYTELLER continues
beginning to hide the bones of the dead, the
long dead, the almost dead in a history
stretching back, and which threatens now to
reach forward and

On the left side of the book, the drawing of Durga DISSOLVES to rolling headlines from the microfiche reader.

The STORYTELLER continues
engulf us in its folds of time. And in Canada,
all of us, trapped in here with these indelible
stains...

The headline "History Repeats Itself" comes up full frame.

Return to **Interior, Kitchen. Summer night. Canada.**

On the screen of a microfilm reader are headlines covering the time period of the early 1900's with the focus on the Anti-Asian sentiments on the themes of "they're taking our jobs" and "keep Canada white."

Full frame microfilm headlines.
Reaction shot of JEANNE.
Full frame of microfilm headlines.

JEANNE in VOICEOVER

It's still the same story now, the same things
that people are saying.

JEANNE is slowly turning the microfilm so that the news-stories
move across the screen.

Interior. Jeanne's Kitchen as in Scene #4. Summer night.

JEANNE's face appears in profile looking at the archival footage.
In the background, the curtains are blowing at the window. A WOMAN
appears in an oval on the blowing curtains. JEANNE responds with
surprise.

JEANNE

This woman is doing what I am doing: looking
into the events of the early twentieth century,

Exterior. A mythic landscape. Twilight.

Close shot of a train revealing an industrial landscape with a
billboard containing WOMAN 3 and WOMAN 4 seated in front of
microfilm readers. TITLE in the billboard over the image of
microfilm reading women: THE RECOVERY OF HISTORY.

JEANNE IN VOICEOVER

the time of the report on "Immigration to
Canada From the Orient and Immigration from
India in particular" which Mackenzie King
wrote...leading to changes in immigration

policy...Federally, the direct passage
ruling...

WOMAN 3 is looking at newspapers with microfilm. CLOSE-UP on a page.

See in a close-up of the microfilm the newspapers Jeanne was looking at from the time of 1906-1914 in B.C. covering the threat of Asian immigration.

Behind the headlines are the women from the billboard so that the scene of the past comes alive.

JEANNE continues

These women are finding out how the past is haunting the present...the same stories being repeated, again and again...the need for a new story, one that isn't based on fear...

The importance of understanding, the importance, finally of...love....

DISSOLVE to Exterior. The plane, 40's vintage, b & w footage with the headline cross dissolve which USHA was looking at--"Pilot Missing in B.C. Believed to Be Roger Sujir"

Forest bordered sequence of different archival planes, aerial shot of mountains and clouds, then photographs of the ship the Komagata Maru which Jeanne is researching.

Interior. JEANNE'S Kitchen.

JEANNE looking at the microfilm reader with the photographs of the Komagata Maru and headlines from 1914 reporting its arrival in Vancouver harbour.

SOUND OF A ship, the Komagata Maru. JEANNE turns to search for the source of the sound, reaches out to touch the Komagata Maru as it floats from the back centre of screen out screen left in the kitchen.

JEANNE continues

I think of the reports of the ship, the Komagata Maru's imminent arrival in 1914 being circulated seven weeks prior to its actual arrival in Vancouver harbour--the coming of such large numbers of South Asians, 376, described in the newspapers as a "threatened invasion." ...I can't believe that...

The premier of B.C., in 1914, Richard McBride, just prior to the arrival of the ship, the Komagata Maru, stated (in the Times, London, April 1914) the following:

To admit Orientals in large numbers would mean in the end the extinction of the white people, and we always have to keep in mind the necessity of keeping this a white man's country.

"PEOPLE AT WORK" logo and music come up.

Editing room in the Cable TV station. Winter night.

MIKE, one of the cleaners (an extra from University of Calgary cleaning staff) is with DEVIKA in the editing room looking at a sequence from the documentary footage, "PEOPLE AT WORK" on a set of monitors. In the tape on the monitors, MIKE is talking about how nobody will trade places with him in the employment rotation scheme.

Head and shoulder shot of Mike in sequence from the "documentary"
"PEOPLE AT WORK:" A blue studio light is in the background.

INTERVIEWER (OFF CAMERA)

"PEOPLE AT WORK" Take 1...

Now Mike, you mentioned something earlier about contract labour. Could you elaborate on that?

INTERVIEW WITH MIKE full screen
Contract labour is

Interior. Editing room in Cable TV station.
MIKE and DEVIKA are seen from behind watching the interview.

INTERVIEW WITH MIKE continues on the house monitors
whereby all in-house caretaking is contracted
out to private sectors, private companies
whereby to them, they feel it's a short term
savings...

MIKE asks DEVIKA what she thinks of what he's said on the videotape
they're just starting to look at.

MIKE
Do you think this is going to sit well with the
supervisors?

INTERVIEW WITH MIKE continues on the house
monitors
labour costs and so forth.

Head and shoulder shot of Mike full screen.

INTERVIEWER (OFF CAMERA)
And what do you see are the problems associated
with that?

INTERVIEW WITH MIKE
Well, it's a quick fix. As far as they're
concerned, it will help them as far as cutting
back costs. And as far as the staff is
concerned, we lose everything. Wages dropping
by half. There's no benefits

Reaction shot of MIKE and DEVIKA watching the monitors.

INTERVIEW WITH MIKE (VOICEOVER)
absolutely. And no job security.

INTERVIEWER (OFF CAMERA)

Can you talk to me about some of the other problems you see in the workplace?

Interior. Editing room in Cable TV station.

INTERVIEW WITH MIKE continues on the house monitors

Morale problem is one. Most of the employees who can't communicate or speak English.

Close up on one of the monitors in the Cable TV editing room, showing the television frame.

INTERVIEW WITH MIKE continues on the house monitor

And they feel a lot of times they're being neglected or misinformed.

Reaction shot of MIKE and DEVIKA watching the monitors.

INTERVIEWER (OFF CAMERA)

And how do the employees feel about this?

INTERVIEW WITH MIKE continues on the house monitors

Well, the employees don't have a choice. They know that. They feel that.

Close up on one of the monitors in the Cable TV editing room, showing the television frame.

INTERVIEW WITH MIKE continues on the house monitor

There's no room. They can't go up above and tell them their problems because there's nobody there to listen.

INTERVIEWER (OFF CAMERA)

Could you explain to me the job rotation program?

INTERVIEW WITH MIKE
Job rotation is whereby
(sound fades out)

Reaction shot of MIKE and DEVIKA watching the monitors.

DEVIKA, frustrated with her sense of being trapped, finally tells MIKE to do what he wants to do.

The INTERVIEWER walks in to see how things are going.

DEVIKA
Well, if you don't want to do it, you don't have to. You do what you want. I have to go to my shift.

INTERVIEW WITH MIKE (VOICEOVER)
...for a short term or a long term, depends on the approval of supervisors.

Head and shoulder shot of Mike full screen.

INTERVIEWER (OFF CAMERA)
So is this a viable program for you?

INTERVIEW WITH MIKE
For cleaners, no. Absolutely no--I don't think there is anyone out in the office who would like to trade their job with a night shift cleaner.

Interior. Industrial office hallway. Fall/Winter night.

DEVIKA moves a cleaning cart loaded with all the cleansers of her trade down a long corridor and moves into another hallway.

Interior. Office hallway of the airlines. Winter night.

DEVIKA moves her cleaning cart down another hallway near an elevator. She waits by the elevator, then suddenly pushes her cleaning cart down a long set of stairs. It moves awkwardly down, leaving broken glass and cleaning fluids.

USHA hears the crashes, runs to see what's happened.

MIKE also hears the crash. USHA and MIKE meet at the bottom of the stairs, look up at DEVIKA, who is crying.

MIKE

Are you O.K.? What's wrong with you?

USHA glares at him.

DISSOLVE to Exterior. Birds in flight. Archival footage, sepia tinted.

Return to Interior. Jeanne's Kitchen.

The sepia tinted birds appear in the window, framed by the curtains.

The birds dissolve to family photographs of Jeanne's husband (Usha's father).

JEANNE (VOICEOVER)

Lost on another continent, another culture.
Lost out of home. That loss a bellow, my
mother-in-law's sorrow for her son lost in
Canada: my husband, the pilot Raghu--known to
the family as Lalloo. Her gift (the diamond
necklace) to the temple in India undone by her
husband because he didn't believe in such
magic, such protection. Two sons gone--

JEANNE at a table looking at the photographs in a family album.

JEANNE (VOICEOVER continues)

both dead--her husband--gone.

Close up of JEANNE's hands.

JEANNE (VOICEOVER continues)
Dead.

Over the shoulder shot of JEANNE looking at the family pictures.

JEANNE (VOICEOVER continues)
All the dead.

Interior. Airlines office. Night.

Master two shot: USHA is on the phone when DEVIKA moves her cleaning cart towards the desk where USHA is working.

USHA
Yes, O.K. Thanks very much. Bye.
(to DEVIKA) Hi.

DEVIKA
Hi, Usha.

USHA
How are you today?

DEVIKA
Oh...all right... And you?

USHA
Me? I'm as good as...Have you just come in on
your shift?

DEVIKA
Just started. You're my first stop.

Master two shot continues with DEVIKA cleaning. USHA is moving back and forth from the filing cabinet to her desk. They meet at her desk.

DEVIKA
What are you thinking?

USHA
Oh--I don't know...

Close up on USHA.

USHA continues
Just the fact that I might not be here two weeks ...a month, maybe six months if that merger

Close up on DEVIKA's reaction.

USHA continues VOICEOVER
goes through.

DEVIKA
So that's what's been bothering you...the merger... well, you know the same for us too, if they go to contract work. I might not be here either. Or the other cleaners.

Reaction shot of USHA.

DEVIKA continues VOICEOVER
These cost cutting measures are going to take us all

Close up on DEVIKA.

DEVIKA continues
away--poof...just like that. We'll be gone.
Only where will we go now?

Close up on USHA.

USHA
So, it's the same then, isn't it

Reaction shot of DEVIKA.

USHA continues VOICEOVER
for both of us?

DEVIKA
Is that what you think? The same. Oh, maybe

Reaction shot of USHA.

DEVIKA continues VOICEOVER
we're both

Close up of DEVIKA.

DEVIKA continues

strangers here, in this country. But I'm a
cleaner. Cleaners are at the bottom, in my
country and in yours too. What do I write home?
That I clean the floors and the bathrooms. At
least you--you're sitting behind that desk.
You're doing important work.

Close up of DEVIKA.

DEVIKA continues

Even the clothes you're wearing--you look like somebody. Me--I wear this uniform. And when I clean--you know, I get dirty. And because we clean, they say, we are dirty. Maybe it's the color of my skin.

Close up of DEVIKA.

DEVIKA continues

So I just keep going--fast, smiling....Yeah, maybe we're the "same"--we'll both lose our jobs.

USHA in VOICEOVER

You think I have a lot of power, don't you,

Close up of USHA.

USHA continues

but I don't. I don't. You know, at times I feel so cut off,

Reaction shot of DEVIKA.

USHA continues in VOICEOVER
as if I have no body.

Close up of USHA.

USHA continues

I'm not at home in my own body. I feel as if I've lost...all those familiar things. Sometimes I feel that I'm floating in a nightmare and there's this storm that's coming.

Reaction shot of DEVIKA.

Close up of USHA.

DISSOLVE to **Flash of Interior. Tiled floor in a room. Tropical summer day. India** (not shown but implied). High angle on WOMAN 1 (JEANNE thirty years ago now looking Usha's present age) lying on a tiled floor, a pool of blood around her waist and legs, a memory image reminiscent of Jeanne at a time when she was in her thirties.

DISSOLVE to JEANNE. Return to Interior. JEANNE's Kitchen.

JEANNE is pacing.

JEANNE

The politicians of the day, no doubt, considered what they were doing as "natural" as did Mackenzie King, when as Deputy Minister of Labour in 1908 declared in a report:

That Canada should desire to restrict immigration from the Orient is regarded as natural and that Canada should remain a white man's county

Mid-stop DISSOLVE of headlines JEANNE has been researching as JEANNE continues to pace.

JEANNE continues

is believed to be not only desirable for economical and social reasons but highly necessary on political and national grounds.

Microfilm headlines become full frame image.

DISSOLVE to "PEOPLE AT WORK" logo.

Interior. Cable Television Studio. Winter night.

THE INTERVIEWER and DEVIKA are small figures in a set surrounded by cameras, camera people, and a monitor with the live feed from a camera in close up on DEVIKA'S face. The apparatus of the television studio is apparent, is unglamorous; the background is brown.

The INTERVIEWER

It's just the two of us. Everyone will be real quiet. You'll be fine.

DEVIKA

I'm a bit nervous.

High angle shot of a roving camera showing the blue lights of the background for the show.

The INTERVIEWER

Devika, could you tell me a little bit about the work you've been doing?

DEVIKA

Oh yes. I'm sorry, I'm nervous. In my country-- I'm from the state of Gujarat--I was working on my Master's thesis at the University of Bombay. And

Close up of DEVIKA.

DEVIKA continues

the subject I was studying--how the World Bank is causing more problems than it is alleviating

by forcing communities to develop (oh sorry),
to develop in certain ways: forcing them to
plant specific crops, what equipment they have
to buy in order to get the loan...

The INTERVIEWER in VOICEOVER

Yes. Well, I'm sure these are very pertinent
issues.

DEVIKA

Yes, they are...

The INTERVIEWER in VOICEOVER

But I think the really important thing is the
real human misery in your country.

DEVIKA

Oh, this sort of situation is causing a lot of
human misery. For instance, our particular
community we were forced to buy useless
agricultural equipment from the United States.
They "re-cycled" it. You call this generosity?
You know, when the equipment came, we not only
had no use for it, because it was not usable,
but then, as a result, we were forced to have
to pay back the World Bank which we cannot
afford.

The INTERVIEWER in VOICEOVER

Yes, those banks tend to want to be paid back,
don't they? I think perhaps we should talk
about the religious rioting in India.

DEVIKA

I'm not here to discuss religious rioting. The
conversation I was hoping to have was more on
the issue of how the World Bank is causing all
these-- famine, poverty, all the subjects you
want to discuss this organization is creating.
It's a very corrupt situation...

The INTERVIEWER

I'm sure other people would disagree with you.

DEVIKA

No, if they knew what the problems are..

The INTERVIEWER

Let's talk about you...You said you attended the University of Bombay--what exactly is it you do here in Canada?

DEVIKA

I'm a night cleaner.

The INTERVIEWER

Pardon me?

DEVIKA

I'm a ...I clean airline offices. I'm a night cleaner.

The INTERVIEWER

Cut. I can't work like this. I'll be in the control room.

Interior. Storage Room. Airlines office. Winter night.

USHA is talking to DEVIKA while she is finishing up her work for the night after the Cable TV interview.

Master shot.

DEVIKA

She didn't even listen to one single word that I said. All she wanted to talk about was her bloody famine and religion problems. She just totally disregarded me.

USHA

I know.

DEVIKA

Anyway, I don't even know what the point is.

USHA

I understand. I really do, you know.

DEVIKA

Sometimes I wonder--why I even bother. These people are so bloody insensitive.

USHA

Yes, well, we better sort out this mess.

DEVIKA cries. USHA looks.

Close up of DEVIKA.

Close up of USHA.

Interior. Airport hanger. Summer night. Canada

The STORYTELLER is standing in front of a large 747. She is framed by a border of bubbles and mops.

The STORYTELLER

(addresses the camera directly with coils of the hose she's been washing the plane at her feet, an industrial vacuum in her hand.)

This summer night, the shortest night of the year, and the daylight illuminating the almost night sky, and me hoping to unravel not only the coils of this vacuum tangled up here, in front of me, but also to untangle this narrative, this mystery, or is it a ghost story?

Interior. Airlines office. Winter night.

USHA is in the office, talking on the phone. She is spelling her name for someone, then moves into conflict.

USHA

No, that's U S H A. Usha. What do you mean? No, I'm from Calgary. Yes, here. Yes, I said Calgary.

She hangs up the phone, puts her head down on the desk, then begins to cry.

DISSOLVE to Flash of Interior. Tiled floor in a room. Tropical summer day. India (not shown but implied). Low angle on WOMAN 1 (JEANNE thirty years ago now looking Usha's present age) lying on a tiled floor, a pool of blood around her waist and legs, a memory image reminiscent of Jeanne at a time when she was in her thirties.

USHA in VOICEOVER

Ma, ma.

DISSOLVE to USHA at the office window, where she begins to sing a SONG for Shiva to try to heal these memories.

DISSOLVE to USHA singing the same song, but in another time period. Devika comes forward. Close up of hands in a hand gesture (a mudra) signifying a gift.

Interior. Office. Winter night.

DEVIKA and USHA, drinking coffee, look out of the office window. Seen through the office window. A Calgary downtown office sequence.

Exterior. Mythic Landscape. Summer night near dawn.

TITLE over the image framed by the pages of an open book: THE EGGPLANT STORY.

JEANNE's flying scene shown with shots of the Calgary downtown skyline, with the eggplant moving across the downtown skyline, first from the point of view of Devika and Usha. Then follow the eggplant point of view, with shots interspersed of the eggplant in flight. Superimposed in the reflections of one of the buildings

(Bankers' Hall) is archival footage of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank meetings.

JEANNE in VOICEOVER

I take wings in the night. Not a bird. An eggplant. Aubergined. Brinjal--ed. I see the shape of a billboard in the twilight sky as I dip down, to the edges of downtown, coming over the industrial wasteland.

Shift to the "eggplant point of view" as JEANNE, in the shape of an eggplant, flies through the industrial section towards the downtown.

View of the eggplant as it moves in screen upper left and moves through the downtown buildings.

JEANNE continues in VOICEOVER

My husband once a pilot.

I learned it from him, at the control panels long, long ago.

And what my husband dreamed before he crashed-- his dream of flight an escape, to and in the "new" land, the new possibilities.

That dream possibly a collective nightmare.

Blue sky with the eggplant moving in at the top of frame left and meandering through the clouds.

JEANNE is seen on her flight by The STORYTELLER who sees her from the ground near **the Airport Hanger**.

The STORYTELLER

And we, the night cleaners now not only of buildings but stories are

A series of cutaways to USHA and DEVIKA in **the OFFICE** having fun--singing a song using the mops and brooms as microphones, throwing toilet paper rolls up in the air, playing at the computer.

The STORYTELLER in VOICEOVER continues dreaming of cleaning the nightmares, that collective history which is haunting and hurting and killing. We're dreaming of a new story, a story which puts the world back together again.

Return to **the Airport Hangar** where the STORYTELLER is continuing.

The STORYTELLER continues
A new order perhaps, call it ...healing.

Exterior. Road near the airport.

DEVIKA and USHA talk now as they're driving, and DEVIKA is able to explain to USHA what she couldn't convey to the interviewer on the "PEOPLE AT WORK" episode, to tell the secret she has wanted to tell.

DEVIKA in VOICEOVER

My secret, Usha--what I wanted to tell the world, what I'd hoped would reach at least some people on that TV show, but you know, that interviewer, she kept on interrupting. She didn't want to hear what I was explaining.

I tried to talk then. But no going back to stay, because there's nothing left, no way to make a life. Even if the World Bank has a small office. My village a model one, for the development agency, buying up North American agri-business. The Holsteins and the Jerseys. The Million Dollar Cow Project. And the villagers paying back with interest, the loans.

Not far from the tribal area: the Kolcha, Kotvalias, and the Varli, now owning irrigation equipment that's useless. Gifts bought with development money. The making of death, too much death, even in the green fields, greened by the monsoon, and for now I've decided. Said no to death.

USHA begins to speak to DEVIKA about the images that are haunting her--the flashes of the woman lying on a floor in a pool of blood. She too is able to tell, finally, the secret which has been haunting her.

USHA in VOICEOVER

Which is, exactly how I felt too. A sense of desperation that I might follow my father's erratic path into death, that inexplicable anger he radiated. He died flying in the mountains off the coast of B.C. It's strange, really. I remember polishing the tiles as if I could change something. Change the world. Wipe it clean, the past, I mean...my father's anger. His outbursts more unpredictable, more violent. And when he died, I stopped... feeling.

Interior. Car. Winter day.

DEVIKA and USHA, now passenger, are driving from the industrial area where the office is located into the mountains.

Exterior. Car on highway located in mountains and forests. Winter day.

The car disappears, apparently into the forest. A partial headline containing the phrase, "women will" appears as the car disappears.

Cut to an aerial shot "driving" along a river.

Credits.