

NEGATIVE SPACES

by

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Darkness. High-pitched ringing and low-end rumbling sounds. The noise slowly builds as we see quick cuts of:

SERIES OF SHOTS:

1. A man stumbling through a crowd holding a bleeding gut
2. Dirt thrown on the face of a body in a shallow grave
3. A sidewalk covered with a woman's splattered remains
4. A naked middle-aged woman in a pool of blood
5. A police detective bending over a bullet-ridden body

Under this we hear an audio collage:

Half the heroin in Asia was right fucking here yesterday.
There are a hundred different gangs in this city.
I never thought they'd have the guts to do it.
We can run — we'll have to.
I don't know what it means — I can't figure it out.
This is what happens when you try to cross us.
He died like a coward, begging for his life.

INT. DARK HALLWAY - NIGHT

A 7-year-old girl runs, pulls on the handle of a locked door, then turns to look over her shoulder as the rumbling is joined by horse's hooves and white light fills the frame.

FEMALE VOICE

When I find them? I'm going to
kill them.

EXT. TOKYO STREET - DAY

The hazy afternoon sky comes into focus behind a mess of telephone wires and neon signs. Voices yell in Japanese as a dazed ANNA sits up on a street littered with rubble, her dyed blonde hair bloody, matted to her face.

Anna is in her 20s with sharp, angular features — the kind of girl who could squash you with a look if she thought it was worth the trouble.

Her face is bruised and her left arm is in a sling. In front of her is a charred office building.

She stands as a SHIRTLESS MAN covered in soot stumbles out of a doorway in front of her. Three ONLOOKERS rush to help her but scream and retreat when she brandishes a gun.

She staggers forward, shoots the shirtless man twice and ENTERS the building.

INT. ANNA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anna sits on the edge of the bed looking at a small television playing a black and white SAMURAI FILM.

It's a slashing, slice and dice action sequence and she copies the main character's movements exactly.

ANNA

Serizawa! Kondo wa doko da?!!

She mimics the action, sweeping her arms in big slashing strokes. She ends in mid swing, freezing on the final frame then turns off the TV.

She turns on a record player and puts the needle to vinyl — an old movie soundtrack plays through a single speaker.

INT. GRANDFATHER'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

KATSU sits on the arm of the sofa. He's 65 and still burly with a boxer's nose and a mischievous smile. In one hand he holds a drink, in the other he spins a poker chip.

Anna's GRANDFATHER ENTERS knotting his tie. In his 70s, handsome, with a smile that has bent the world to his will. They speak in Japanese, subtitled.

KATSU

There's our star, like he just walked off the screen. Young ladies — guard your hearts.

GRANDFATHER

True, I dress for the young ladies, though only seniors will show up.

KATSU

(laughing)

Don't pretend like you're not proud. A retrospective is a big deal, right?

GRANDFATHER

So they tell me.

KATSU

Well, since it's in the papers the place won't be completely empty. I bet you'll have a handful of women afterwards standing around to ask you questions.

GRANDFATHER
 (smiling)
 A handful?

KATSU
 Four. No, five or less.

GRANDFATHER
 2 to 1 there's six or more.

Anna walks past, beer in hand, and laughs.

KATSU
 No comments from the teenage
 alcoholics, please.

ANNA (O.S.)
 I'm not a teenager anymore.

KATSU
 To me you're still in grade school.
 I'll take those odds. And how much
 of your money will I be taking off
 your hands?

INT. ANNA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anna ENTERS, cracks her beer and sits at her desk. An antique Graflex camera is in pieces in front of her. She begins assembling it, humming along with the music.

GRANDFATHER (O.S.)
 Anna! Are you ready to go?
 Train's leaving.

ANNA
 Almost!
 (under her breath)
 Why don't you bet on how long this
 will take me?

EXT. DESERTED DOWNTOWN STREET - NIGHT

A 1960s Monaco bounces past dilapidated buildings and their gated store fronts. Anna sits in the back, her grandfather and Katsu in the front.