



TITLES EXPLODE TO WHITE

FADE TO:

EXTREME CLOSEUP ON ROB, WAKING UP AT HIS DESK, IN HIS APARTMENT

Rob is an intense young man who wears a perpetual frown. He lives in a small apartment which is crowded with machine parts all intertwined into a single, haphazard computer. Rob effectively lives inside this computer.

ROB(VOICEOVER)

7:47. Personal note. When I was a kid my mother told me not to stare into the sun. So once, when I was six, I tried it.

Rob fixes coffee and goes immediately back to work. He uses a power screwdriver/drill to attach new, unlikely parts to the ever expanding machine.

ROB(VO)

The doctors didn't know if I'd ever see again. But once the bandages came off, little by little everything crept back into focus. I regained my sight but something had changed.

Back at his desk, facing the machine, Rob goes to work on the computer. Monitors flicker in response. He uses several keyboards, switching back and forth at a manic pace.\*

ROB(VO)

In that moment of rarefied vision I had glimpsed something, something perfect. A pattern beneath all the chaos around me. Just a glimpse. I've been trying to see it again ever since.

One component of the machine is something that looks a lot like a microwave oven. Rob takes random objects from a pile on the floor and places them in the microwave, then hits some buttons.

ROB(VO)

4:20. Restate my assumptions: 1) Behind all the complexity in nature there lies one very simple, perfect pattern. 2) A powerful computer, by reducing objects to the simple language of ones and zeros, can reveal this pattern. 3) To view this pattern unadulterated is to see perfection, the very face of God.

The microwave fills with light. The monitors pulse. The computer kicks out a printout which Rob studies grimly.

ROB(VO)

4:20. Results. Bullshit. PLATO continues to produce gibberish. But the pattern is there, just beneath, waiting to be discovered. I'm sure of it. I'm close.

From OS we hear a knock on the door. Rob looks out the peep-hole and sees DEBBIE, a very pretty girl of about ROB's age. She is smiling expectantly. Rob leans against his side of the door.

ROB(VO)

Debbie, my neighbor. Always trying to distract me with frivolous things. I shouldn't answer.

After a beat, Rob changes his mind and starts frantically undoing the locks\* on his door. By the time he gets the door open, DEBBIE is gone.

EXT. CHINATOWN. DAY.

ROB walks along briskly, clearly uncomfortable in the presence of crowds.\*

ROB(VO)

9:11. Plato needs more input. The stranger the object the better, to cancel out the complexity.

INT. GROCERY STORE.

An aisle crowded with strange products, garish packaging. ROB shuffles along, overwhelmed.

ROB(VO)

Look at all this. Chaos. Obscene.

EXT. PARK. DAY.

ROB is on his way home laden with plastic shopping bags. From OS we hear a honking sound. ROB turns and sees SULLY, a clown, sitting in front of a checkerboard.

ROB(VO)

Sully, my old mentor. Spent thirty years in his quest for the underlying pattern before his breakdown.

Rob stops to play checkers with Sully.\*

ROB(VO)

7:11. Personal note: What went wrong? I've never been able to discern. Did he give up in his quest? Or did he get too close?

The checker game is over. ROB gets up to leave. As he walks away we hear SULLY's horn. ROB turns to find that the checkers have been arranged on the board in the shape of a smiley face. ROB hurries away.

ROB(VO)

6:66. Restate my assumptions.  
1) There is a very simple pattern underlying all the chaos in nature.

In beat with the word "pattern" ROB glances down and sees trash on the street arranged into a smiley face.

ROB(VO)

2)With the aid of a powerful  
enough computer any mortal man can  
see this pattern.

In beat with the word "Pattern" ROB sees an ashtray with  
the cigarette butts arranged into a smiley face. ROB is  
approaching the entrance to his building, a dingy ex-hotel.

ROB(VO)

3)Who sees the pattern sees, in  
effect, the very face of God.

In beat with the word "God" we hear, from OS, a woman's  
voice.

DEBBIE

Yoo-hoo!

Debbie is walking toward the camera covered in faces-faces:  
a smiley face t-shirt, smiley-face hand-bag, seductively  
licking a smiley-face lollipop. Rob stares; stunned,  
appalled, baffled, then scurries into the building.

INT. ROB'S APT.

Rob snaps all the locks, makes coffee, is preparing to get  
back to work on the computer when his attention is arrested  
by the computer printout, abandoned on the desk.

ROB(VO)

When I was a kid and I stared into  
the sun I glimpsed something, just  
for a moment.

INT. A CLUTTERED CLOSET

Rob takes a microscope down from a top shelf. We see  
through the microscope: random letters on the printout.  
Switch to a higher and higher magnification. The letters  
are made up of hundreds of tiny smiley-faces.

ROB(VO)

I knew even then it was important,  
the sacred pattern behind  
everything. The face of...

ROB'S POV

We see PLATO, the computer. Up until this point we have only seen parts of the machine. Now that we see it entire we see that with monitors for eyes and keyboards arrayed in a grin it forms a giant smiley face. Rob tries to tear the smile apart. In the process he dislodges the power drill which he was using earlier to build the computer. It falls from a top shelf.

EXTREME CLOSEUP ON ROB'S FACE, LOOKING UP

EXTREME CLOSEUP ON THE DRILL, FALLING TOWARD HIM

FADE TO WHITE

THEN FADE TO:

Rob and Sully sitting in the park. Rob has a bandage on his head and an enormous, vacant smile on his face.