

Machinations

By

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1 INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT 1  
A cassette tape turns inside a plastic radio.

2 EXT. THE ENDLESS - NIGHT 2  
Colors twist and turn in a land outside reality.

3 EXT. BEACH - NIGHT 3  
Waves crash against the sand.

4 INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT 4  
The cassette continues to turn.

5 EXT. BEACH - NIGHT 5  
The tide goes in and out.  
In and out.

6 EXT. THE ENDLESS - NIGHT 6  
The absence of limits, no up, no down, no in, no out.

7 EXT. BEACH - NIGHT 7  
A wave roars against the coast.  
A couple walks along the sands, hand in hand.

8 INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT 8  
An empty, industrial space. Heavy chains hang from exposed rafters in the ceiling. Discarded piles of scrap metal and old machinery lay about haphazardly, as if someone has started and abandoned a million different projects here over the course of years. Stood over two massive sawhorses on the other side of the room, THE WELDER works silently, dressed only in jeans and an apron.  
  
Sparks fly as The Welder stares down at his work, his brows knit, his eyes concealed by circular, reflective goggles. The reflection of his flame dances in their lenses.  
  
The Welder shrugs, the muscles in his back rippling.  
  
He remains intensely focused on his work, never looking away from his workspace.

Behind The Welder, the acetylene tank to his welding machine sits in the darkness, highlighted by firelight. The Welder's one gloved hand reaches back and tightens a knob at the top of the tank.

The Welder's flame gradually dies, leaving the space in greater darkness.

On the far side of the room, a silent film plays on a CRT television. John Barrymore's Doctor Jekyll grins and gurns in black and white.

The Welder lifts his work to eye level, staring in awe, his goggles still on, at The Gauntlet, a complex, interlocking array of circuitry, metal, glass, and gemstones in the shape of a human hand.

The Welder slides The Gauntlet over his own right hand. It is a perfect fit.

- 9 EXT. BEACH - NIGHT 9
- Waves roll against the sands, more gently now, a comfortable ebb and flow.
- 10 EXT. THE ENDLESS - NIGHT 10
- Myriad tones of black and white, like ink in a glass of milk, swirl and roll over each other, collecting into an infinite center.
- 11 INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT 11
- The Welder shrugs on a jacket, one hand still concealed inside The Gauntlet.
- He strides out of the warehouse's double doors, his head down, moving with determination.
- 12 EXT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS 12
- The Welder turns, measuredly charging along the corrugated metal siding of the building. At another corner, he turns again, walking out into a gravel parking lot. On the other side of the lot, he unlocks a car and steps inside.
- 13 INT/EXT. CAR - NIGHT 13
- The Welder's booted foot presses down on his accelerator.
- The car's back wheels spin against dirt as the engine REVS

loudly.

His eyes, still goggled, gleam in the night light, his teeth gritted in a rictus grin.

The car's headlights cut into the night, its front grille bared. The engine REVS again.

The Welder's grip tightens on the wheel.

As the engine REVS a third time, the car's muffler rattles with a deep THRUM.

The Welder grips the gear shift with his gauntleted hand and throws the car into "drive."

14 EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS 14

The car roars forward, hurtling out of the parking lot.

It leaves a trail of dust in its wake.

15 INT/EXT. CAR - NIGHT 15

Behind the wheel, The Welder laughs maniacally, desperately, worryingly to himself, his eyes still locked forward.

On the dashboard in front of him, the speedometer's needle rises higher and higher.

The Welder's eyes remain locked forward.

The speedometer reaches its maximum.

CUT TO BLACK

16 EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT 16

The Welder's right hand, now without The Gauntlet, lies against long and unruly grass, his fingers bruised and battered, as if The Gauntlet was removed by force. His two middle fingers twitch lightly.

The Welder stirs, tossing his head to one side.

17 EXT. ROADWAY - NIGHT 17

The Welder staggers across the road, now with a limp.

He comes to a halt on the other side of the road, facing an empty field.

Tired and battered, The Welder looks up toward the sky.

The sky over The Welder slowly transforms into The Endless, turning and twisting over itself absent mindedly.

The Welder's jaw drops. He reaches up and lower his goggles, revealing two empty, metal sockets embedded directly into his skull.

The patterns in the sky grow and expand, almost seeming to reach down to The Welder, to swallow him and the surrounding fields up, drowning everything in spiraling light.

18 INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

18

The cassette tape makes a few final turns then stops with a heavy CLICK. Far away, a crowd LAUGHS.

FADE TO BLACK