<u>TITLE</u>

Written by

Author's Name

Draft
information

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INT. INTRO SPACE

A white light pulses on and off three times, followed by a
red, blue and green square light coming on in series. The
rgb lights converge, creating a white square light, which
snaps off to reveal a glowing white pathway. At the end of
the pathway is a grandfather clock. To the left, halfway
between the camera and the clock, a wind chime lit in blue
is suspended in the void. If the camera turns to look
behind, a metal door sits at the edge of the glowing white
pathway, as if the camera/player had entered by it. The door
cannot be opened.

                    TECH 1 (V.O.)
          Participant is under.

                    TECH 2 (V.O.)
          Memory gateway is open.

                    TECH 1 (V.O.)
          Everything is looking good.

                    TECH 2 (V.O.)
          Boundaries confirmed.

                    TECH 1 (V.O.)
          Entanglement is strong.
          Base line tendency aligned.

                    TECH 2 (V.O.)
          Yes, base line okay. System injection
          underway... And done.

                    TECH 1 (V.O.)
          Minor anomalies in the attention
          matrix. Within acceptable error
          margins, but let's keep tabs on
          those.

                    TECH 2 (V.O.)
          Noting the anomalies for monitoring.
          And we've got confirmed sync.
          Man, I could use a coffee. How about
          you?

INT. VOIDSPACE / DIRAC SEA

The player falls down a void, 3 rings of light flashing by.
They land and a light comes on with a *clunk*. Ahead of them
is a path in shadow. The path hangs in the air over an
uncertain, moving mixture of lights and shadow, something
akin to waves on the sea.

If the player turns around a grand red chair faces the path, and to the side of the chair is a small table with a coffee sat in a kintsugi mug. To the other side of the chair a shadowy blur of a figure stands. If the player Focuses on the figure:

                    ARCHITECT

          The Dirac sea.
          Not unexpected, but not something I
          had planned to account for.
          This sea of quantum foam, of
          uncertainty, as two minds mesh.
          If the active mind were to fall into
          it. Well. That would be an unpleasant
          outcome.

          Fortunately, we should be able to
          adapt the psychic baffles to provide
          some level of protection.

INT. WHITESPACE LABORATORY

The laboratory is carved out of meter cubes. Within it are a series of focus-reactive objects with tacit interactions designed to familiarise the user with the possibilities of the system.

-- Object Placements (No tendency contributions here)

Location #1: Sofa
Interaction: Tulpa Talks in Attended inward.

Location #2: Picture Frame
Interaction: Visible = sound, attended = animate, focus = 3d ship.

Location #3: Writing Desk
Interaction: Quote from Neuromancer?

Location #4: White Cubes
Interaction: fade out

Location #5: Black Cubes
Interaction: slowly change colour?

Location #6: Old Radio
Interaction: enable soundtrack if watch long enough.

Location #7: Telephone
Interaction: Rings only if not in attention or focus. If long enough, red telephone boxes spawned thru experience?

-- Baseline

                    TULPA
Welcome to the whitespace laboratory.

I am a tulpa, a thoughtform,
constructed from an amalgam of
personnel at Oneirica.

This area is designed to familiarise
you with how your entanglement with a
person's memories operates.

Your attention matters.

What you look at, where you go,
causes the system of memories to re-
act to you.

So pay attention to what you see,
to the details.

Try looking at the objects in this
room. See how they respond to how
much attention you pay to them.

But note, real memories are more
complex. This simulated environment
is a simplification.

What actually happens when we engage
with a memory in the system is not
always obvious.

Please therefore also exercise
caution in what you pay attention to,
And what you don't.

INT. DAVID AUSTER'S APARTMENT

DAVID AUSTER's apartment has an open-plan living space, a separate bedroom, and separate bathroom. A garden is visible to the left from the starting position of the camera.

-- Object Placements

Location #00: Desk
Baseline: Notebook, Auster: Documents,
Oneirica: Schematics, Unstable: Hypercube?

Location #01: Coffee Table
Baseline: Magazine, Auster: Circuit boards,
Oneirica: Gun in pieces?, Unstable: Tiny house

Location #02: Shelf by Front Door
Baseline: Mail, Auster: Legal docs,
Oneirica: Pile of pills, Unstable: Penrose Triangle /
Impossible shape (glowing?)

Location #03: Side Table near Kitchen
Baseline: Succulents, Auster: Typewriter,
Oneirica: Mobile phones in pile, Unstable: Pyramid

Location #04: Side Table back of Living Room
Baseline: Hi-fi, Auster: Ship in Bottle,
Oneirica: Pistol, Unstable: Torus

Location #05: Shelf by Washer Dryer
Baseline: Detergent etc., Auster: Folded clothes,
Oneirica: Bomb Chemicals? / Pipebomb?, Unstable: Tiny
Architect

Location #06: Bedroom Storage
Baseline: Empty box, Auster: Box full of junk,
Oneirica: EMP, Unstable: Glowing Stag Man

Location #07: Beside Bed
Baseline: Glasses, Auster: Picture in Frame
(thispersondoesnotexist.com),
Oneirica: Anarchist Cookbook, Unstable: Explosion

Location #08: Kitchen Worktop
Baseline: Toast on plate?, Auster: Broken Egg,
Oneirica: Knife, Unstable: Rubber Duck

Location #09: Kallax Shelf
Baseline: Hourglass, Auster: Zen thing? Singing bowl?,
Oneirica: Hack RF Gadget, Unstable: Recognizer (tron)

-- Baseline

A normal conversation between AUSTER and CAIN?

                    DAVID AUSTER
          Hey Aurelié.

                    AURELIÉ CAIN
          David. It's been too long. Are you
          well?

                    DAVID AUSTER
          I've been better.

                    AURELIÉ CAIN
          I heard. You are a free agent now.

                    DAVID AUSTER
          Free is a way of putting it for sure.
          Though I'm not going to lie, it is a
          weight off my mind, to be out of
          there.

                    AURELIÉ CAIN
          No, I think even if you didn't want
          to leave at the time, it was what was
          best.

                    DAVID AUSTER
          Yeah, I hope so. But I'm not happy.

                    AURELIÉ CAIN
          And why is this?

                    DAVID AUSTER
          No. The reason they fired me. The
          reason I was making a stand, would
          have quit anyway. What we were doing.
          It's no good.

                    AURELIÉ CAIN
          And what are you going to do about
          it?

                    DAVID AUSTER
          I honestly do not know.

                    AURELIÉ CAIN
          I think you should take some time
          out. Go visit your sister, maybe.
          Some time in the countryside. I know
          it does me good, to breathe that
          better air.

                    DAVID AUSTER
          Maybe. Maybe you're right.

-- Auster

Concern for the dangers Oneirica and their tech propose.

                    DAVID AUSTER (cont'd)
          What am I going to do? What is anyone
          going to do? I want to just opt out
          of all this. Can you believe what
          HENRY said to me? He said if I had
          moral issues with what we were doing
          then maybe I should have not gone in
          at the start.

                    AURELIÉ CAIN
          Maybe he was right. If one meddles,
          one should expect that their meddling
          has unintended consequences.

                    DAVID AUSTER
          But I didn't know where it was going
          until we got there. Here. To this
          point. HENRY said I should have gone
          to the Borealis Institute or
          something, should have been a think
          tanker, a policy wonk.

                    AURELIÉ CAIN
          These are the mechanisms people have
          accepted in Western societies, for
          the most part, you know?

                    DAVID AUSTER
          Like you can't do the thing and do it
          right. You can only do what the money
          wants and hell with you for having a
          moral compass. And this, he said this
          when we started breaking ground, when
          the entanglement was in, first pass.
          I said I was unsure. He gave me that
          response.

                    AURELIÉ CAIN
          It stung you. You've always been a
          delicate man.

                    DAVID AUSTER
          It did sting. I care. I should have
          walked then. Stopped giving, stopped
          my part of the system, left them with
          a void.

                    AURELIÉ CAIN
          But you didn't leave.

                    DAVID AUSTER
I was too much of a coward. And now,
now it's too late. They're about to
have this thing in for the state, and
from there it's SQUIDs, its private
enterprise, it's miniaturization, and
we go from unwieldy state weapon to
the thing that is in every pair of
glasses, in every home, gets passed
off as entertainment, but really is
always taking a read on what we
think.

                    AURELIÉ CAIN
And this is bad why? To know what
each other are thinking? Is this not
your honesty, and connection, that
you'd hoped for? It is why I
supported you, funded you, put you in
touch with HENRY. I believed in the
same, and hoped you might bring us
there.

                    DAVID AUSTER
But it isn't what we think. It's an
approximation. We always do this. We
take the approximation and speak
about it like it's ground truth. Like
it's the real thing.

                    AURELIÉ CAIN
But you thought you were doing the
real thing. I thought you were too.

                    DAVID AUSTER
Not like this. Like, it's a
suggestion, a gesturing at, to help
us understand. I saw that over time,
understood it. And watching, being
there, looking at these ersatz
memories, it *changes* them. So it's
bunk. No good for applied purposes, a
curiosity. Like so much research, in
the end. How it's marketed is another
matter. We like to tell ourselves all
sorts of stories and pass them off as
truth.

                    AURELIÉ CAIN
What is truth? We make our own
reality. Everything is... subjective.
                    (MORE)

                         AURELIÉ CAIN (cont'd)
          My hope was your system would help
          bring consensus in subjective space,
          help bridge, let people understand
          one another. Is this not the case?

                         DAVID AUSTER
          No, I don't think it's going to work.
          And I've tried warning people. But
          I'm in the same place as a science
          fiction author at this point.

          Sci-fi authors write dire warnings
          and then idiot people we are we take
          it as a flipping MANUAL and say hey,
          this corporate dystopia? Let's make
          THAT our reality. We shouldn't even
          joke about it, tell stories as
          warnings about dire meat-hook
          futures, because someone somewhere
          will make it real.

          This is becoming real, and it's
          another step in obliterating
          ourselves by a thousand tiny
          increments.

                         AURELIÉ CAIN
          Then this is our fate. If not you,
          someone else would have. HENRY,
          IZUMI-san, you all had similar ideas.
          If you don't wish to play, then don't
          play. Or find another role to play,
          or another game. Or go after the
          meta. But that's for you to figure
          out.

                         DAVID AUSTER
          I'm trying. I'm sorry. I've made it
          all about me. How are you? How is
          Peter? And Mia?

-- Oneirica

Establish AUSTER as unstable.

                         DAVID AUSTER
          I can't believe it. Those swine! I
          was absolutely key in building the
          system. I developed the recall
          stabilisation, the voice synthesis,
          got the remembered people pinned down
          to locations, not glitching between
          areas. I'm talking core tech here. So
          much more. The analysis engine.
                         (MORE)

                    DAVID AUSTER (cont'd)
          The database. They can't just take my
          life's work away from me like that!
          It was everything!

          But no, no. I know what I can do. I
          just need to get back in there. Hit
          them where it hurts. Henry can watch
          his little float plans sink. And all
          those hangers on. Developers, not
          engineers, not architects, no vision.
          Working to make it enterprise grade,
          which is just code for breaking the
          thing and making it run twice as
          slow.

          No, I'll get Polivoks. And Zip. Maybe
          Aurelié can put some funds my way.
          Get in there, break the entanglement
          algorithm, wipe the dataset, put them
          back five years at least. Maybe
          there's more I can do.

          Think. Gotta think.

-- Unstable

The Neuromancer invocation.

                    AURELIÉ CAIN
          (Quoting)
          "Where? Describe the place, this
          construct."

          "A beach. Gray sand, live silver that
          needs polishing. And a concrete
          thing, kinda bunker..." He hesitated.

          "It's nothing fancy. Just old,
          falling apart. If you walk far
          enough, you come back to where you
          started."

          "Yes," she said. "Morocco. When
          Marie-France was a girl, years before
          she married Ashpool, she spent a
          summer alone on that beach, camping
          in an abandoned blockhouse. She
          formulated the basis of her
          philosophy there."

EXT. UNDERPASS

A city underpass. A FOODTRUCK sits to once side of the path.
A <REACTIVE OBJECT> in disrepair squats to the other. A
chainlink fence blocks the end. Beyond that, uncertainty,
poor memory recall. A wall of safes and plants, for some
reason.

-- Object Placements

Location #00: Food Truck (table by it?)
Baseline: Soda can, Auster: Beer bottle,
Oneirica: Whiskey, Unstable: Lucky Cat

Location #01: Stalls
Baseline: Fruit / Veg, Auster: Computers/Electronic,
Oneirica: Drugs?, Unstable: Lucky Cat

Location #02: Side of Path
Baseline: Tree, Auster: Red Telephone Box,
Oneirica: Police Box, Unstable: Lucky Cat

Location #03: Bus Stop
Baseline: Bicycle, Auster: Motorcycle,
Oneirica: Unicycle?, Unstable: Lightcycle

Location #04: Safe Wall
Baseline: Smoke Plumes (brackeys), Auster: Brutalist Flower
Pot,
Oneirica: Fake Auster-implicating Memory, Unstable: Glowing
light strands?

Location #05: By the bins
Baseline: More rubbish piled up, Auster: Mattress,
Oneirica: Wire person, Unstable: Drunkard Statue

Location #06: Car Wreck
Baseline: Tire, Auster: Blade Runner Origami Unicorn,
Oneirica: BR2049 Wooden Horse, Unstable: Robot Cat

Location #07: Billboard
Baseline: Blank, Auster: WAKE UP Sign,
Oneirica: Oneirica Ad, Unstable: Video Footage?

Location #08: Arch Near Start
Baseline: concrete bin, Auster: worn trunk,
Oneirica: CCTV camera, Unstable: Large Toaster

Location #09: Rooftop
Baseline: Tree, Auster: Antenna,
Oneirica: Satellite Dish, Unstable: Shiny Fish

-- Baseline

A food truck visit with ZIP CLICK?

                    ZIP CLICK
          I think the only real thing I got out
          of our transatlantic deals, out of
          this cultural hegemony from them over
          there, is burritos and the like.
          Proper good ones...

          Anyway.

          Eh you know some guy asked me
          recently how he'd be able to stand up
          some metaversal content zone that
          would last five hundred years.

          The thing is, I've been around
          awhile. I remember like fifteen years
          ago someone wanted a millennium-
          surviving virtual reality thing.

          And before that, I remember as a kid
          my Da telling me about someone
          wanting the same thing with a
          website, you know, all that *text*.

                    DAVID AUSTER
          So? What's this got to do with
          anything?

                    ZIP CLICK
          I'm getting to that.

          So, the reason I remember it as a kid
          is because my Da, for all his
          technical wizardry he infected me
          with, was much more interested in
          words. He'd wanted to write, but
          already text was looking pretty damn
          shaky as a means to an end involving
          not living in a barrel on the street
          and getting three square.

          So, this sticks with me, the five
          hundred year website - and all the
          folks rolling up after with same aims
          in different mediums - well, my Da
          talks through this user desire and
          shakes his head. He says,

          "Son, five hundred years ago the
          language we are speaking now
          basically didn't exist.
                    (MORE)

                        ZIP CLICK (cont'd)
Even if you could rent a server for
five centuries, or find some
distributed ledger or whatever to sit
it on, who's to say anyone five
centuries *from now* could even read
what it says without some serious
linguistic archaeology?"

                        DAVID AUSTER
Zip, the point?

                        ZIP CLICK
The point, my dude, is that your
memory thing is the same. Tech moves
on, societies move on, it all rises
and falls, fades into obscurity, and
so on. We're all gonna be dead in
five hundred years, except probably
those zuckerheads if their 'juvie
juice works out for them.

So hell with it. Live your life. Find
a life worth living. It ain't here,
wringing your hands, because the
machine only sleeps in total darkness
and baby the lights are always on
now. And if you can't catch it
sleeping, it's gonna roll over you,
whether you helped build its latest
manifestation or not.

-- Auster

Talking with ZIP CLICK about physical pentesting?

                        DAVID AUSTER
You ever do physical pentesting?

                        ZIP CLICK
Did I...? David, please. This is me
you're talking to. 'Course I did
that, I've done the lot. The kids
too. Daily, down here, out there, we
do it to get by. Not all of us got
that cash injection you did, got you
off the rubbish pile.

                        DAVID AUSTER
Zip, please.

                        ZIP CLICK
Dude I know. You made your choice. No
judgement. But you did drift from
this.
                        (MORE)

                    ZIP CLICK (cont'd)
Maybe good, maybe bad, but here you
are back now asking ol' Zip about a
little somethin' somethin'.

                    DAVID AUSTER
Yeah.

                    ZIP CLICK
So what you want help with? Physical
access to what?

                    DAVID AUSTER
Oneirica.

                    ZIP CLICK
Place of work.

                    DAVID AUSTER
Former place.

                    ZIP CLICK
Ahh. Penny dropped. So what, you
screwed up and now you want something
back out?

                    DAVID AUSTER
Uh no. I did get kicked.

                    ZIP CLICK
By Hank the shank, ye?

                    DAVID AUSTER
Henry, yes.

                    ZIP CLICK
Not surprising.

                    DAVID AUSTER
But I wanna get in, and I lost
access, and, well, I've forgotten a
lot. I need your help.

                    ZIP CLICK
Why?

                    DAVID AUSTER
You want a why?

                    ZIP CLICK
You bet I do. Juicy.

                    DAVID AUSTER
I want to get into the servers there.

                    ZIP CLICK
          No remote? C'mon Davey boy.

                    DAVID AUSTER
          This particular stuff is air gapped.

                    ZIP CLICK
          Heard that one before. Nothing's air
          gapped. Everything with power hums a
          little ditty about its doings.

                    DAVID AUSTER
          Yes, yes, I'm aware. But I need to
          modify some source code.

                    ZIP CLICK
          Well now. And what for?

                    DAVID AUSTER
          The thing we built, it's no good. I
          tried to stop it while I was there,
          now I'm not there because I tried.

                    ZIP CLICK
          The thing you built.

                    DAVID AUSTER
          Yes.

                    ZIP CLICK
          David, I coulda told you that when
          you first started working on it. But
          you wanted money, comfy, safety,
          happy. Itchy tasty, idiot.

                    DAVID AUSTER
          Thank you Zip.

                    ZIP CLICK
          No it's fine, I'll help. It'll be
          fun. Let's get another burrito and
          then back to the factory for planning
          with the kids.

-- Oneirica

Talking with ZIP CLICK about hacking the servers?
Destruction?

                    DAVID AUSTER
          I want to take them down.

                    ZIP CLICK
          Down as in?

                    DAVID AUSTER
Completely. Total wipe. On-site, off-
site, cloud, metaversal, the lot. The
sum total. The whole thing. Like we
never even made it. Because to hell
with it. Never should have made it.
Never should have let Henry get it
and do what he did.

                    ZIP CLICK
Yeah enough editorial, enough
personal vengeance quest 5000. I get
it David. You wanna pop their quantum
bubble. Well I have some big hecking
needles, let me tell you. The whole
gang, interesting times, we kept the
faith while you turned startup, which
is just corporate in trainers to be
honest. But sure. Tell me a story
about their network configuration.

                    DAVID AUSTER
Well, it's been a month or so. But we
had the office here, the one in
Singapore, and remote redundancies in
the US and China. Cloud stuff through
Cloudflare, Meta/Horizon on the
metaversal. Virtual routers across
everything, encrypted. I'm sure you
can find some wedge points though.

But the actual system, the thing
itself, is air-gapped. We had people
coming in, putting them under with
induced hypnagogics, and some two-way
fNIRS and SQUID stuff to set up the
entanglement with stored memories.

                    ZIP CLICK
Sounds like you just need a
sledgehammer for the thing itself
then.

                    DAVID AUSTER
Yes and no, access is locked down by
the external systems. Card and
biometric gating. I'm obviously off
that now. And the system itself,
well, we had a black box recorder of
a sort set up to handle unexpected
scenarios.

                    ZIP CLICK
Like a vengeful former founder.

                    DAVID AUSTER
          Maybe.

                    ZIP CLICK
          So we steal the box and figure out a
          way to wreck it post-hack.

                    DAVID AUSTER
          Works for me.

                    ZIP CLICK
          Yeah okay this is fine for overview
          stuff. But let's go back to the den,
          see the kids, and we can really get
          into it. Gonna need detail, and lots
          of it.

-- Unstable

In which someone goes off on one.

                    THE DEVELOPER
          Folks, you know what? I am so tired
          of this. Here, let me read to you:

          'Hello?' said the voice.
          'Who is this?' asked Quinn.
          'Hello?' said the voice again.
          'I'm listening,' said Quinn. 'Who is
          this?'
          'Is this Paul Auster?' asked the
          voice. 'I would like to speak to Mr
          Paul Auster.'
          'There's no one here by that name.'
          'Paul Auster. Of the Auster Detective
          Agency.'
          'I'm sorry,' said Quinn. 'You must
          have the wrong number.'
          'This is a matter of utmost urgency,'
          said the voice.
          'There's nothing I can do for you,'
          said Quinn. 'There is no Paul Auster
          here.'
          'You don't understand,' said the
          voice. 'Time is running out.'
          'Then I suggest you dial again. This
          is not a detective agency.'
          Quinn hung up the phone.

          Yeah, right? And what else? All the
          little trails, the crumbs, the
          condition.
                         (MORE)

                    THE DEVELOPER (cont'd)
The little scratch in the back of the
head.

We are, as was once said in a play
gone to the wind, the animal that
represents. This is all nothing. This
is all built on nothing.
Wittgenstein's cloud castles. Where's
the rough ground to which we can
return? It's not through endless
abstractions, not through medium upon
media, insignificant signs, the
absence of referents.

We are in this dead-end road.
Our mistakes are founded on
transaction, the destruction of
consensus, the desire to put any
interface between people.
We are allowing conglomorates to push
the cave wall between us. We can only
communicate by pale imitations.
Shadows on cave walls. Once we've got
your senses, and limit what you can
send, we've got you. I'm waving into
blind eyes.

The kid really hit that home for me.
You know? We're here contributing to
the problem. The best we can hope for
is to take it back to scratches on a
page.

I guess my frustration is people talk
all the time about ethics, and forget
about morality. Just because we can,
doesn't mean we should, but we've
gotten so good at shirking personal
responsibility.

INT. GALLERY

This locale maybe the tendencies just add additional
dialogue? As opposed to alternative characters or takes/
conversations?

-- Object Placements

Location #00: Room 1 Center
Baseline: Deer Sculpture?, Auster: Anubis,
Oneirica: Lion Crushing a Serpent, Unstable: Fotrate
Sculpture

Location #01: Room 1 Left Wall
Baseline: Abstracts, Auster: abstract_painting2 (woman),
Oneirica: Sleeping Muse, Unstable: Glowing Colours

Location #02: Room 2 Center (Skyroom)
Baseline: Concrete Block, Auster: Hepworth Two Forms,
Oneirica: Charging Bull, Unstable: Invisible Sky Mesh
Telephone Ring

Location #03: Room 2 Left Wall
Baseline: Red Abstracts, Auster: Photography,
Oneirica: Forest Skull, Unstable: Black Void?

Location #04: Room 3 Center
Baseline: Glowing Glass Spiral, Auster: Barbara Hepworth
Sculpture,
Oneirica: Skull, Unstable: Giant Hands

Location #05: Room 3 Right Wall
Baseline: Spring Goddess Ora Tallo (Birth of Venus) (light
art Sketchfab), Auster: Hepworth Painting,
Oneirica: MRI of Skull and Spine, Unstable: Soulless Face

Location #06: Room 3 Far Wall
Baseline: Abstract, Auster: Hepworth Painting #2,
Oneirica: Muscles of the Head, Unstable: Wipeout Feisar Car

Location #07: Room 4 Center
Baseline: Northumberlandia Land Sculpture, Auster: El
Pensador,
Oneirica: The Death and the mother, Unstable: Inverted
Pyramid on Ceiling

Location #08: Room 4 Far Wall
Baseline: Abstract Painting, Auster: Geographic image,
Oneirica: Death Crowning Innocence (1896), Unstable: Moire
Pattern

Location #09: Room 4 Right Wall
Baseline: Sunrise, Auster: cc0 FOREST,
Oneirica: Painting by Zdzislaw Beksinski (4), Unstable: Test
Card Pattern

-- Baseline

>   POLIVOKS
>   So what is it you want from me, my
>   friend? How have you been, anyway?
>   Nothing for two years, and now here
>   you are.

>   DAVID AUSTER
>   Poll, I'm sorry. You know how it is.
>   Work, perennial obsession, until it
>   stops, until you stop it or crash
>   out. I crashed out.

>   POLIVOKS
>   I heard. I heard lurid tales. Are
>   they true?

>   DAVID AUSTER
>   I guess. There's always a bit of
>   truth in anything. But they did me
>   wrong. I was one of the founders. I
>   built a core part of the tech.

>   POLIVOKS
>   And then you got cold feet.

>   DAVID AUSTER
>   I had a change of heart. Or head. Or
>   what it really was is that I listened
>   to myself. Properly. You know how
>   hard that is?

>   POLIVOKS
>   I know.

>   DAVID AUSTER
>   Then you understand.

>   POLIVOKS
>   I think I do. And you want me to help
>   you.

>   DAVID AUSTER
>   I do. You've got muscle, leverage.

>   POLIVOKS
>   A lever and a fulcrum, and I can move
>   the world.
>   (MORE)

                    POLIVOKS (cont'd)
You think too highly of me. Or you
are mistaken either way. Besides, I
am retired.

                    DAVID AUSTER
Retired, sure. Like all the old ones.

                    POLIVOKS
Less of the ageist sentiment, you
foal. You jumped the fence, bolted
from the stable. And then you got
upset when your greenfield was built
upon yet another graveyard of money,
people, data.

                    DAVID AUSTER
Whatever. I know you like this sort
of thing. I know, somewhere in that
maze of thoughts inside your head,
that the center holds. And that
center is a sculpture, a concrete
pour of two fingers raised to the
world.

                    POLIVOKS
HA! You speak like you took my
memories into your machine.

                    DAVID AUSTER
I'm good at getting people. Am I
wrong?

                    POLIVOKS
You are not wrong. There is truth in
your vivid metaphor. If I cannot be
the king, then let the kingdom burn.
Let them all burn.

                    DAVID AUSTER
Bit stronger than I'd put it, but
sure.

-- Auster

                    POLIVOKS
So what is it you want me to do?

                    DAVID AUSTER
I need to take the thing offline.
Nothing good is going to come of it.

                    POLIVOKS
That is like saying oh, Pandora,
please shut this box.
                    (MORE)

                    POLIVOKS (cont'd)
Like the hand-wringing some went
through when they wanted to take the
inter out of the internet. A fool's
errand.

-- Oneirica

                    DAVID AUSTER
But yes, let's go strong.

                    POLIVOKS
This is what I like to hear. We burn
your old friend's lair of steel and
glass to the ground, and his silly
little memory palace with it.

-- Unstable

                    DAVID AUSTER
What are we even looking at anyway?

                    POLIVOKS
I wish it was a Bloch, if I'm honest.
A fondest for his work, lately.

                    DAVID AUSTER
Who?

                    POLIVOKS
Not an art person. I forget. One so
uncultured.

                    DAVID AUSTER
Culture? Let me tell you about
culture. Culture's another channel
for misunderstanding. Just like all
this. The machinery of the night.

                    POLIVOKS
I suppose I should say that at this
point I need scissors, sixty one!?

                    DAVID AUSTER
But it's true. We try to talk through
endless abstractions. We're the
animal that represents. We can't just
say what we are and what we want. We
have to filter it through so much.
And then when it gets received, it
has to go through the whole layer
upon layer of baffles and filters,
fronts and blinds, of the person on
the other end, who then goes about
misunderstanding the whole thing.
                    (MORE)

                    DAVID AUSTER (cont'd)
          So we say it sideways, it gets
          understood backwards, and we're no
          further along, everyone is confused,
          hurting. And we keep making more
          things to make it worse.

                    POLIVOKS
          David! Please!

                    AURELIÉ CAIN
          David!

                    LEGION GUY
          DAAAVID!

EXT. STREETS NEAR AUSTER'S APARTMENT

A doorway with green forest painted on it. A blurry white
tulpa figure stands beside it. Just how to end the vertical
slice / demo.

                    TULPA 2
          Hello.

          This tulpa kindly asks for you to
          return to this doorway when you have
          visited the underpass and the
          gallery.

          Once you have done so, you can access
          the debriefing area and leave the
          simulation.

          Thank you again for your
          participation, citizen.

INT. DÉNOUEMENT

Use Global tendency rating, I think!

-- Object Placements

None - Experience is ending.

-- Baseline

Techs broadcast, prepping to bring you out.

>   TECH 3
>   This one's close to done. Get the
>   thing ready.
>
>   TECH 4
>   The thing?
>
>   TECH 3
>   The uhh, the debrief and
>   disentanglement process.
>
>   TECH 4
>   Would it hurt you to learn the names
>   of each part of what we do? It's
>   pretty important.
>
>   TECH 3
>   We should have checklists for this
>   stuff.
>
>   TECH 4
>   That's process. I've read the
>   checklist manifesto too. But try
>   talking to management about it.
>
>   TECH 3
>   Anyway yeah, heck, here they come.
>   Loading the debrief environment.
>
>   TECH 4
>   Love the old computer in that thing.
>   Nice touch.
>
>   TECH 3
>   Architect's idea, so I hear.
>
>   TECH 4
>   Who was the architect anyway?

                    TECH 3
          Wasn't any of the founders. Someone
          told me once that some of them jacked
          someone else's thing, reverse-
          engineered it.

                    TECH 4
          Pffft, figures. Anyway environment
          loaded. Unthreading the sync now.
          Participant is primed.

                    TECH 3
          Loading the questionnaire.

                    TECH 4
          And up they come. Okay.

-- Auster

Auster voice over mixed with techs? Memory echoes?

                    DAVID AUSTER
          I just couldn't face what they were
          doing. What we were doing. What I
          did. People spend a lot of time these
          days talking about ethics.

          But nobody talks about morality,
          about the compass in your heart, the
          voice in your head, that nudges you
          and points out what is right and what
          is wrong. There's this excuse that
          everything is... subjective. Whatever
          that means.

          Still, not hurting people seems like
          a good start. And thinking beyond the
          immediate. Am I going to hurt others
          by how my actions stack over time?
          It's hard. But it's the least we can
          do. And undoing what I helped build,
          that seemed like a good start.

-- Oneirica

Formal Oneirica outro thanking participant and reminding
them of Auster's guilt / trying to convince participant.

                    ONEIRICA SPOKESPERSON
          Thank you for your participation,
          member of the jury.
                    (MORE)

>   ONEIRICA SPOKESPERSON (cont'd)
>   As you have witnessed, David Auster
>   is an unstable and unreasonable
>   individual who actively planned and
>   committed industrial espionage,
>   criminal theft, grievous harm, and
>   treason. He is a criminal and
>   terrorist, with foreign affiliations.
>   We trust you will judge him suitably.

-- Unstable

Glitching environment, remix of vocals from throughout
experience in seemingly random order but maybe spelling out
something about how broken the system is.

>   ONEIRICA SPOKESPERSON (cont'd)
>   Thank you for your participation.

>   AURELIÉ CAIN
>   (Quoting)
>   "Describe this construct to me."

>   DAVID AUSTER
>   We even get it wrong with our
>   fiction. People wrote warnings but we
>   took them as goddamn handbooks,
>   manuals on how to hurt ourselves.

>   POLIVOKS
>   The Luddites were portrayed as anti-
>   technology, recidivists who resisted
>   progress, the capital F future. But
>   essentially they were unionists. They
>   did not want their hard-won skills
>   thrown by the wayside. They wanted
>   protections, a future. They just
>   wanted to be a part of things. Not
>   assigned to the refuse of history.
>   More victims of a dispassionate, so-
>   called rationality.

>   ZIP
>   I dunno man, I just wanna have a good
>   time. This sounds boring. There's no
>   right or wrong, only fun and boring.

>   DAVID AUSTER
>   I mean, in the end, what can I do?
>   What can anyone do?

>   TECH 2
>   Man I need a coffee. How about you?

INT. ONEIRICA OFFICES

Clearly the offices of some kind of startup that got a big
cash injection. Light sculptures, luxe reception desk,
plants, high sheen finish on surfaces, whatever the techbro
fashions of the time are.

-- Object Placements

Location #1:
Baseline:, Auster:,
Oneirica:, Unstable:

Location #2:
Baseline:, Auster:,
Oneirica:, Unstable:

Location #3:
Baseline:, Auster:,
Oneirica:, Unstable:

Location #4:
Baseline:, Auster:,
Oneirica:, Unstable:

Location #5:
Baseline:, Auster:,
Oneirica:, Unstable:

Location #6:
Baseline:, Auster:,
Oneirica:, Unstable:

Location #7:
Baseline:, Auster:,
Oneirica:, Unstable:

Location #8:
Baseline:, Auster:,
Oneirica:, Unstable:

Location #9:
Baseline:, Auster:,
Oneirica:, Unstable:

Location #10:
Baseline:, Auster:,
Oneirica:, Unstable:

-- Baseline

Celebrating funding, success.

                    HENRY WAKES
          This is it folks. We're in the black.
          Better than black. We're golden.
          We're set for the foreseeable.

                    IZUMI
          Something.

                    DAVID AUSTER
          Something.

-- Auster

Auster trying to warn about morality, ethics, etc.

                    DAVID AUSTER (cont'd)
          Look, Henry, we really have to think
          about the implications of what we are
          doing here.

                    HENRY WAKES
          David, please. Enough of this.

-- Oneirica

Auster being let go, cast as unreasonable and unstable.

                    SAMANTHA JOY
          Mister Auster. David. I'm going to
          have to ask you to leave.

                    DAVID AUSTER
          Leave? I built this place! If it
          wasn't for me, for IZUMI, HENRY would
          still be shilling his unworkable
          mental note replay garbage.

-- Unstable

What's the unstable office scene? Is it in the data center
stuff?

                    HENRY WAKES
          From here the city looks like a
          mirage.

                    DAVID AUSTER
          Perhaps. But I can't forget there are
          real people out there. With real
          lives.

                    HENRY WAKES
          What is real anyway? At what point do
          we draw a line? Is there a threshold?

                    DAVID AUSTER
It's more real than our memories. Let
alone these poor echoes we put
through machines and claim are the
real thing.

                    HENRY WAKES
What are we if not our memories? A
memory is about all we have. The
delay between our sensory inputs and
what we think of as "I" or "me" is
long enough that we are always
getting a version of events just
passed. Memories. We are memory
machines, walking around
accumulating, forgetting,
accumulating again. We are the sum
total of whatever we remember at any
given moment.

                    DAVID AUSTER
These conversations never do us any
good, Henry. I did enough spinning as
a kid and a teenager, wondering what
was and wasn't. It led me here, to
making this thing with you. But in
the end, I think I just want to stop
overthinking. None of this
complication of lived experience
works. We have to make do with what
is directly in front of us. We have
to accept the people we see in front
of us. Labels and abstractions and
misremembering? It's no help.

                    HENRY WAKES
Everything is... subjective.

                    DAVID AUSTER
Everything is built on consensus. If
we can't agree to see the humanity in
each other, what good are we?