

M Y S T I C A

" A m n e s i a "

Episode #05

by
Karl Kaufmann

Projects4TV@yahoo.com

323-469-5155
323-850-5128

FADE IN:

INT. AIRPORT DEPARTURE HALL, EARLY SEVENTIES LOOK -- DAY

CAROLINE, Mystica-like, ascends on an escalator. She gestures to somebody down the hall to hurry up.

In Penumbra's water green blazer, SYLVIE, reminiscent of Penumbra, comes charging toward the escalator. She almost runs into the SAINTLY MAN in white.

SYLVIE

Sorry sir.

He smiles, she rushes on.

Shouting from upstairs,

CAROLINE

Where did you get the blazer?

From the escalator, coming up,

SYLVIE

Nice, isn't it?

On Caroline, watching Sylvie approach,

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CABARET IN SAIGON -- MORNING

as Caroline wakes up, exhausted yet smiling.

From the center of the hall can be heard:

SYLVIE (O.S.)

Alright, everybody ready?

On Caroline, keeping quiet,

CUT TO:

"Saigon, Republic of Vietnam,

Early Morning of April 30, 1975"

over:

EXT. QUIET SAIGON STREET -- MORNING

as Sylvie's voice fades in singing "LA VIE EN ROSE."

FATHER ALAIN (70), strong, French priest rides past on a bike with an empty child's seat on the front.

As he withdraws,

CUT BACK TO:

INT. CABARET IN SAIGON -- MORNING

on Sylvie, singing, accompanied by VIETNAMESE MUSICIANS. The atmosphere is surreal, the playing academic. No forced cheering of passengers, it's not the sinking Titanic. Rather, a staged cheering of the musicians for their own sake. General tension and agony sit on everybody's face, except Caroline's.

As she reposes on a bench, listening with fading attention,

DISSOLVE TO:

"One Day Earlier"

over:

EXT. AIRCRAFT CARRIER OFF VIETNAM COAST -- AFTERNOON

as a Navy HELICOPTER lands. DOZENS of VIETNAMESE REFUGEES get off. ADULTS, FAMILIES with CHILDREN, a TODDLER. The chopper takes off for the next load.

Caroline observes the scene in hope of spotting somebody dear to her. VOICES REBOUND IN HER MIND.

CAROLINE (V.O.)
How about Sylvie?

HAROLD (V.O.)
She's already left Saigon.

CAROLINE (V.O.)
(happy, surprised)
What?

HAROLD (V.O.)
Philip just found out.

Another "53" lands. MORE REFUGEES. Same ritual.

As Caroline gets disappointed:

OFFICER (V.O.)
No ma'am, it appears there's no person under that name here.

CAROLINE (V.O.)
She's still in the compound?

OFFICER (V.O.)
Or in the embassy. Look, she could be
on any of the incoming 53's. Be
patient.

A third CHOPPER lands. YOUNG, MIDDLE AGED, and SENIOR FOLKS
get off.

As Caroline grows impatient:

OFFICER (V.O.)
Look, she could be on any of the
incoming 53's.
(rebounds)
Be patient. Be patient. Be patient.

As the third chopper takes off,

CUT TO:

INT. AIRBORNE NAVY "53" CHOPPER TOWARD SAIGON -- AFTERNOON

on PILOT and COPILOT showing fatigue but full of high spirits.
The sun is soon to set.

COPILOT
A marine platoon or two more wouldn't
have hurt.

PILOT
...2000 evacuees. And each time we
fly back it's the same amount.

NOISE from the back alarms them. The Copilot turns. Caroline
approaches in a marine outfit.

COPILOT
Who are you?

CAROLINE
Caroline Gephardt.

COPILOT
Gephardt? What's your rank?

CAROLINE
Caroline Gephardt, agent.

PILOT
What agent?

She takes off her helmet.

CAROLINE
Talent.

She shows her business card.

The Pilots laugh.

COPILOT
How did YOU get aboard?

CAROLINE
I sneaked in through the backdoor.

PILOT
How did you steal this uniform?

CAROLINE
I didn't.

PILOT
Lady, you suicidal?
(to Copilot)
What we gonna do? I'm not flying back.

CAROLINE
Oh please don't.

PILOT
Have you lost your orientation?

CAROLINE
Keep flying, Captain.

PILOT
What could YOU have possibly forgotten
in Saigon?

COPILOT
Her makeup case, right?

CAROLINE
You guys look tired. But you're doing
an excellent job.

The Copilot scans her business card.

COPILOT
Yeah, when all is over I'll apply with
you as a stunt pilot.

CAROLINE
I don't need another uniform.

PILOT
Was that the trade in?

COPILOT
A uniform in exchange for the promise
of an acting job?

CAROLINE
An extra.

PILOT
(laughs)
An extra?

CAROLINE
It's Hollywood!

COPILOT
For a marine uniform...

CAROLINE
And it's three sizes too big.

PILOT
Hey, I guess stunts don't fall in the
"talent" category, what?

CAROLINE
I represent singers. And I'm on the
way to get one.

PILOT
Lady, this is not a round trip, let
alone to rescue a singer.

CAROLINE
Well, then I better go casual.

She opens the marine shirt underneath which is her blouse.

COPILOT
Thinking on everything...

PILOT
Never thought entertainment biz is
that tough.

COPILOT
Is your singer in the compound at all?
Or is he not even there yet?

CAROLINE

She! She.

On first lights of nearing Saigon from chopper,

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

INT. CABARET IN SAIGON -- MORNING

as Caroline wakes up. She turns to the side and slumbers.

Realizing she is alone with Sylvie,

CAROLINE

Where's your band?

SYLVIE

Left. They asked me to rehearse a little. As a distraction.

CAROLINE

Great.

SYLVIE

One owns the place.

CAROLINE

What next?

SYLVIE

I'm still recovering.

CAROLINE

How did you get ahold of them?

SYLVIE

Through the nurse. They recognized me when it was all blank for me.

Caroline stands up.

CAROLINE

Do they have coffee in this junk?

Sylvie checks behind the counter. Lifts up a bottle.

SYLVIE

Champagne's all is left.

CAROLINE

Not exactly my choice.

SYLVIE

It's French.

CAROLINE

Okay, let's finish it off before the
North Vietnamese get a hold of it.

Sylvie gets two sleek glasses and uncorks the bottle.

POP!

SYLVIE

What are we celebrating?

CAROLINE

Still roaching around, I guess.
(enthusiastic)
Our reencounter!

SYLVIE

You wish it happened a couple days
earlier...

CAROLINE

Make it a couple weeks. Or in another
land.

Both take a gulp.

CAROLINE

What if the Commies find us drunk?

SYLVIE

Send us to rehab?

CAROLINE

Won't like their "indoctrinating" style.

SYLVIE

There's still a few journalists around.

CAROLINE

Don't tell me of journalists.

SYLVIE

All regulars here. Supposedly.

CAROLINE

All liars. Guaranteed.

LATER

Two champagne bottles stand empty on the floor. A third rolls through the room.

Sylvie has fallen asleep. Her head rests on the piano.

Caroline yawns. She sits up straight.

HER P.O.V.

reveals Sylvie on the piano as image blurs.

CAROLINE

When are your storytellers coming?

Sylvie lifts up her head.

SYLVIE

What?

As Sylvie's head drops back onto the instrument:

CAROLINE (O.S.)

Ah, never mind.

On Caroline, tired, falling asleep,

DISSOLVE TO:

"Three Days Earlier"

over:

EXT. EASTERN STYLE EATERY, SAIGON -- DAY

with calm, open food court. Caroline has lunch at a table by herself. HAROLD, mid-forties, the kind of guy who displays a brave face in adverse circumstances, approaches her. He sits down with a drink in one hand and food in the other.

HAROLD

Did you find her?

CAROLINE

No.

HAROLD

Passed by the embassy before. It's filling up. I wanna be out of here by tomorrow.

CAROLINE
Without Sylvie?

HAROLD
I don't like what the Communists are
cooking up outside town.

CAROLINE
They're not going to attack just yet.

HAROLD
Whatever. I wanna be gone.

CAROLINE
Not within the next 48 hours.

HAROLD
Okay. April the 29th.
(checks his watch)
At 2 p.m. I'll be out. You come with
me.

CAROLINE
I shall not leave without Sylvie.

PHILIP (50), recognizes Harold, a casual but old acquaintance,
and joins the party. He has a beer and a concerned look about
him.

Introducing himself to Caroline,

PHILIP
Philip Martin, with the Associates'
Press, how d'you do?
(to Harold)
Harold.

To Caroline, joking,

HAROLD
He's related to the Ambassador.

PHILIP
Cut the crap.

HAROLD
What's the insider's take?

PHILIP
Situation's damn serious. The Defense
Attaché wants the evacuation to proceed
as quickly as possible.

Harold glances at Caroline, self-righteous.

PHILIP

But the President, and Kissinger, and the Embassy fear that the haste might provoke a confrontation with the South Vietnamese Army. Some intelligence reports suggest it.

Caroline is concerned.

HAROLD

"If we go down, you're gonna go down with us," huh?

PHILIP

Precisely.

To Caroline,

HAROLD

We better pack and pack fast.

CAROLINE

Mister Martin --

PHILIP

Philip.

CAROLINE

Caroline. Philip, you got any idea how we could find Sylvie, the singer?

PHILIP

She Vietnamese? French?

Nodding,

CAROLINE

My dearest friend. And client.

HAROLD

Caroline, our 7th Fleet is deployed off the coast. For three weeks. Warships!

PHILIP

They're not gonna do anything. You forgotten the '73 treaty?

HAROLD

(surprised)
We're bluffing?