

A TRAPPED ECHO

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EXT. CHICAGO STREETS - SPRING - EVENING

Green and pink tree buds take our vision - swaying gently on tiny branches in the April breeze. The subtle chirping of birds can be heard - before the dissonant sound of an approaching L-train disturbs the tranquil air.

We see a city side street next to an L-station as a train comes to a halt - in the distance, looms the Chicago skyline.

We push in closer to a slender female figure walking down a sidewalk under the bedraggled L-line stop. She's alone - looking so fragile in this austere place, that one wants to keep an eye to make sure she stays safe.

SAVVY is her name, and she totes a medium duffle bag on her shoulder - bearing a color that complements her quirky overalls outfit. That's no mistake.

She checks her phone's GPS and walks along toward a large, industrial-looking warehouse building.

The night is getting darker as she walks along through the strident industrial-grounds.

EXT. WAREHOUSE ENTRANCE - EVENING

The back of the warehouse building is situated next to freight train tracks, the surroundings are desolate - full of concrete buildings and gravel parking lots.

Savvy approaches the back doors from a short stair where she see's MODEL ONE leaning next to the doorway. She's wrapped in a denim jacket - with a garter belt piece and stockings below. She's smoking a cigarette - a steely beauty.

SAVVY doesn't know how to interact with her -

SAVVY

Hi, I'm here for--

MODEL ONE
(Nonchalant)

Right through those doors.

SAVVY

...Thanks!

MODEL ONE takes a drag - exhales into the chill air.

INT. WAREHOUSE ENTRANCE - EVENING

The large steel door slams behind SAVVY - closing out most of the light. Flashes begin to ping off of SAVVYs face. She looks into the space -

INT. WAREHOUSE LOADING DOCK - SAME

Intermittent light flashes bounce off the surfaces of the dark walls. Red light beams streak across the large space -

Support pillars line the open studio-space, continuing almost endlessly into the dark reaches of the chamber. Lighting and camera equipment lie about in clusters - A deep red light illuminates various models being shot by photographers around the space. Photography backdrops hang behind some of them - This is an avant-garde/boudoir world that Savvy is being introduced to.

SAVVY continues to walk - past a couple clusters of different photographers/models. She crosses a bridge that's made up of large pieces of steel. Her shoe catches an edge - causing a reverberating crash. She continues along -

She sees RICH in the distance and waves - he's in all black, slick-looking, conversing with another photographer and model. He doesn't see her. LEAD MODEL has her hand on RICH'S shoulder as they talk. She sees SAVVY, as other models' contemptuous gazes also spot SAVVY from a distance - sizing up the newest entrant, before SAVVY is startled by the loud crisp voice of:

STUDIO MANAGER
SAVVY?... (Approaching)

SAVVY
(startled)
Yes! I'm here for--

STUDIO MANAGER
Follow me please.

At that - the mid-twenties, darkly-elegant STUDIO MANAGER walks SAVVY off into:

INT. DRESSING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A small dank space with a lighted mirror. SAVVY sets her bag down, and begins to unzip it. An older woman approaches from the corner:

MAKEUP/COSTUME ARTIST

Oh no, you'll be wearing what we provide - RICH set you up with a few outfits in the back. 34C, 25-34 right?

SAVVY

(After a beat)

...Yes, that's right.

SAVVY is set slightly aback by this. She goes into the changing room, and closes the door.

Different laced outfits are spread out on a rack. They're tagged with numbers, and she grabs for the one labeled '1'. As she pulls the white corset-like piece out, a garter belt and bottoms fall out from it to the floor. She looks petrified. CUT TO:

INT. STAGE TWO - PHOTOSHOOT SESSION - SAME

Different shots of models being photographed, flashes fill their eyes, some are alone - some are in groups posed together. RICH is in his element photographing the LEAD MODEL. He holds the camera landscape, then portrait - moving in and out. FLASH. FLASH.

WHITE

INT. DRESSING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

SAVVY exits the changing room - wrapped in a white gown, she's holding it closed around her, self-consciously.

The MAKEUP ARTIST then sits her down to apply gold paint, which is rubbed on her neck, and begins to drip down. The artist reaches for black mascara and 'sharpens the weapon' as:

SAVVY looks at herself apprehensively in the mirror - Almost frozen.

INT. STAGE TWO - PHOTOSHOOT SESSION

Moving in with SAVVY, the STUDIO MANAGER walks her to the central studio session in progress. She is placed with a group of girls being shot by RICH, who's shooting them against a large Victorian couch backdrop. A flash fills the space as other photographers move in with their cameras, occasionally going back to the 'video village' to preview the shots.

Other models stand nearby drinking vodka, taking Polaroid's of each other as SAVVY stands off to the side, spectating before her trial. LEAD MODEL bumps into her:

LEAD MODEL
Hey! Could you take our
picture?! (Hands SAVVY
the Polaroid)

SAVVY
(Startled)
...Sure! (Takes camera)

Three girls assume their positions almost immediately on cue - posing together as SAVVY snaps the shot.

LEAD MODEL walks over and takes the camera and photo that's ejected.

LEAD MODEL
(Fanning the photo)
Thanks. (Turns away)

LEAD MODEL turns back to SAVVY. Her condescent is pungent.

LEAD MODEL (CONT'D)
First time?

SAVVY shakes her head in agreement.

LEAD MODEL (CONT'D)
That's what I thought...

The model give her a devious smile before returning to her posse.

A photographer approaches SAVVY.

PHOTOGRAPHER ONE
SAVVY? Over here please (gesturing
to backdrop)

SAVVY is then moved around and fixed in different positions on the set - into the lit area. RICH looks to SAVVY from a monitor in the video village and is put into a sinister-transfixion by her glowing presence. He gives her a slight nod, as she returns a nervous smile.

The photo-shoot begins, as Savvy slides a white gown over her shoulder, showing more skin, trying to give different looks for the camera. She's good - there's an innocence within her that can't try to be anything but honest.

RICH gestures for her to remove a section - and more. She stands in the light like a timid, stricken faun - The other Models including the LEAD MODEL watch her from behind RICH, posed in the likeness of dark sirens.

The gown drops, Savvy stands in the light half-naked, covering her parts - trying to pose as flashes from the camera fill her trembling eyes.

WHITE

EXT. CHICAGO STREETS - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Traveling through the city, we see superimposed shots of SAVVY being photographed - over the city. We fade in and out on her, moving closer to her face - before ending on her eyes.

BLACK

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Out of the darkness a phone lights up on an end table. A hand reaches down and grabs it.

We see SAVVY looking at the phone - seated on a couch in a dark living room. Light from the city pours through a large window.

On the phone, she see's notifications for likes and replies on Instagram and other social media - about her 'photo'. She scrolls down, there looks to be hundreds.

SAVVY sits up and goes to her profile page in the phone app.

We see different photos of her - from the NoirLux Photoshoot. Thousands of likes on each photo. She ends on one of her posed with two men holding her body up in the air, her arms and legs hanging outstretched. She puts the phone down as we see her face: a look of sly satisfaction - before a slight discontent fills her eyes.

SAVVY approaches the large window overlooking the city, a dozen stories up. Holding that same look - She sees herself in the reflection with city-lights in the background.

RICH (V.O.)

You're very attractive, you know that?

SAVVY (V.O.)
(Embarassed)
...Thanks, but not like the girls
that--

RICH (V.O.)
Stop. I would know, I'm kinda in
the business of good taste.

SAVVY (V.O.)
I suppose that's true.

RICH (V.O.)
So you have the look - you're going
to get exposure like crazy from
this shoot, I know this. But I'm
not sure you...are you ready for
this?

SAVVY (V.O.)
It's what I've been wanting...
trust me.

RICH (V.O.)
Ok. Let's do it.

BLACK