

**Divine Consultants Motion Comic Series - Exploratory, early First Outline 54 x 1”
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1.

Episodes 1-6

1. Joy wakes up with head in her father Joseph’s papers: set up three levels of reality: dream/voice-over/‘present (story) time’ separated by Joy’s sarcastic teen v/o (she speaks everyone’s voices). We see the papers: graphs + equations about potions (for Soul Butter, without naming it) and info on H&H corporate structure and financials - a pic of island/address/coordinates for ‘Offshore & Off-Earth’.

2. Joy picks up a pair of pink and black glasses from among the papers and as she’s about to try them on, she hears a sound from outside. Joy sees spies looking at her house.

3. Joy dashes off downstairs to tell her parents Joseph and Abigail, who are in the middle of an argument while preparing for a sponsored academic fundraiser. Joseph hopes to attract more attention for his esoteric research.

4. Joy confronts Joseph, who berates her instead of listening to her. She conceals one of his notebooks (and the glasses) under her hoodie. Joy is talented with the computer and programming - she retreats to her computer to research.

5. Joy tells Abigail, who’s leaving Joseph.

6* Parents lock study door + go to fundraiser. Cliffhanger: while parents are at fundraiser, we see the same spies in another ballroom (H&H has been funding the Amicables to keep an eye on them and their results?). End with Joy looking, again, at the glasses, book and/or through window?

2.

Episodes 7-12

7. We begin with Joy waking up again, with page of the book she took with her flapping as if in the wind; shows details about her mysterious grandparents (non-western? something about Amicables’ lineage); interruption - knock on door by the now privatised Social Services: ‘something happened at/after the fundraiser, your parents are dead’ Must make a way to differ a bit from Series of Unfortunate Events storyline/premise. Can the parents still disappear?

8. “What? Let me see them!” Instead, they take her to a bureaucratic, if eccentric Social Services Housing Unit/ Exceptional or Special Children's’ Unit.

(possible scene: if Joy finds Joseph’s remaining notebooks in a hole in the ground/ fireplace etc. in episode 44, then in this episode 8, the officials could tell her to “take

everything important you need”, but when Joy goes to pack, she sees the officials snooping around the house/drawers for something, so she stashes her most important notebooks/glasses etc. away to be found in 44. Also, in episode 11. when the officials ask her if her parents “had anything of (research) value,” it would mean they didn’t find anything in her house.

An alternative to this episode 8-44 ‘notebook arc’, is Joy throwing the books in the fireplace in episode 37.)

On the way out of the house and down the streets, we are introduced to:

9. Show Joy’s real suburbia and dust from demolition in the background. Make one of the houses on her street dilapidated, taped/boarded up or being torn down.

10. The Social Services van stops at crossing. Her parents demise is all over the newspaper headlines as we see from a local newsstand. People in town are cold, looking at Joy: they know about her ‘weird’ family + research. As the van drives on, we see that an H & H building project is encroaching upon her home town, which is going to consume the town into a larger city.

11. Arriving at the Social Services Unit, we learn about Joy’s *lack of family background* (or grandparents’ backstory?). Joy sees another lonely girl in the Social Services Housing Unit, like a trapped horse in a stable. Joy is interviewed/asked for a (public?) statement/put before cameras and flashes to answer questions about her parents. Joy is startled and refuses to answer.

Maybe she’s asked if her parents owned ‘anything of value’ (question repeated) anything of academic/research value (to the unit/govt?) “What did they learn?” In the background, we see a young but persistent intern at the H&H corporation, Oogle, whose eye Joy catches. (or Oogle behaves towards Joy in a positive/negative memorable way).

Joy made to quickly sign a contract about paying for ‘the Office’ (privatised Govt.) becoming her guardian? Remember sarcastic v/o talking: “they wanted to make me the fall guy, but I wasn’t having it.” etc.

12* As Joy is all but abandoned by the Social Services, Joy outwits the officials and escapes with the lonely girl (some trick to get out, like “she’s my sister”...? Actually, this ‘trick’ is an opportunity to showcase Joy’s technological skills - like her computer hacking stuff - e.g. she knows how to disable ID card swipe machines, steals someone’s card and jams the ‘gate out’ machine allowing the girls to escape). We’re left with a dutch angle CU of leaflet/something on the floor (or brass sign) with H&H name/logo on it - indicating even the Social Services are part of H&H? Question to leave audience with: what’s going to happen to Joy as parents have died?

3.

Episodes 13-18

13. At a H&H party ('Amicable Free Party'): corporation is happy that the Amicables are no longer pestering them they have got rid of the Amicables. The intern Oogle is very reserved, awkward & suspicious at party, watching Ms Bliss planting faces against the photocopies with the boss.

14. Talk about 'the next stage of project development - this is going to be B-I-G!'. Vague sounding Power Points. Boss has big plans for Oogle, 17, who has been doing really well during his work placement and is guaranteed a sure job once he grows up.

15. Commotion at the party. A heart attack/ somebody has taken ill in the background?

16. Cut to single image of Joy, outside with binoculars, watching this all.

Joy and friend hiding at the back of a 'H&H Burger' rubbish bin, eating scraps. As her friend tucks in, Joy is furious, aiming the binoculars towards a metro/Light Railway station. A train whizzes past, revealing what she's staring at: the H&H headquarters. V/O: "I know this was the last place my father visited before the fundraiser... I was so disgusted by them, one night they had a party..."

17. Oogle alone at home. Sparse. Visual depictions of his career goals. A bit superficial though ambitious. Ms Bliss as the image of Oogle's aspirations: a symbol of his career/life style goals: "when/if I were older..."

18* Oogle ordered to 'cancel' the party heart attack employee's pension, because the company doesn't have (or is not interested in finding out about) any relatives. He feels a momentary pang of guilt (character growth opportunity).

4.

Episodes 19-24

19. Joy and her friend looking at her friend's parents/foster parents flat from a distance or calling them from a broken pay phone. As her nervous friend makes the call, Joy stands, in her thoughts. From the pay phone, they can see the abusive parents fighting and upon knocking on their door/calling them, they get a very aggressive welcome and, frightened, run for it!

20. Joy and her friend walk about town; seeing it - or new neighbourhoods - in new way. the environment/world changes to reveal the real estate development take over effects. A bit like the wall that gets increasingly abstract in Coraline? (if not too much magic without Joy's glasses?) This is the first of three episodes on changing neighbourhoods. The first one is a new urban apartment development.

21. The second neighbourhood ("hmm, changed") is a historical neighbourhood in the process of being demolished. Joy lifts a small notebook of her father's to display a lost building/office - now, it's a lot labelled 'H&H enterprises' (or some other fake company name for H&H)

22. The third neighbourhood is another historical neighbourhood, long since demolishedeven more different. It has been taken over by nature - and people around bin fires, resisting/fighting the changes. "Hey - (in thoughts) where am I?"

(maybe wasteland/slums/wild urban forest to reflect series s2, or a wild urban forest?)

23. The girls wander off the main street and find themselves among youths 'reclaiming and PRESERVING the local housing' (nice Moomin Valley like open house feel squatters). Led into a large building with a GIANT TREE GROWING UP INTO THE GLASS CEILING of the main foyer, the girls are accepted by the squatters' community, given soup. Joy's friend feels warm and safe.

24* Awareness about H&H growing. Joy shares her suspicions about H&H to their new friends, but they are already well aware due to being constantly harassed.

Cut to H&H headquarters: Oogle (OTS, CUs) reads newspaper for news stories. A story on the H&H corporation's take over plans; everyone is going to be made unemployed in order to be 're-employed' and become an H&H 'consultant' (although no-one knows what they are working on/product) - overseen by the H&H casting agency?

Another newspaper article about Joy talking about her parents. Journalist tries to scandalise parents, startled Joy claims the H&H corporation is somehow connected. In the background, Oogle's boss signs a monthly legal defense budget for spying/surveillance to defeat trouble makers and prevent anything like the Amicables happening again.

5.

Episodes 25-30

25. We see Joy (and her friend?) pulling boards/tape off the parents' house front door. She and her friend are/have been breaking into and sleeping in Joy's home, which has been closed down until H&H can either demolish the area or make money off the area's houses. They are trying to make food on the GAS COOKER. Joseph's door is still locked - Joy opens door.

26. Joy in father's room: examining the black/pink glasses (NB does she keep/leave them in ep. 4?). Joy puts the glasses on but gets a strong shock and dizziness - pulls them off, gasping.

27. backstory episode: we find out Joseph made two pairs of glasses, one for him and one for Joy. He shows them to Joy. They're meant for the afterlife (or maybe pink represents Abigail and black Joseph?). We see drawings of the glasses in a notebook.

28. Joy in father's room: finding out what the glasses can do e.g. deciphering pages of Joseph's books/notes - visualise this.

29. Joy goes out onto the street: finding out what the glasses can do, reveal in the outer

world. A short walk around reveals her suburb in all its levels - past/present, alive/dead/afterlife, revealing 'fakery'. Returning to the porch, she hears a repeating sound of her friend calling her back to reality.

30* Joy stands on porch steps, with her friend facing her and the squat friends having arrived behind her on the front lawn. Momentarily, Joy takes glasses off to get her bearings. The squat friends have come to check up on the socially awkward girls, and to invite/take them to a (literally) Underground concert/party (featuring Fly's earthly band)

Out of curiosity, Joy lets the glasses slip back on, and IMAGINES herself walk up to the underground squat concert/party. (The following happens in dream/pink glasses state. She is able to see two versions of reality - and her friends? - through the dream/glasses, like the later facades of Heaven/Hell in the DC series.). Whoa!

6.

Episodes 31- 36 (dreaming through pink glasses) - SUBSTITUTE glasses for s-thing?

31. concert/party at the squat building with the magnificent tree - Joy attending. In all the excitement, Joy loses her friend in the crowd. We follow her friend, and the squatters having a good time. We see the band play. But - something has caused the tree to catch fire (pyrotechnics?). There is panic. Joy, frightened about losing her friend, darts her eyes around. However, Joy's friend has noticed suspicious 'spies' and has followed them to safety outside the building. The squat flames rise higher (foreshadow Joy the Phoenix bird).

32. In the engulfing flames, Joy sees burnt shapes she thinks are people fallen over. She passes out - or wants to, due to guilt - leans on her hands, like a wounded, heavy bird on its wings.

The gigantic, burning tree crashes on top of Joy, sheltering her like a giant claw. The tree floods/rains/drains all of its life into liquid through its leaves/branches, drenching Joy and the ground and saving her her life. We see an animated sliver of ice creeping and spreading across the ground among the flames.....to meet the lifeless hand of Joy lying on the ground. The ground around Joy begins to crackle and freeze, uniting Joy and the ground, which all together melt into the ground. As the squat burns, a halo begins to form around Joy.

(alternative: her friend is back in the room, sees her and turns into a white 'force'/light, bleeding into the soil and travels through the ground to meet Joy from underneath. This version of her friend later shifts shape and merges into the Dark Lotus character, an alter ego of Joy's dark/light life choices.)

33. Teen sarcastic tone of v/o: what the hell is all this (I'm seeing/feeling/able to do)? Also: teiniviisastelu sarcastic/satirical action bits, so tone not just in dialogue/voice-over

(a lot of stuff in 32., so maybe — reverse the action: ice spreading first, then dramatic fall of tree in 32., and sarcastic 'dude, what's happening to me?' with powerless action in 33.?)

but end so that we can transition to the liquid/tap in basement, in 34.)

34. Transition from wet soil to tap (show ECU of tap, then EXT establishing shot of dilapidated shopping centre): Joy literally melts into the liquid of the soil and... travelling through the ground, she ends up in a tap in the deep cavernous basement of the local commercial shopping centre, where she is met by a glowing...

- ... figure, the Dark Lotus. Joy is reconstituted into solid form. We realise the world is uncanny ('new rules'). The figure's face is in the dark, but - sitting in lotus pose, caresses a baby, who looks like Joy - It disintegrates into ashes, which turns into water on the floor, flowing into the basement drains, alerting the rats. At the sides, empty cages with bird/chicken feathers everywhere.

35. Deeper in the womb/cave, more into the Dark Lotus: Joy is learning from the Dark Lotus about her identity and the nature of reality, The Dark Lotus (an alter ego of Joy's dark/light life choices) delivers mysterious message(s) a la 'there are secrets/something is close to you/you are close to something'. Joy is faced with different aged versions of herself : very young, old woman. "Your life is not set in stone: you have many options, turning points in life. There are many possible yous." (a la the Bertolt Brecht dialectics/ Abre los Ojos/Vanilla Sky line: "Every passing minute is another chance to turn it all around").

Joy gets 'powers' of sight - what are these? - and confronts spies in 'dream time'. Glowing white coats appearing in the very dark shadows of the basement. Joy is partially aware of life and sounds from the 'real world' like the fire, her friend, to contrast realities?

36* Joy dreaming herself in Joseph's study: she imagines an even more hidden, secret door, room or space: imagines a mysterious truth as shown by the Dark Lotus, and that there is some strong link between this light and her father. We see a really strong bright torch light right in the eyes, POV shot style. The light breaks up into prismatic beams.

"Whoa, man!"

7.

Episodes 37-42 (still dreaming through pink glasses)

37. Joy still researching Joseph's notes again and getting anxious - wants to ascend/leave this 'special version' of her world and out of the cave-basement. Misses her parents (visual reminder of goals), but is angry at them for leaving and confused about what she is experiencing. (alternative to episode 8+44 'notebook arc'): Joy throws the notebooks into the fireplace in anger, but doesn't light them (works like a flashback).

38. Joy, worried about her sanity, sees herself trying to resume normal life/be normal, but awkward and failing miserably. She is still awkward and without people skills, with an unusual ability to see through 'the bullshit' of things.

39. She walks out for fresh air - eerily calm, sedate and sanitised familiar surroundings. She explores her hometown, which has now become the ideal dream H&H corporate IKEAish suburbia. Lots of people working as 'consultants' on...something.

40. She is met by her friend, who is now very social and fake cheerful, bouncing about in new neat and tidy, 'respectable' clothes. Her friend introduces Joy to 'new friends', white polo-necked versions of the squat friends from the concert/party.

Something, in all of this suburban whiteness, is TRYING HARD TO MAKE Joy act unnaturally for her and forget what she's learned about her identity and the nature of reality from the Dark Lotus. As if an invisible hand were pushing her forward. Maybe, comedically, a new voice is trying to take over her voice-over narration. "H&H is the new reality/normality. Here, try this spritzer/milkshake/(Soul Butter like product, or jumper she must pull over her head etc.). Wouldn't you prefer to live in a house like... this one?"

41. Joy walks up to an innocent looking corner shop/butcher's, the entrance of which looks like a very small building, but inside, the space expands to a large empty supermarket (like Dawn of the Dead supermarket - we are leading to the same space as the Dark Lotus basement). Outside, on the window, there is a note: 'New recruits needed'. Someone has written 'meat' on top of 'recruits' in red felt tip pen. Jump cut to a vision Joy gets from her series episode 1 nightmare - Joy in a meat grinder!

42* Repeat of bright light straight in the eyes imagery - cut from that POV to reverse: it's just her friend shining a torch light in her face, Joy passed out from the carbon monoxide. As everything looks blurry to Joy, we see flames in the background, her friend and squat friends putting out the fire.

8.

Episodes 43-48 (returning to an altered 'normal world')

43. Joy is dragged back to reality, for real this time. Freezing, she stands up in the ashes of her parents' house ... the first floor is burnt badly.

They all put the fire out, wondering why no fire brigade etc. came to help. (privatisation jokes?). A beat passes, and the pollution triggered (acid?) rain begins. Sarcastic comment from Joy, looking up at the remaining floor of the house: "sure, now it rains..." The rain drenches the house. (opportunity to draw dramatic rainy environments)

(alternative: wonky electricity in the house suddenly jolts the television on: "of course, pollution and climate change...doesn't exist"/"to prove that climate change isn't real..")

44. Joy's friends leave her and beg her to come with them to the squat (maybe they're leaving for the countryside, which is still out of range of H&H?). She thanks them but refuses, because she has a plan - she now wants, not just has to, confront the questions/answers - higher level H&H secrets. Joy digs up a hole in the ground/ the bin outside/bin in her father's room to find his important notebooks stashed away in episode 8, when the officials came for her and the research. She discovers, that the notebooks have ironically

been saved from the fire.

(An alternative to this episode 8-44 'notebook arc'... is Joy thinking 'to hell with my parents' and throwing the books in the fireplace in episode 37 and now checking the fireplace here in episode 44.)

45. Joy lays down and sleeps in the half burnt down house (only ground floor burnt - Norwich house outside town/area which doesn't call attention from the authorities, visual cliffs etc.), shivering, clutching the remaining notebook/glasses (glasses a bit funny, like the Calamari Unioni film) ...?

46. As Joy sleeps: dreams about happier times in South America - dream starts from recent arguing parents, to happier parents and imagery of a younger Joy.

47. (South American tradition) Magic Realism Dream Episode: deeper into family in South America, and something in their trust in her which sows the seed for her real world motivation and strength - her grand/parents speak directly to her from 'beyond'?

48* The wind (again?) wakes her up. Big realisation/beginning of training scenes: There is a wealth of information that is much deeper in the H&H vaults, that she can only get at the headquarters/via H&H, and not Joseph's notebooks - CU image in notebook/voice-over about this. Joseph had only a vague notion of where this would be - somewhere in the headquarters?. Joy realises she must return to the Social Services Housing Unit and pretend that she needs them, but in reality she is regrouping and researching H&H to break in. They are unaware about her parents house burning down (or would throw her out?).

9.

Episodes 49-54

49. Actual Joy's 'training and preparing' episodes: drawing plans, and maybe consciously silly Rocky etc. 'training' sequences for giggles! She begins by ransacking Joseph's bookcases, drawers and notes for clues.

'Plan Oogle' (Oogle as the 'target' for getting close to H&H information - need to strengthen focus on Oogle earlier - as a target for Joy - for getting more information on H&H and her parents). "How do I get close to H&H?... I need a way in." Then, she realises: remembers Oogle from the Social Services Unit interview/interrogation, whose eye she caught. CU photo of Oogle (episode 11)

50. walks back to the Social Services Housing Unit through a changed town... maybe she alternates with and without glasses, seeing the a proper kind of growth and potential, how areas/people have two sides/fates? Joy bumps into someone on the way, like a down and out ex H&H executive. When she acts kindly to him (sees his real vulnerability with the glasses) and e.g. gives him money or a sandwich, he praises her in an exaggerated way 'you're our/my new Messiah!' Sarcastic and stunned teen reaction to an adult: "I don't want to be! (your Messiah) - a bit like Fisher King/Robin Williams or Trading Places/

Eddie Murphy? Need to show complete conversion of this man, while at the same time it's a clown like reduction to the streets from the skyscrapers.

Could there be random oasis/oases of nature in this progressively more denuded city - like sheltered inside brutalist concrete (like the huge tree inside the squat)?

51. Stalking Oogle/planning. Establish that Joy has already returned to the (H&H) Social Services Unit to get closer to all the information, and is using it as her base. She knows a back/side door (basements again? to get out undetected. Stalking Oogle at his home and daily activities, going to the corner shop, following on the street Edward Hopper/noir detective style. Maybe she could use the phone booth to call him, hear his voice or let him know of her/spook him? His flat...living with parents, I guess? Or, his flat could be a dorm room OR! company accomodation during the work placement? Could be - that would leave him alone, no drawing of parents etc.)

52. Joy: more 'training and preparing' sequences: Joy breaks into Oogle's flat to get a key, plans or something necessary for the H&H break in - after getting what she wants from Oogle. She tries to/breaks into the Social Services Unit's H&H computers network (foreshadowing her computer skills at the beginning of the series).

53. Joy: "I can/am ready to leave the (real) world now" (hmm. for target audience: not in a suicidal sounding way, but in a heroic self-sacrificial Indiana Jonesy way?)

54* Season Finale: Joy sets off for her mission: e.g. the 'outside H&H' downshot, with Joy looking up at the window out of which she's eventually going to crash in the YLE demo and beginning of series.

Denouement/taking care of loose ends *but* add intriguing new threads/hooks leading *into* series? See the 'Extra ideas' text!