

# Road Memoir : libretto

## EPISODE #2 : "On Waking"

**The Investigator (spoken) :**

If Sri Lanka had been the turning point for mobile phone evidence. 10 years later, when the conflict kicked off over here, the processing techniques had become more established.

I'd receive these phones in catalogued boxes of twenty or thirty. Each sealed in clear, coded evidence bags. Sorted by where and when, and from whom, they'd been recovered. Some cracked, broken, muddied. Some with dried blood on em. I'd charge em up, switch em on and see what I could find.

**The Woman (sung) :**

I only went because he's my brother.  
Only went to keep him safe.  
Tagged along to protect him.  
From himself as much as from anyone else.  
To keep him out of trouble.

What am I doing here?  
Deep in a wood  
Speaking to myself  
Trying to find words  
Trying to describe  
The indescribable.  
To capture  
What I have seen.

Last night I slept here.  
Here beneath the trees.  
Except I didn't sleep -  
Couldn't sleep -  
Thinking of what I had seen.  
And the fear  
And the certainty  
That today I would  
Return to what remains  
Of my home, my life.

**The Investigator (spoken) :**

I saw a lot of shaky video of explosions and smoke and shouting crowds. We've become programmed to lift our phones and press record as soon as anything of interest comes into view but a lot of that stuff is of little use by itself. In situations like that, where things are

moving fast, people don't have time to think about the quality of what they're videoing. They don't consider that, 12 months down the line, some guy in an office is going to be watching these films and trying to piece together the last moments of their lives.

**The Woman (sung) :**

At the first road block  
Anyone without a passport  
Or ID  
Was being detained.  
I don't have a thing.  
Just a phone  
And the clothes that I  
Stand up in.

I cannot fall  
Back into their hands.  
Can't be arrested again.  
Can't go back,  
Back behind those walls.  
Can't answer those  
Questions again.  
Suffer their insuations.  
Endure their threats.

I turned and ran.  
Back here.  
Back to the trees.  
Back to the safety  
Of the woods.

Somehow the birds still sing  
Their fitful song.  
A counterpoint  
To low whispers  
Of violence, carried  
On the dense,  
Poisoned breath  
Of the wind.

I've sat for hours,  
Thinking.  
Thinking.  
Watching the plumes  
Of smoke rise  
In the summer sun.

**The Investigator (spoken) :**

Every now and then however, you'd come across something - a nugget - that you just knew could clarify or change or reveal. Something of

real importance. And you had to take a moment to remind yourself that the person who filmed that didn't upload it to an evidence website, didn't submit it in person, didn't email it or text it. That person probably didn't survive. Possibly they died recording that very film and this phone, this photo, this video, is their last word.

**The Woman (sung) :**

I couldn't save him.  
From his beliefs,  
From himself,  
From their dark gaols,  
From their tortures.  
And now he's lost  
And I'm marked too.  
For my allegiance.  
For my blood.  
For my love for my brother.  
Can I save myself?