

Andrea Lloyd  
Eraserhead  
Directed by David Lynch  
Aspect ratio: 1.85:1

**Shot 1: 665 frames, 28 seconds**

**Size:** The shot starts as a close-up shot and turns into an extreme wide shot as the character walks away from us.

**Sound:** The sound is very simple but effective. It sounds like a low hum of a machine or an airplane flying. The sound mirrors Henry's cold industrial surroundings.

**Contrast Dominant(s):** The movie is black and white. The shot starts out as a white flash those transitions from the previous shot. After transitioning there are no pure whites only the cold grey of the buildings. Henry's skin tone blends in with the grey of the buildings. The darks in the shot are Henry's hair and clothing, and the shadow that he walks into. The shadow is a strong triangular shape that leads our eye to where Henry is going to walk.

**Character Movement:** We see Henry close-up, then turn and walk along the z-axis toward the dark shadow. He gradually becomes dwarfed by his surroundings as he gets smaller and smaller until

he disappears into the shadow. This is an effective way of introducing the character and then showing how he fits into his surroundings.

**Character Proxemics:** Henry starts in the foreground looking slightly to the right of us with the large stone wall far in the background. Then turns so his back is towards us and walks towards the wall until he is also in the background and eventually disappears out of the shot into the shadow.

**Camera Movement:** The camera stays still during this shot. This is to emphasize the character movement from the foreground to the background, and show how he becomes dwarfed by his surroundings as he walks out of the frame

**Camera Angle:** The angle of the shot is eye level. This is because we are coming out of the nightmarish scene before, and we relate with Henry's frightened eyes. The camera stays at the same place as Henry turn and walks away hurriedly into the shadow.

**Lens Used:** A wide-angle lens was used for this shot, to accentuate the movement Henry takes along the z-axis. The wall is in focus and stays in focus as Henry moves from the foreground to

the background. This reinforces Henry's relationship with the surroundings.

**Depth Of Field:** The shot is in deep focus. Deep focus is needed to center on Henry as he goes from the foreground to far into the space of the background and then disappears into the shadow.

**Lighting:** The shot has an overall middle grey tone. There are the dark blacks of the shadow and Henry's clothing. It is a combination of high key and soft lighting so there is not a variety of different shades. The light source is the sun since this is an outside scene and the lighting is even. It is day but it seems dark like the sky is overcast. The light source is not very intense but does seem to be coming from the upper right. The lighting in this shot tells us that Henry's surroundings are cold and industrial, devoid of life.

**Screen Graphics/Composition:** At first Henry is the main object in the frame with the line of the dark shadow in the background leading our eye down to his face. As Henry walks toward the shadow the line leads our eyes to the point where Henry will enter the shadow. Another compositional element is the wall that creates a frame for Henry and the shadow. Henry's dark clothes keep us focused on him until he merges with the shadow.

**Editing Style:** We fade in from the previous shot, which ends a dream sequence. The next shot is more of Henry walking which is a straight cut. We fade in to Henry staring back at us already in the shot. We then follow him as he leads us out of the frame into the next shot. This is an A roll shot. The emphasis is on mise en scene. The importance is the action of his walking into the shadow.

**Time:** We have just come out of a dream sequence. That is why we are focused on his face and the terrified look in his eyes in the beginning of this shot. After this we continue through real time as he trudges along to his apartment.

**Subtext:** The point of the shot is bridging the sequence that we just came out of in his head to his reality. We start with the close-up of his face and then watch him become smaller and more insignificant as he walks into the shadowy background. The sound settings and composition all tell us about the cold dark world he lives in.

**Shot 2: 728 frames 31 seconds**

**Size:** This is a wide shot. The character is shown in the landscape.

**Sound:** This shot begins with a long horn like that of a train then some faint fun house music can be heard in the distance.

**Contrast Dominant(s):** The contrast dominant of this shot is the black of Henry's figure against his grey surroundings. There are no bright whites in the shot. The foreground is slightly lighter grey

**Character Movement:** Henry moves into the frame at the left then moves to the right along the x-axis. He walks up and down small piles of dirt pausing occasionally to examine something.

**Character Proxemics:** Henry is moving from left to right through the frame. He goes back and forth between having his back to us and being in profile.

**Camera Movement:** The camera stays still during this shot. This is to emphasize the up and down movement of the character and reflect the quiet stillness of the setting.

**Camera Angle:** The angle of the shot is eye level. This is the best angle to watch him walk up and down the piles of dirt and rubble.

**Lens Used:** A normal lens is used for this shot. Each plane of the shot is in focus.

**Depth Of Field:** The shot is in deep focus. Deep focus is needed to center on Henry and his movement

**Lighting:** see shot 1

**Screen Graphics/Composition:** This shot is divided into foreground, middle ground, and background. Our eye follows Henry in his black suit as he walks up and down pile of dirt and rubble in the middle ground. A brick wall with a broken window is in the background and the foreground is dirt and weeds. These things give the composition texture and variation to make it more interesting especially when working in black and white.

**Editing Style:** Both before and after this shot are straight cuts. It begins with Henry entering the frame at the left and

cutting to a closer angle as he gets more to the right of the frame. This is an A roll shot. The emphasis is on mise en scene.

**Time:** Real time is the focus at this point in the film. This shot continues Henry's walking from the previous shot to the close-up in the next shot.

**Subtext:** The point of the shot is showing the next step in Henry's long trip to his apartment. At this point in the movie we are being introduced to Henry and his barren world that he lives in. The way he walks up and down the pile of dirt tell us that he is simple and innocent.

*or that he lives  
in a void world*

**Shot 3: 534frames, 19 seconds**

**Size:** This is a closer full shot from the last shot.

**Sound:** The faint fun house music can still be heard in the background, along with the low machine hum. Is he moving toward the music?

**Contrast Dominant(s):** The contrast dominant of this shot is the black of Henry's figure against his grey surroundings. This shot has a few darker greys but Henry's black suit still stands out.

**Character Movement:** Henry moves into the frame at the left then moves to the right along the x-axis. He stops as he steps in a puddle of water then continues out of the frame on the right.

**Character Proxemics:** Henry is moving from left to right through the frame. He goes back and forth between having his back to us and being in profile.

**Camera Movement:** The camera stays still during this shot, again to emphasize movement in the frame.

**Camera Angle:** We are slightly higher in this shot. This is to better see the action of Henry stepping in the puddle.

**Lens Used:** A normal lens is used for this shot. Each plane of the shot is in focus.

**Depth Of Field:** The shot is in deep focus. Deep focus is needed to center on Henry and his movement and his surroundings.

**Lighting:** see shot 1

**Screen Graphics/Composition:** This is a closer version of shot 2 but from a slightly different angle. Henry is closer to the

foreground and our eye follows his dark figure through the frame.

**Editing Style:** Both before and after this shot are straight cuts. This is an A roll shot. The emphasis is on mise en scene.

**Time:** Real time is the focus at this point in the film. This shot continues Henry's walking from the previous shot to the next shot.

**Subtext:** This is the next step in Henry's journey. We are watching his actions in his surroundings. We are following his movement in and out of the frame. His flow of movement is disrupted when he steps in the puddle. We get small glimpses into his character by the way he walks and nonchalantly shakes the water of his shoe and keeps on going.

**Shot 4:478 frames, 16 seconds**

**Size:** This is an extreme wide shot. The character is shown in the landscape.

**Sound:** The music is gone and now there is the sound of a train in the background. It starts with a faint horn and then the sound of a train moving across tracks.

**Contrast Dominant(s):** The contrast dominant of this shot is still the black of Henry's figure against his grey surroundings. The windows in the background are a dark grey but Henry still stands out in stark black. There are no pure whites.

**Character Movement:** Henry again moves into the frame at the left then moves to the right along the x-axis exiting the frame. This continues to keep continuity for if he went the other direction then it would be disorienting.

**Character Proxemics:** We see Henry in profile walking next to an old building.

**Camera Movement:** The camera stays still during this shot. Again our focus is Henry walking from one side of the frame to the other.

**Camera Angle:** The angle is eye level. The position of the camera thus far gives the feeling of watching him from far away in observation.

**Lens Used:** A normal lens is used for this shot. Each plane of the shot is in focus.

**Depth Of Field:** The shot is in deep focus. Deep focus is needed to center on Henry and his movement.

**Lighting:** (see shot 1)

**Screen Graphics/Composition:** The main components of this shot are Henry and the building. There are the rectangular shapes of the windows and vertical lines on the building leading down to Henry. There are also phone lines that lead our eye horizontally. The geometric shapes are broken up by the more organic shapes of the stains on the walls.

**Editing Style:** Again straight cuts, starting when Henry enters the frame and ending when he exits it.

**Time:** Real time is the focus at this point in the film. This shot continues Henry's walking from the previous shot to the close-up in the next shot.

**Subtext:** The point of the shot is showing the next step in Henry's long trip to his apartment. Along with observing our

character and his environment, we start to notice that there are no other people.

*exactly*

**Shot 5: 489 frames, 17 seconds**

**Size:** This is <sup>0</sup>wide shot.

**Sound:** The sound is the low hum of a machine with a few rusty creaks every so often.

**Contrast Dominant(s):** The contrast dominant is no longer Henry. The composition has been split down the middle. The top half is black and dark greys. The bottom half are lighter values of grey. There are no pure whites.

**Character Movement:** This is the first time that Henry walks towards us and we can see his face. Henry moves along the Z-axis. He becomes bigger as he walks toward us. Henry has entered a more confined space so he is weaving in and out of a maze of industrial structures.

**Character Proxemics:** Henry is facing the viewer and walking towards us along the z-axis. He is looking around curiously at his surroundings.

**Camera Movement:** The camera is still again to watch and analyze Henry's actions and movements within his surroundings.

**Camera Angle:** The angle is eye level. The position of the camera thus far gives the feeling of watching him from far away in observation.

**Lens Used:** A normal lens is used for this shot. Each plane of the shot is in focus. Space is represented as it looks there is no distortion.

**Depth Of Field:** The shot is in deep focus. Deep focus is needed to center on Henry and his movement along the z-axis.

**Lighting:** The scene is still taking place outdoors but Henry is now walking through more narrow spaces. The lighting is still soft as if it is an overcast day. There are more shadows but the shot is lighted evenly.

**Screen Graphics/Composition:** This shot has more to look at than the previous shots of the open spaces that Henry has walked through. Henry comes from the background and walks through a maze of old pipes and dirt with a hole in the ground nearby that is filled with water. Our eye still follows Henry even though he does not stand out as well in this darker space. The objects in the space create a path for Henry to walk through and our eye follows along with it.

**Editing Style:** The previous shot is a straight cut connecting Henry's travel through the two spaces. The next cut is to a point of view shot of Henry looking around at his surroundings.

**Time:** Real time is the focus at this point in the film. This shot continues Henry's walking from the previous shot to the point of view shot that comes next. The rhythm of the scene so far is that the shots are becoming shorter.

**Subtext:** Henry's movement has been very important thus far and the spaces that he has moved through. He started in very open lighted areas and is getting into narrower, darker spaces. This could be a metaphor for Henry's mind.

*good*

**Shot 6: 237 frames, 6 seconds**

**Size:** Henry is not present in the shot. This is of Henry's point of view.

**Sound:** The sound is the low hum of a machine with a few rusty creaks every so often.

**Contrast Dominant(s):** The shot is of the hole that Henry is walking by. It is filled with muddy water and has pipes and branches sticking out of it. The shot has an overall blackness to it. The blackness is broken up by the reflections off the surface. The black water and the reflections contrast against each other.

**Character Movement:** The movement in the shot is from the camera as if Henry is looking around at the water

**Character Proxemics:** NA

**Camera Movement:** The camera moves to show us Henry's point of view. It moves from the left to the right in a smooth but irregular manner so we can view what Henry sees.

**Camera Angle:** The camera is at a high level to act as Henry looking down.

**Lens Used:** A normal lens is used for this shot, space looks as normal.

**Depth Of Field:** The shot stays in focus. There are a lot of details even though the shot is so dark.

**Lighting:** The light from the sky is causing the reflections on the water but the lighting seems to be getting darker as we go from shot to shot.

**Screen Graphics/Composition:** Our eye follows with the camera as if looking through Henry's eyes. The texture and detail is very rich in the shot. The reflections create odd shapes on the water and we can see small glimpses of the architecture around Henry. The forms seem abstract and sometimes look like an Abstract Expressionist painting.

**Editing Style:** The transition to this point of view shot (insert), is a cross dissolve and the transition out is a cross dissolve. This shot is much shorter than the other shots. This was a short glimpse into what Henry is seeing.

**Time:** Real time is still the focus; this was just a look at Henry's point of view.

**Subtext:** The point of this shot is to break up the shots of Henry walking and give us a view from his perspective.

**Shot 7: 764 frames, 25 seconds**

**Size:** This shot is a medium full shot.

**Sound:** The sound is the low hum of a machine with a few rusty creaks every so often.

**Contrast Dominant(s):** The scenery and lighting has become much darker. Henry does not stand out like he did in the earlier shots. The foreground in which Henry is in is very dark. The background is lighter but only enough to separate it from the

foreground. Throughout the shot there are a few lights scattered to break up the darkness.

**Character Movement:** Henry is walking but now the camera is following with him.

**Character Proxemics:** Henry is in profile as he walks towards the right of the frame.

**Camera Movement:** The camera moves with Henry as he walks to the right. It then stops when Henry hears a noise and stays still as he moves out of the frame. This is to show the factory behind him as he walks. Then the camera stops to emphasize the sound that Henry hears in the background, and relate to his movement.

**Camera Angle:** The angle is eye level. This is to relate to Henry especially when he is startled from the sound that he hears.

**Lens Used:** The lens used was most likely a wide-angle lens to give added depth and detail to the background.

*is there greater size drop off on the z-axis?*

**Depth Of Field:** The shot is in deep focus. This is needed for all the background details. The background is important to add to the eerie feeling of the shot.

**Lighting:** In each shot there are more and more shadows. The sun has gone down. There are lights on in the background but there is still some light coming from the sky. The lighting relates to the story for we are going deeper into Henry's mind.

**Screen Graphics/Composition:** There are many graphics in this shot. Henry walks along a chain link fence that is in shadow. The camera movement helps us keep focused on Henry because he blends into the darkness. In the background Henry passes barrels and more pipes and industrial objects. Every item is cold and manmade. When Henry hears the sound he is in front of a large black pillar. This gives a dark shadowy presence that adds to Henry's fright.

**Editing Style:** The previous shot was a transition and the next cut is a straight cut. The camera stops moving then Henry exits the shot at the right. He then enters the next shot at the left. This is important for continuity.

**Time:** We are still traveling through real time.

**Subtext:** This shot is the darkest of the scene as if we are traveling with Henry through his mind and this is a deep dark corner. There are no other people around only noises here or

there. The setting is cold and lonely. The camera is moving more now at this point of the scene as if we are traveling with Henry.

**Shot 8: 621 frames, 19 seconds**

**Size:** This is wide shot that moves into a full shot as Henry enters his apartment building.

**Sound:** The sound is the low hum of a machine with a few rusty creaks every so often. Towards the end of the shot there is a loud noise that scares Henry.

**Contrast Dominant(s):** The contrast dominant is the point where Henry enters the frame. His dark suit contrasts against the light shining on the stairs

**Character Movement:** Henry enters the frame on the left. He walks to the right along the x-axis and the camera follows him, as he slightly gets bigger.

**Character Proxemics:** Henry is walking to the right but also somewhat walking towards us.

**Camera Movement:** The camera pans as Henry moves to the right following him to his door.

**Camera Angle:** The angle is eye level. The position of the camera thus far gives the feeling of watching him from far away in observation.

**Lens Used:** A normal lens is used for this shot. Each plane of the shot is in focus. Space is represented as it looks like there is no distortion.

**Depth Of Field:** The shot is in deep focus. Deep focus is needed to center on Henry and his movement along the z-axis and x-axis.

**Lighting:** The shot is not as dark as the last shot. Henry enters an alley near a brick building in which he enters a side door. The main light source is from above. It does not seem to be daylight but more like moonlight. It is soft lighting because there are a variety of shadows.

**Screen Graphics/Composition:** In this shot we are no longer in the cold industrial plant setting but in a quiet old building setting. Everything is made of wood and brick instead of steel.

The old stairs on the side of the building point to Henry as he walks along the side of it.

**Editing Style:** The previous shot and next shot are straight cuts. This is the final space that Henry passes through before he enters his building. The two cuts connect Henry's journey. There doesn't seem to be a set rhythm to the cutting. The cuts are being decided by connecting the movement and the journey.

**Time:** Real time is the focus at this point in the film. This shot continues Henry's walking from the previous shot to the point of view shot that comes next.

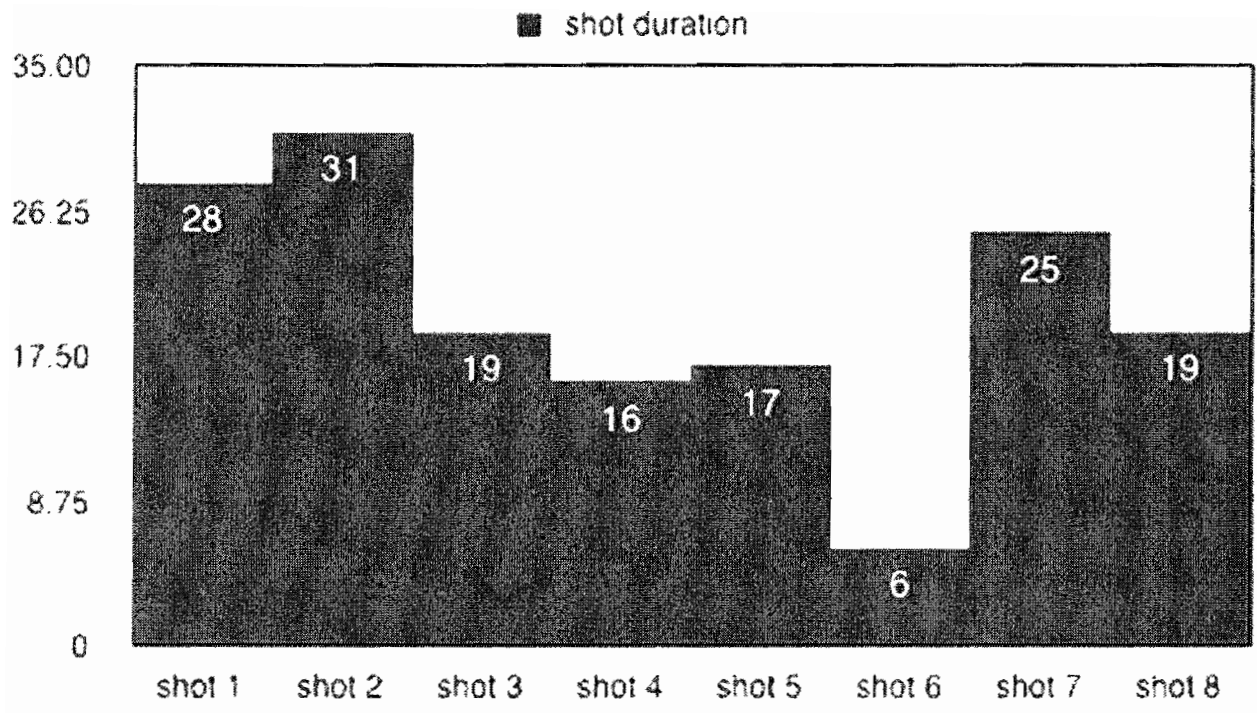
**Subtext:** This last shot is not as dark as the previous shots. The composition and setting is quiet. This is Henry's safe place. It's strong because it's made out of brick and the soft lighting gives it a safe feeling.

## Summary

At the start of the scene Henry is looking back at us with a frightened look on his face. Then he hurries off walking into the shadow and a large gate, which starts his journey. He starts off walking through open, well-lit spaces and as he proceeds the spaces become more narrow and cramped. Also the lighting becomes darker. Right before Henry reaches his goal the scene climaxes when Henry hears the sound and the dark shadow is looming over him. He then reaches the safe confines of the brick building.

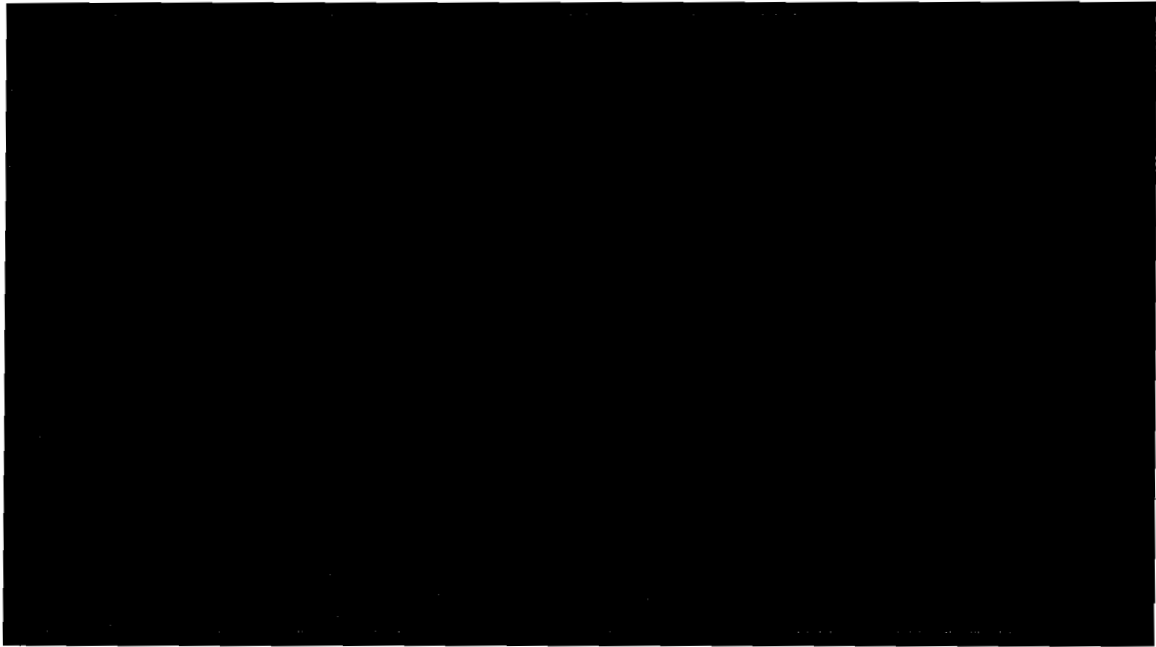
I think that David Lynch is showing us the world inside the mind of Henry. He uses lighting, locations and camera techniques to create a cold lonely detached world. The farther along we get the darker and more cramped things get as if we are getting deeper into the mind. Finally Henry reaches a place that he can retreat to.

yes  
Andrea:  
This is an excellent analysis -  
showing a solid understanding of Lynch's  
technique here. His depiction of the external  
world certainly indicates the sense of threat  
and coldness the character feels.  
GOOD WORK!  
I'd like a copy, please.  
A

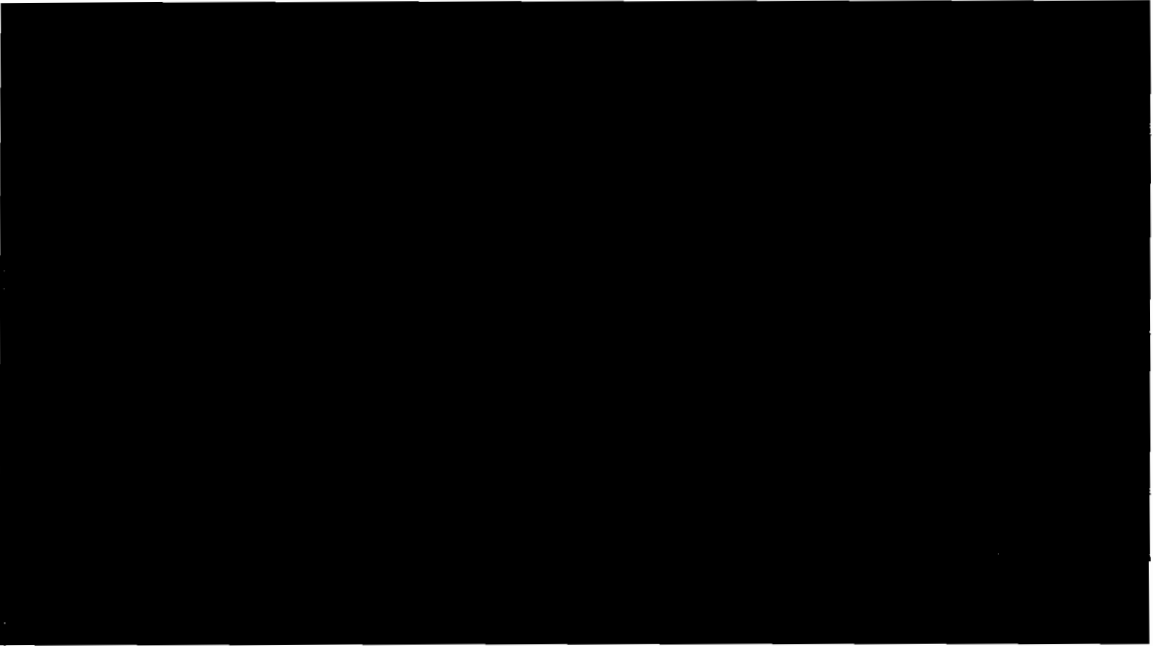
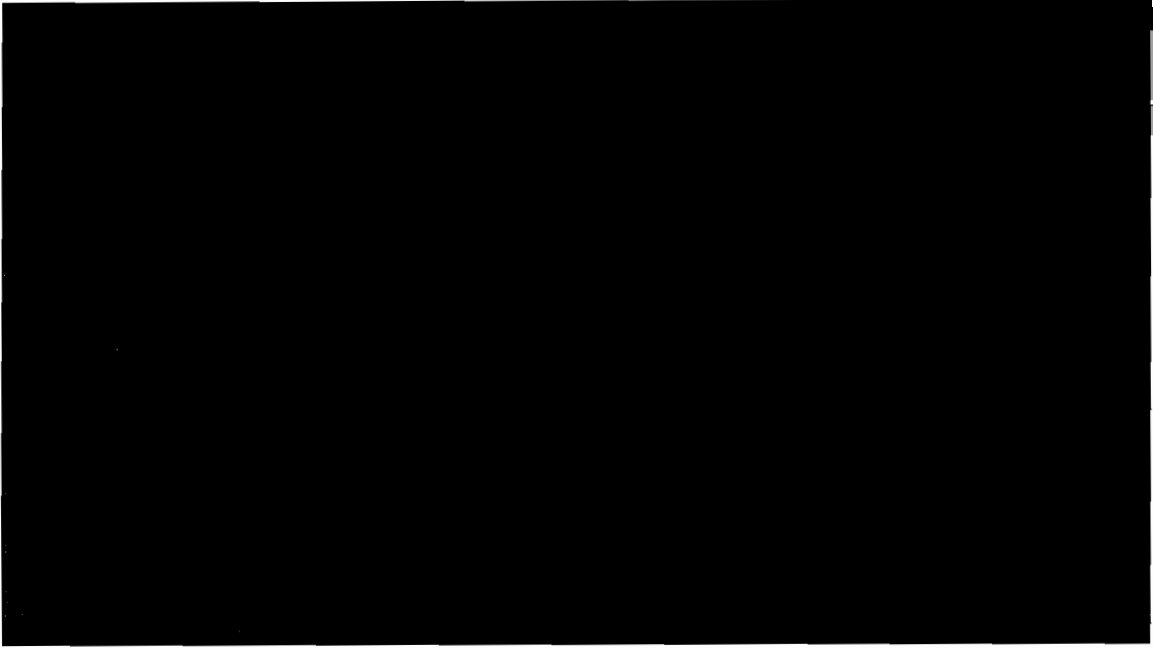


Andrea Lloyd

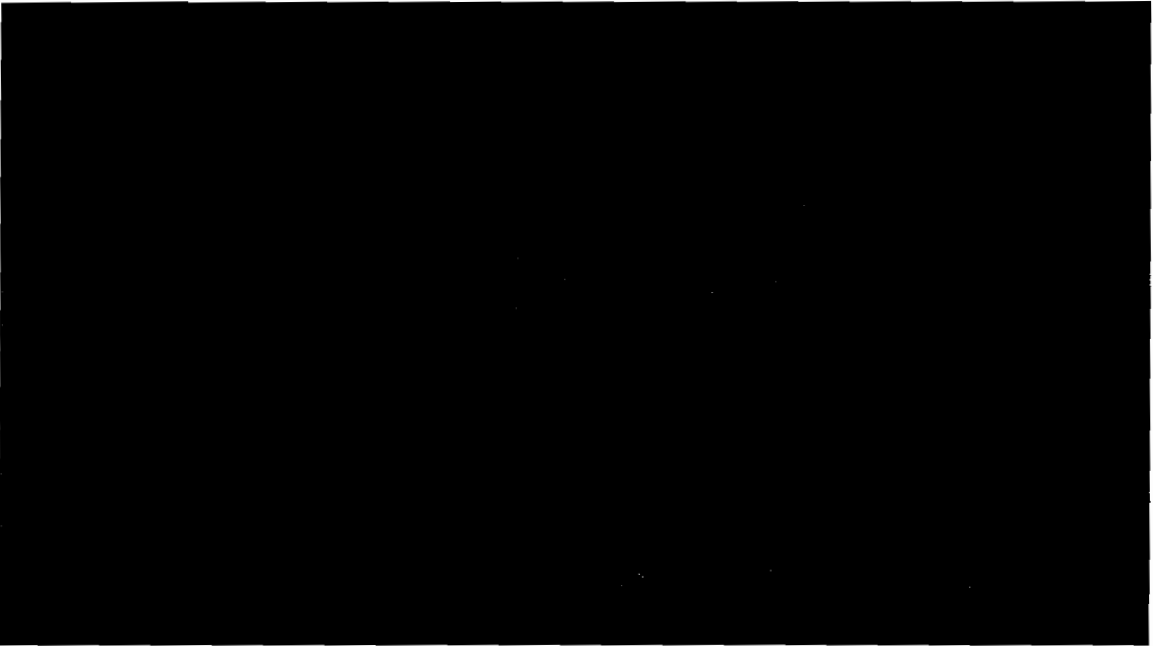
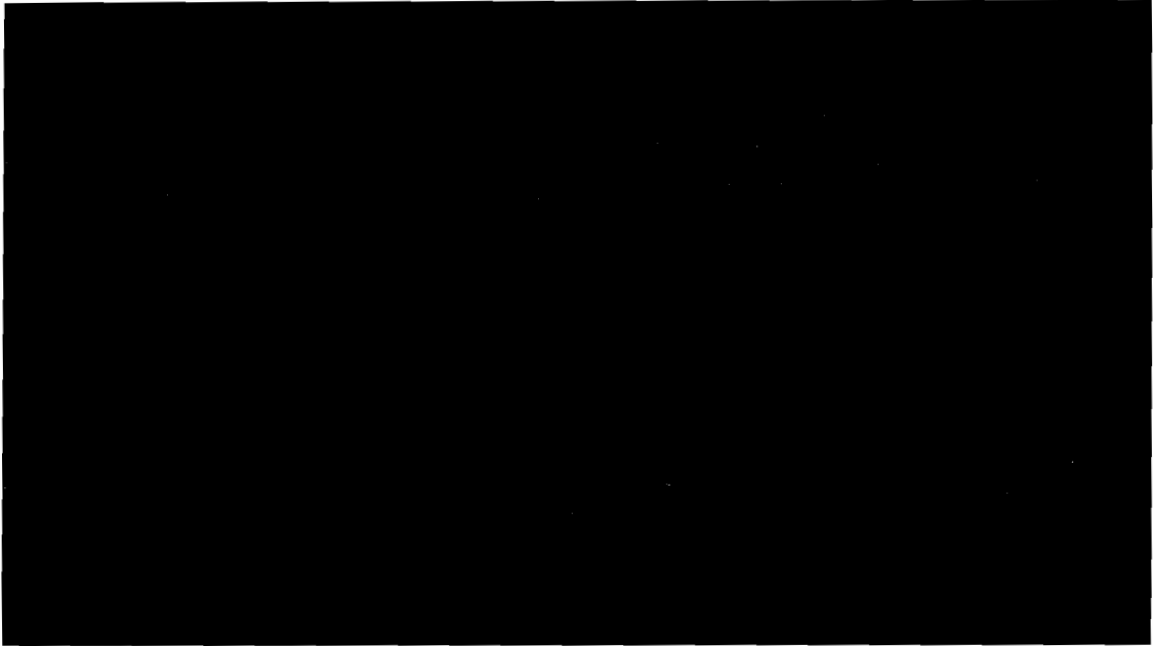
Shot1



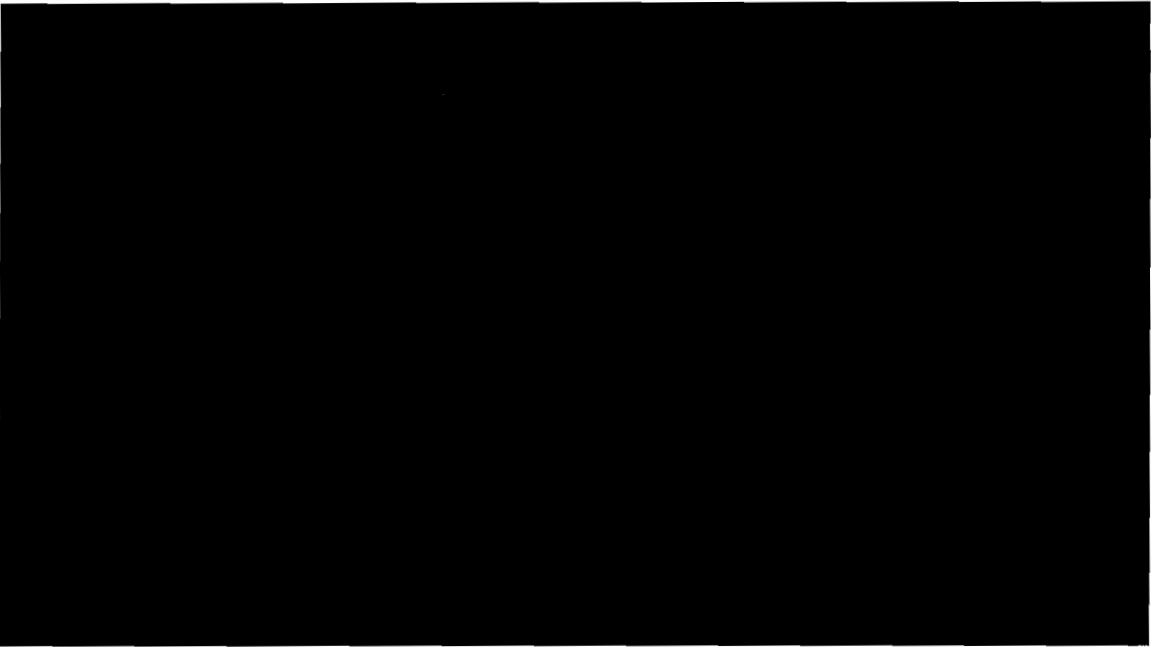
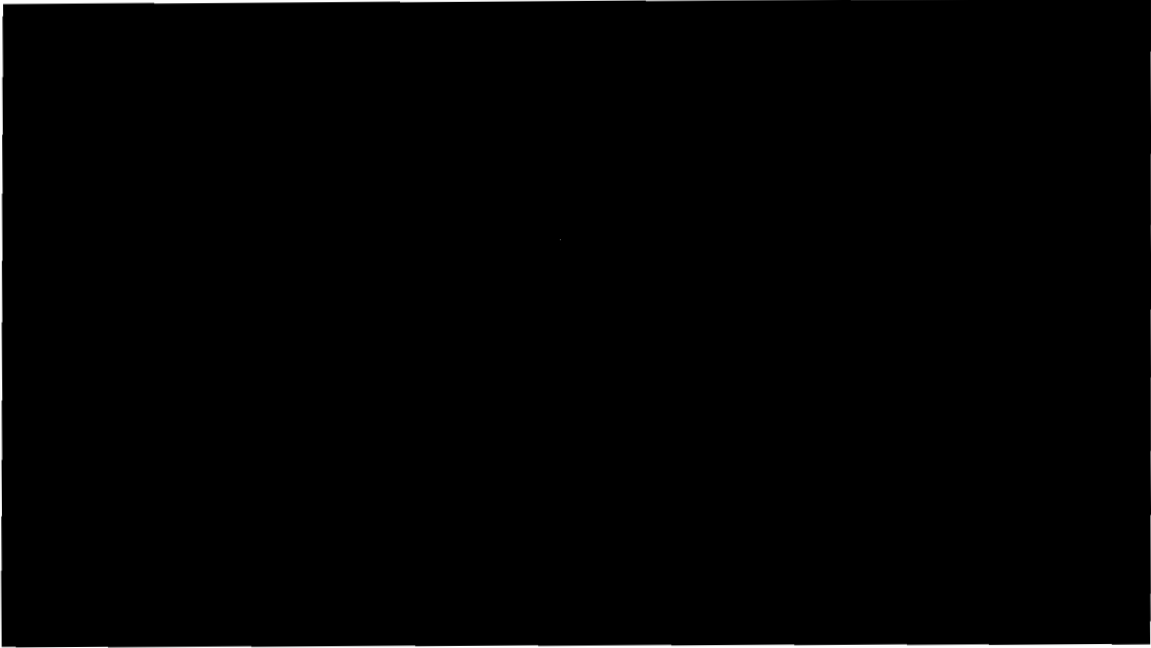
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Shot 3



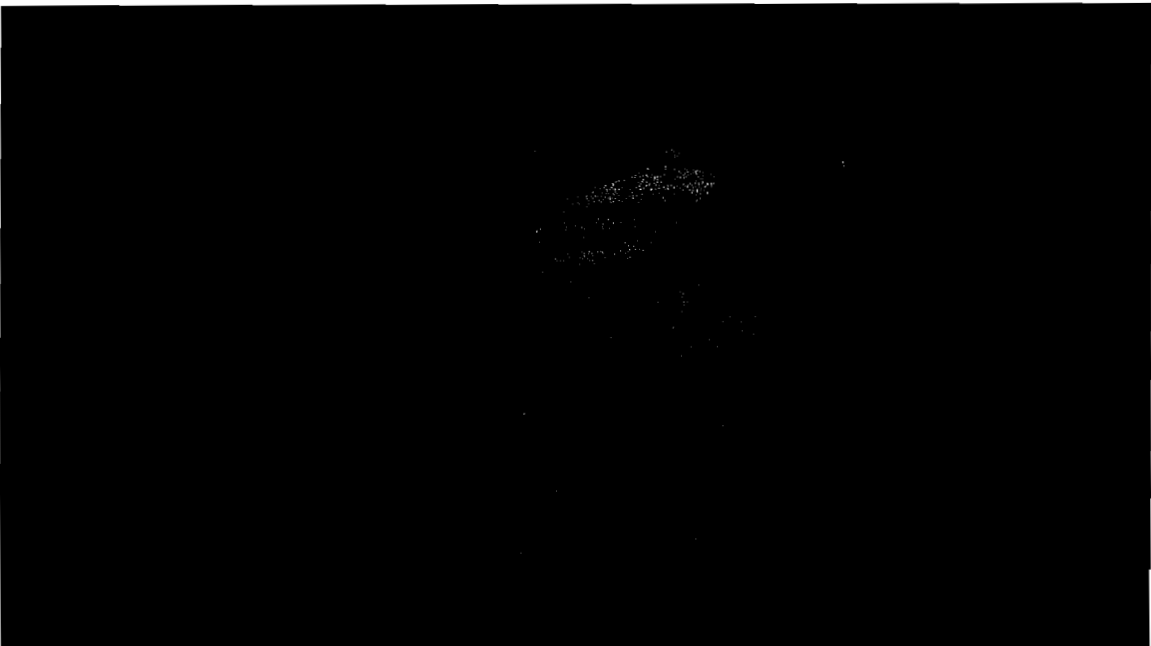
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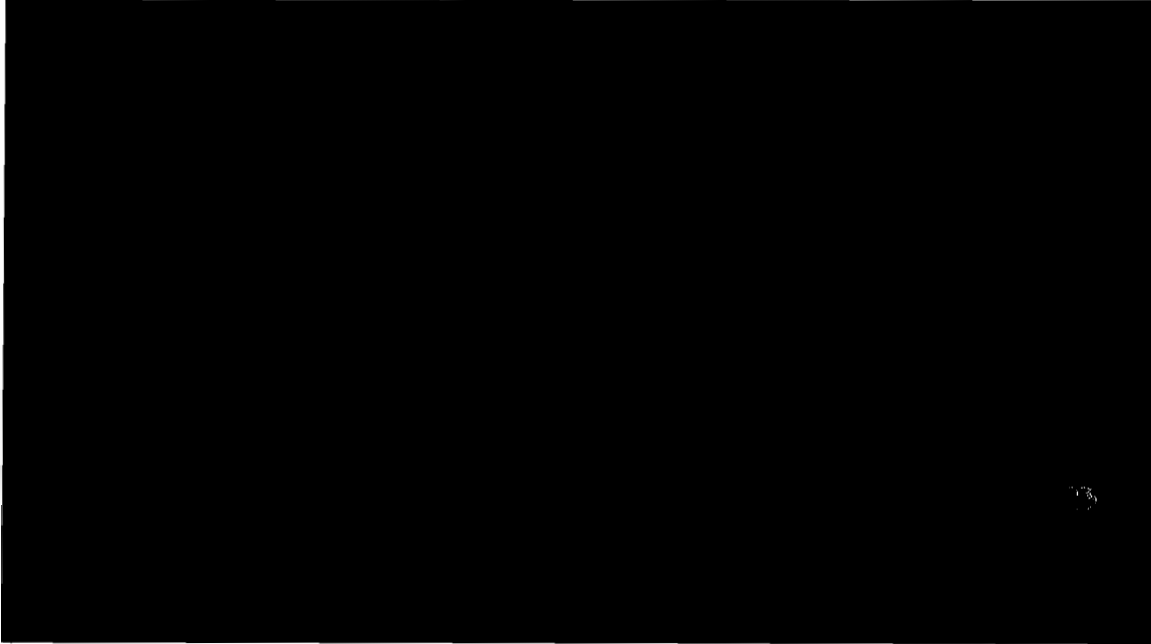
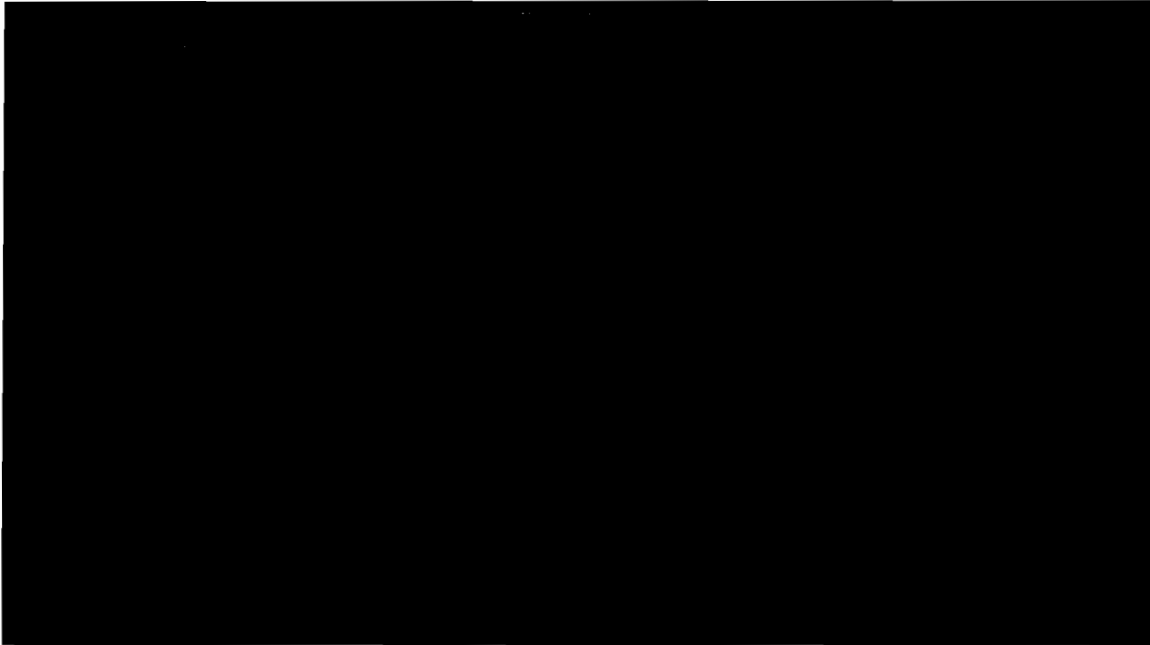
Shot 5



Shot 6



Shot 7



Shot 8

