

Vu by Kenneth Sinclair

*An empty boat silently emerging out of mist
on a Japanese lake. A mysterious white-veiled lady*

An excerpt from Chapter XX (pp 267 - 269):

Images appear, flowing along a beam of light.

Ingmar Bergman is captivated by light. Gentle. Clear. Misty. Bare. Sudden. Falling. Slanting. Sensual. Subdued. Calming. Pale ...

Death, waving his scythe, leads a dance along a bare hill. In a country mansion two sisters and a steadfast maid, in long, turn-of-the-century white dresses, wait in a deep, red-walled room, recalling the past. A third sister is slowly dying from cancer.

Images. An empty boat silently emerging out of mist on a Japanese lake. A mysterious white-veiled lady riding through a sun-dappled forest. Kurosawa brings to the screen Mieko Harada as Lady Kaede, slinking across the polished wooden floors of her mansion, her silk gowns rustling.

Late at night, a private eye drives into Alphaville ... In a bleak industrial landscape Monica Vitti stands disorientated by the side of a road ... Alain Delon, a professional hit man in raincoat and lowered hat, sits on the edge of his bed in a Paris apartment and looks at his watch ... A leper limps slowly towards Christ.

On a Hungarian plain, soldiers—a few on horseback—enact a choreographic poem ... After years of patient suffering, an ass is gunned down in a grassy meadow, where sheep quietly graze ... The captain of a U-boat raises pieces of potatoes he himself has fried to the lips of his exhausted engine room crew ... A hush falls as a Gestapo agent enters a classroom in a Catholic boys'

boarding school in occupied France ... A steamship is hauled over a hill in a South American jungle.

A long tracking shot, down corridors, past motionless servants, limpid mirrors, out over a formal French garden, comes to rest on a woman in evening dress, leaning on a stone balustrade ... An angel drawn to a Berlin in need of hope watches a trapeze artist apply her make-up ... Her black dress billowing out in the wind, a dark-haired Scotswoman waits on a bleak, New Zealand shore with her young daughter and encased piano ... Thirteen beggars at a long table enjoy a late supper in *Viridiana*. Its director, Luis Bunuel, will later muse,

If I have twenty years left, give me two hours a day of activity. The rest I'll take in dreams.

Images, flowing along a beam of light.

A lingering shot of a closed white door brings Carl Dreyer's oeuvre to a close.

