

'TRACE'

FADE IN:

SERIES OF SHOTS: EXT. COUNTRY LANE, SUSSEX - NEAR DAWN

A gas-guzzler four-by-four speeds down them, right at at us, MAN at the wheel obscured by reflections in windscreen.

EXT. DUNES CAR PARK (EMPTY), ENTRANCE - MOMENT LATER

Four-by-four speeds through, not heeding speed-bumps. Car's screeched haphazardly to a halt.

INT./ EXT. CAR - SAME TIME - INTERCUTTING:

Over Man's back: pan of the vacancy. Engine ticks.

Door's thrust open.

Man (face still obscure) tumbles out.

HIS POV

- 'dizzying' 360 degree pan: landward hills, distant abodes dotted among dunes.

Man's hands paddle 'goodbye' to car, keys in ignition, headlights on, door left open.

We push on Man staggering towards steep dunes.

EXT. DUNE SUMMIT (SEAWARD SIDE) - MOMENTS LATER

Man appears from landward side. Recovers breath. Unbuttons wrongly buttoned-up raincoat.

Tosses raincoat aside. Closer, we see he's dishevelled, in an expensive suit, tie askew.

Trilby is tossed aside.

CU

-the Man's face: bleary-eyed, unshaven.

HIS POV

-up and down beach: no one about.

Man winces.

He takes the precipitous descent towards the beach, leaning back, bracing his body. Misses footing. Rolls with it.

BEACH

Man straightens back. Teeters on towards shoreline. We follow the fresh footprints.

Man kneels.

Thrusts straight fingers into the sand. Lets sand filter from his hand. He digs a hole, piling sand to side. It ends up a half metre deep and wide.

Man slumps beside the hole.

Looks to horizon. Sun rising above horizon.

Man brings into frame what he's concealed from us all this time: a biscuit tin. Opens it, Stares in at contents. Brings out a clutch of photos, splays them like playing cards. We only see the backs, some corners dog-eared.

Some shots are lingered on.

A smile.

A nod.

Chin nudged.

Photos are returned to box.

Lid's snapped shut.

Box is set gently in the hole, settled secure.

Sweeps of forearm return sand into hole.

Top layer is patted affectionately.

Man takes a fistful of sand. Despite the trembling pressure, it filters out.

He stands...

Faces the sea...

Slowly raises arms, to horizontal either side.

He holds the pose for a long beat.

A blinding flash from behind the sun eviscerates the Man, bleaches screen to white.

FADE OUT.

THE END