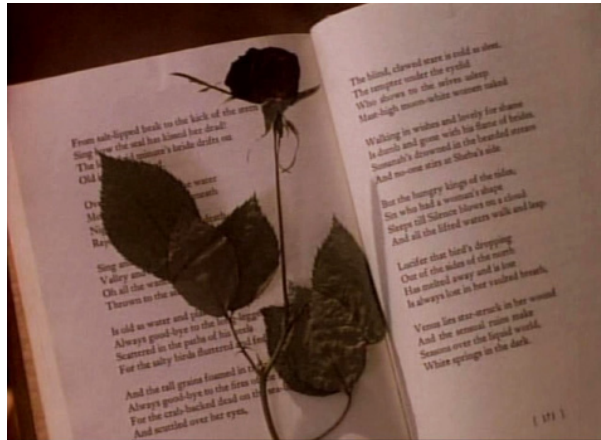


Analysis of “The Ballad of the Long-Legged Bait” - by Dylan Thomas - as referenced in the episode “Remember Love”

by Zara Wilder



My instinct for synthesizing a cohesive history from the uncohesivematerial at hand tells me that Vincent's relationship with this poem pre-dates his relationship with Catherine...and postdates his relationship with Lisa.

It has the right “voice” of predatory male adolescence contemplating a disastrous failure of romance. Since he took the book out of his childhood-mementos-trunk, I deduce that it's an older artifact from Vincent's younger days. Since he packed it in his bag, I further assume that the book (and perhaps the poem) was a thing he wanted to share with Catherine on their trip.

Combining these elements with my view of “Arabesque,” I feel that Vincent harbors no bitterness or resentment with regard to his relationship with Lisa...only regret and grief, and a wisdom gained from adult reflection upon a painful past. There is great shame involved, and terror, but these are not unspeakable secrets for him. Private matters, yes, and deeply intimate. But not a thing of divisive gothic angst. Rather, something to share, perhaps, with the woman he loves during a brief getaway that will assuredly mark a new era in their relationship (not to mention Vincent's own experience of life on Planet Earth). A part of Vincent's inner life and memory that Catherine will need to know about if and when they decide to explore physical intimacy together.

All with Dylan Thomas serving as a bridge into that conversation, since his was the poetry that spawned the idea for the impossible excursion in the first place. The book is a refuge and repository, the poem both a gateway and a gift. For Vincent I think it represents a safe way to think about (and talk about) unsafe territory.

My two cents, for what it's worth. I'm not a fan of this episode. It is very Dylan Thomas-esque (for all that they attempted to combine it with ye olde obligatory rip-off of “It's a Wonderful Life”) including storytelling. Hard to pull off adequately in a TV series, confusing for too many viewers, and visibly disgusting to Linda Hamilton. I felt bad for her during many episodes of the series. This episode, especially.