

BAD LISTING

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FADE IN

Blackness.

A BUZZER sounds, abrupt and ugly.

MAN (V.O.)
(through an intercom)
Yeah?

WOMAN (V.O.)
Hi, it's Cleo.

MAN (V.O.)
I'll be right down.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

It's raining in a sketchy neighborhood in a big city.

CLEO, 30, waits outside the glass front door. Her clothes and overnight bag are expensive but functional. Her jewelry is chic but understated.

Cleo is like a cat, sleek and poised, but reserved, an aura of mystery about her. Her eyes reveal an almost unnatural degree of confidence.

INSIDE THE BUILDING

JACK, 32, opens the door. Jack's clothes are rumpled and slightly mismatched. Try as he might, he can't quite manage dressing for success.

Jack is more like a dog: pleasant-looking and a bit shaggy, a touch too eager. But he's still determined, despite having been kicked down more than once.

He opens the door.

JACK
Cleo?

CLEO
Yeah.

JACK
Come on in.

INT. THE LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

It's a once-grand building, now run-down. There's a beautiful chandelier overhead, but it's covered with dust.

One of the bulbs SPUTTERS.

JACK
(re: her bag)
Can I take your...?

She tightens her hold on it like a constrictor.

CLEO
No, I've got it.

Cleo looks around, takes it in.

JACK
This place must really have been something in its day, huh?

CLEO
(non-committal)
Mmm.

She stops in front of an elaborately framed mirror on the wall. The reflection is crisp and clear.

Cleo stares deeply into the mirror, but not at her own reflection. Instead, she looks beyond herself, into the reflection of the room behind her.

JACK
So what brings ya to town?

Short beat.

CLEO
A wedding.

They move on again, toward the elevator.

CLEO (CONT'D)
But it's over now. My flight was cheaper if I stayed an extra night.

Jack nods.

They reach the elevator, which is ancient -- the kind with a metal cage.

Jack rolls open the outer door, then pulls open the inner metal grate. It SQUEALS.

It looks precarious.

JACK
 (off Cleo)
 It's fine, I swear. But we can take
 the stairs if you want.

CLEO
 No, it's okay.

They enter.

INT. THE ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Jack closes both doors -- SQUEAAAAAK! SLAM! -- and punches a
 button.

All around, things CREAK AND WHIR like something out of a
 steampunk dream.

The elevator jerks, then begins its slow rise upward.

Cleo looks out through the gate.

OUTSIDE THE ELEVATOR

different floors pass by:

- On the first floor, lights flicker.
- On the next floor, the hallway is dark -- pitch black.
- On the third floor, the hallway is disturbingly black too.

CLEO
 Where is everyone?

JACK
 Developer's about to renovate the
 building. I think ours might be the
 only occupied unit left.

Cleo digests this news.

CLEO
 So you're holding out for more
 money?

SQUEEEEEK! He elevator jerks to an abrupt halt. Cleo stumbles
 forward, right into Jack's arms.

It's uncomfortably intimate -- awkward.

JACK
Oh! Sorry about that.

She pulls back, then stares at him. Did he know that was going to happen?

But Jack seems oblivious.

He turns away, rolling open the two doors, then leading Cleo out into...

INT. THE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

It's even more run-down than the lobby. The overhead lights flicker here too, and the doors are grimy.

JACK
Just ignore all this, okay? The apartment itself is nice, I swear.

He stops at a door midway down the hall -- just as grungy as the others -- and pushes it open, allowing her to enter first.

JACK (CONT'D)
Here we go.

Cleo eyes Jack, coolly assessing the situation.

He smiles innocently.

Finally, she steps past him into the apartment.

INT. FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

It's like entering another world. Or maybe another time.

Like the rest of the building, the finishes and fixtures are classic, everything very tasteful. But here the walls and floors are clean and well-maintained.

The decor is more modest: nothing too extravagant, things a bit scuffed and not quite meshing together. Like Jack.

The lights are dim, but steady.

Rather than paintings, framed mirrors hang on the walls, six in all, in different shapes and sizes. Each one is distinct, and they're all beautiful.

There are other reflective surfaces as well:

- A decorative bowl with a mother-of-pearl finish, on its own pedestal.

- A brass fixture overhead.

- An umbrella stand by the door, made of shiny metal (holding both an umbrella and a golf putter).

Cleo looks around at the apartment, almost like she's looking for something.

Her eyes linger on the different mirrors.

JACK
Well? Was I wrong?

CLEO
(distracted)
No.

He reacts, disappointed.

CLEO (CONT'D)
(off Jack)
It might be the only AirBnB in history that actually looks better than the photos.

Jack brightens.

JACK
Ha! I thought the exact same thing.

He shows her around.

JACK (CONT'D)
So that's the kitchen, obviously. Cappuccino-maker doesn't work, but feel free to use anything else. Just, you know, clean up afterward. The bathroom is in there -- fresh towels on the shelves. And this is your room here. Internet password is on the Post-It on the wall.

She peers inside her own room.

And falters. Something about this room saps some of her boundless confidence.

But she recovers fast.

CLEO
This is great.

JACK

Oh! Here are your keys. Duh.
Building door and apartment. If you
go out.

CLEO

Thanks.

She takes the keys.

JACK

All right then.

He points to the door next to hers.

JACK (CONT'D)

And that's my bedroom -- it's just
us two tonight. If you need
anything, give me a knock. Anything
at all, even in the middle of the
night.

Even Jack seems to hear how creepy this sounds.

Cleo glares, unamused.

JACK (CONT'D)

Uh, I didn't mean...

CLEO

I'm going to bed.

Jack blushes, embarrassed.

JACK

Really, I didn't mean--

CLEO

It's fine. I'll see you in the
morning.

Before he can say anything else, she disappears into...

INT. CLEO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cleo closes the door behind her and drops her bag. But she
doesn't relax.

She spots the aforementioned Post-It on the wall, leans
closer.

THE POST-IT

reads: SexGod8.5

CLEO
(to herself)
You gotta be kidding.

She turns to the door, examines the knob.

CLEO (CONT'D)
And no lock. Of course.

She sits on the bed. Releases a sigh. Just what has she gotten herself into?

But then a new expression creeps onto her face.

Sadness.

Still doleful, she gazes around the room until...

...her eyes stop at the headboard of the bed, at an old sticker of a teddy bear, now weathered and torn. This must once have been the bedroom of a small girl.

Cleo leans in. Fingers the sticker forlornly.

She takes a breath for courage, straightens. Her cat-like confidence is back.

She stands and moves to the door. Listens.

She pulls open the door. Peers out.

JACK'S DOOR

is closed. From behind it, MUFFLED SHOUTS AND EXPLOSIONS slip out -- a video game of some kind. Violent.

Moving slowly, Cleo steps out into...

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The floor CREAKS, and she stops.

She glances over at Jack's door again.

But the VIDEO GAME continues uninterrupted.

Moving cautiously, Cleo steps deeper into the apartment. She glances around as if looking for something.

Once again, her eyes linger on the different mirrors.

In the middle of the room, she stops. Looks around.

HER OWN FROWNING FACE

stares back at her from all sides -- the different reflections.

In some of the mirrors, her face is tinted slightly different colors. In other mirrors, her face is vaguely warped.

In the reflection of the metal umbrella stand and mother-of-pearl bowl, her face is massively warped.

Cleo falters again, unsure. It's like she stands accused of a terrible crime, and the jury is all these reflections of herself.

But no, it's going to take more than some silly reflections to stop Cleo.

She inhales, straightens again.

And finds herself facing a shelf of photos.

She steps forward for a closer look.

THE PHOTOS

are mostly of the same man -- early 50s, friendly, avuncular. Sometimes he's alone, but mostly he's surrounded by happy friends and family.

Jack isn't in any of the photos.

Perplexed, she pulls out her phone, punches up a recent page.

THE PHONE

shows the profile of her AirBnB host, whose name is "Travis."

She expands the photo with her fingers.

It's definitely the man in the photos on the shelf.

Cleo looks over at Jack's bedroom door.

CLEO
(to herself, quietly)
But if he's not the host...

The sounds behind the door come to a SUDDEN STOP -- like he's put his game on pause.

Floorboards CREAK -- he's moving toward the door.

CLEO (CONT'D)

Shit.

She hurries toward the bathroom door and ducks inside.

INT. THE BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cleo closes the door behind her, listens.

OUT IN THE APARTMENT

The floor CREAKS -- Jack is moving around. Shadows shift in the light in the crack under the door.

Cleo steps back ... and finds herself looking into the bathroom mirror.

She leans forward, stares deeply into it. But as in the lobby, she looks everywhere except at her own reflection.

OUT IN THE APARTMENT

The floor CREAKS, closer now. Is Jack coming toward her?

Cleo steps back from the mirror.

Her eyes catch on the plastic curtain in the shower.

The curtain is brand new, right out of the package.

She looks up to see it hasn't been hung exactly right on the rod -- it's one ring off.

Cleo turns to the wastebasket. Inside, there's wadded up packaging for a new shower curtain. There's no sign of the old one.

A KNOCK on the door.

Cleo jumps. Recovers.

CLEO

Yeah?

JACK (O.S.)

Uh, you almost done? Sorry, it's kind of an emergency.

CLEO

Oh, okay. Sure.

She flushes the toilet, and the pipes CLANK and SQUEAL.

She hesitates at the door, collecting herself.

She opens it.

JACK

waits right outside, uncomfortably close.

Cleo inhales, surprised. Was he trying to listen through the door?

But he really does look desperate to use the toilet.

JACK

Sorry. Only one bathroom.

CLEO

No, it's okay.

She starts by him -- a tight squeeze.

When he realizes he's crowded her, he immediately backs away.

Cleo steps out into...

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The bathroom free, Jack hurries inside.

JACK

Thanks.

CLEO

Sure.

He closes the door behind him.

Cleo steps out into the living area.

Her eyes return to the room -- and the different mirrors.

She sighs. Whatever she's looking for, she's not finding it.

Frustrated, she turns for...

INT. THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She gets a glass from the cupboard and pours herself water from the sink. The old pipes RATTLE.

As she drinks, her eyes stop on the wood block of knives.

The biggest knife is missing.

Cleo leans in, fingering the empty slot. She looks around the kitchen -- the drying rack, the counters, a drawer.

No knife.

She frowns. Something nags at her.

She finishes her drink and is about to set the dirty glass in the sink.

But no, Jack said to clean up after herself, so she quickly washes it, sets it to dry, and reaches for a paper towel from the dispenser to dry her hands.

The roll is empty.

She sighs. Bends down to look under the sink for more towels.

No paper towels.

There are other supplies, including a bottle of floor cleaner, almost empty.

A thought hits Cleo, and her eyes widen. She stares into the darkness of the lower cupboard.

In her mind, she "hears" a sequence of events as they might actually have happened:

BEGIN AUDIO MONTAGE

(1) A key UNLOCKS a door.

MAN (V.O.)

So here we are. What do you think of the place?

JACK (V.O.)

Not bad. It's the only AirBnB in history that actually looks better than the photos.

MAN (V.O.)

Thanks, that's really nice to hear. And here's the kitchen. Feel free to use anything, just please clean up afterward.

JACK (V.O.)

Oh, I will.

(2) Later, a knife SLIDES FREE from a wooden block.

MAN (V.O.)
 What the fuck are you...? Wait!
 Stay back!

JACK (V.O.)
 Stop fighting. It'll be over soon.

A knife PLUNGES into pliant flesh, again and again. Blood SPURTS.

MAN (V.O.)
 Oh, my God!

Jack GRUNTS, twisting the knife.

The man MOANS, COLLAPSES onto the floor.

(3) Metal shower rings RATTLE on a shower rod, plastic RIPS.

(4) Plastic sheeting CRINKLES, as if Jack is rolling the man's body into the shower curtain.

JACK (V.O.)
 And down the garbage chute you go.

(5) A body SLIDES down a chute.

(6) Later, liquid SPLASHES -- floor cleaner poured into a bucket of water.

Paper towels MOP UP BLOOD.

(8) Later, a BUZZER sounds -- the film's opening sound.

JACK (V.O.)
 (through an intercom)
 Yeah?

CLEO (V.O.)
 Hi, it's Cleo.

JACK (V.O.)
 I'll be right down.

END AUDIO MONTAGE

Cleo still stares into the darkness under the sink. She's jittery -- even her nerves of steel are finally giving out.

She stands and yanks her phone out of her pocket again.

JACK (O.S.)
 Something wrong?

It's the real Jack, out of the bathroom now, in the doorway to the kitchen.

Cleo jumps again.

Her phone slips out of her hand, then falls -- CLUNK! -- then bounces across the kitchen floor.

JACK (CONT'D)
Sorry. Didn't mean to scare you.

CLEO
You didn't. I mean, it's fine.

JACK
(off Cleo)
Are you okay?

CLEO
Yeah. We're out of paper towels.

She nods to the empty dispenser.

JACK
Oh.

He tries a cupboard -- finds dishes. Clearly not where the paper towels are kept.

He tries another spot. Still wrong.

CLEO
You don't know where the paper towels are?

JACK
No. Why?

CLEO
Nothing.

Cleo looks down at her phone on the floor.

It's closer to him than her.

Jack sees her looking.

JACK
I got it.

CLEO
No, I've--

But Jack reaches it first -- picks it up. Looks at it.

JACK
Nice phone.

CLEO
Yeah.

JACK
Expensive.

CLEO
I guess.

CLEO (CONT'D)
(re: the phone)
Um...?

JACK
Sorry.

He hands it to her.

JACK (CONT'D)
Making a late call?

CLEO
No.

JACK
The reception's really bad.

CLEO
What?

JACK
In the building. I guess I should
have said that earlier. But I
forgot.

HER PHONE

reads, "No service."

CLEO
I wasn't making a call.

He nods toward the apartment phone on the kitchen wall.

JACK
You can use the land-line. Even
long-distance. Just not
international.

CLEO
I wasn't making a call.

JACK
Right. You said that. Duh.

Jack stands between her and the exit from the kitchen. He has her trapped.

He notices her noticing.

JACK (CONT'D)
Oh. Sorry.

He immediately exits to the front room, letting Cleo out too.

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cleo follows Jack out -- keeping a wary distance.

JACK
We keep running into each other,
don't we?

CLEO
No. I mean, yeah, I guess we do.

JACK
Have to get a solo unit next time.
Except...

CLEO
What?

JACK
Well, sometimes it's nice not to be
alone.

CLEO
Yeah. I know what you mean.

She eyes the front door. But now Jack is standing between her and that door.

CLEO (CONT'D)
So. I guess we should go to bed.

JACK
Yeah.

But he doesn't move for his bedroom.

Instead, he turns and stares into one of the mirrors. Unlike Cleo in the bathroom, he's definitely looking at his own reflection.

His eyes fill with sadness now too, but a different kind.
Remorse.

CLEO
You know, I think I forgot
something.

JACK
What?

CLEO
At the drug store. I need
something.

His eyes flick her way.

JACK
You can't go now.

CLEO
What?

JACK
It's too late.

She takes a step forward, as if to walk around him.

CLEO
(forced)
It's okay, I'll just be a minute.

But Jack steps in front of her, heading her off.

JACK
No, really. You can't.

She has no choice but to stop.

CLEO
Why?

JACK
It's not safe. Drug store's closed
by now anyway. What do you need?

CLEO
Huh?

JACK
Maybe I have it.

CLEO
Uh, female stuff.

JACK
Oh. Can't help ya there.

CLEO
Didn't think so.

Jack watches her.

JACK
Are you okay?

CLEO
What? Yeah.

JACK
You seem ... nervous.

CLEO
No. Just had a big day. I'm tired.
I think I'll...

She takes a step for her bedroom.

JACK
The wedding?

CLEO
Yeah. So...

She takes another step.

JACK
I had a big day too. Really big.

CLEO
Yeah?

JACK
Might even be the best day of my
life.

CLEO
Is that ... right?

JACK
One of those days you want to live
over again. After it's done.

But he still looks -- and now sounds -- sad.

CLEO
Look ... just so you know. I don't
care.

Jack's face falls.

JACK
About my day?

CLEO
No! About ... anything.

JACK
(confused)
I don't...

CLEO
The truth is, I came here for a reason. To this apartment. And it's really important to me. So why don't you just leave? And I won't say a word to anyone. At least not until the morning.

JACK
Leave? Now?

CLEO
I'm serious. I promise.

JACK
Why would I leave? It's the middle of the night.

CLEO
Fine. Then let me go. I still won't say anything. And I'll come back later. Next week.

Jack grows increasingly annoyed.

JACK
I don't give a damn what you do.

CLEO
Really?

JACK
No! Why would I care?

Beat. Cleo eyes the door again.

CLEO
Okay. Then I'm leaving.

She takes a wary step toward the door.

JACK
 Seriously?

CLEO
 Yeah.

JACK
 Without your stuff? Fine, whatever.

She takes another step. Eyes Jack. He isn't stopping her.

CLEO
 I'm going.

JACK
 (false enthusiasm)
 Oh-kay!

When Jack still doesn't stop her, she goes for the door. The floor SQUEAKS again.

Her fingers wrap around the doorknob, start to turn it.

JACK (CONT'D)
 But I'm telling Travis.

Cleo hand freezes. She doesn't open the door.

She looks over at him again.

CLEO
 Travis?

JACK
 The host?

CLEO
 What?

JACK
 The host of this place! And they get to review the guests too, you know. I'll make sure he leaves you a doozy.

CLEO
 I ... thought you were the host.

JACK
 What? No, I'm a guest just like you.
 (muttering)
 Just not batshit crazy.

CLEO

But you answered the door. And showed me around.

JACK

Travis asked me to -- gave me a free night if I did. He's out of town or something. Didn't he tell you?

CLEO

No.

But she looks down at

HER PHONE -- the text messages.

The last one reads: "I won't be able to meet you, but another guest, Jack, will let you in and show you around. Text me if you have any problems at all. Travis."

CLEO (CONT'D)

Wait. He did. Did Travis tell you all that stuff?

JACK

What stuff?

CLEO

Like the building is being renovated. And it's okay to use the land-line.

JACK

That's what the other guy told me.

CLEO

What other guy?

JACK

The guest before me. The guy who showed me around.

CLEO

So you didn't meet Travis either?

JACK

No.

CLEO

But I thought...

JACK

What? What did you think?

CLEO
Well, you didn't know where the
paper towels are kept.

JACK
Since I don't live here.

CLEO
And I saw the new shower curtain in
the bathroom.

JACK
The old one was disgusting. I found
a new one under the sink.

CLEO
Where's the old one now?

JACK
In the garbage.

CLEO
No. It wasn't in the wastebasket.
And the knife--

JACK
What knife?

CLEO
In the kitchen. The big one. It's
missing.

Jack moves abruptly into...

INT. THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

...and points to the drying rack.

JACK
You mean this?

Cleo follows behind.

The knife is there -- perfectly hidden behind a dish.

He opens the cupboard under the sink to show the kitchen
garbage bin (which Cleo didn't check).

JACK (CONT'D)
And this garbage here.

Cleo looks.

It's half-full with a disgusting old wadded-up shower curtain.

Jack looks between the knife and the shower curtain -- and snorts.

JACK (CONT'D)

(casual)

What -- did you think I killed Travis? Wrapped him in the shower curtain or something? And then I was pretending to be him, and was going to murder all the guests as they come in, one by one?

Cleo's face doesn't move.

Jacks stops laughing. His eyes grow wide.

JACK (CONT'D)

(serious)

You did? You thought I was a serial killer?

CLEO

Well ... I mean...

JACK

Is that really how I come across?

CLEO

No, not at all! It's just ... the abandoned building. And the internet password.

JACK

That was Travis, not me!

CLEO

And pointing out how your bedroom is next to mine. And always acting so creepy. What was that about?

Jack blushes.

JACK

Uh, I wish I had a better answer other than just me being a dork.

A smile tickles Cleo's lips.

JACK (CONT'D)

What?

CLEO
I thought you were a serial killer.

JACK
It's not funny.

CLEO
It kind of is.

Now a smile tugs on Jack's mouth too.

JACK
Yeah, I guess it is.

Both their smiles grow bigger.

Cleo breaks into laughter first.

Jack joins in.

They snicker together. The tension between them is rapidly draining away.

Cleo turns back toward the front room.

This time, Jack gives her a deliberately wide berth.

CLEO
Thanks.

Amused, she steps by him, out into...

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jack follows Cleo out of the kitchen.

CLEO
It's so funny. I thought I might really be murdered tonight.

JACK
Well, in fairness, all you know is I didn't murder Travis. I might still murder you.

Beat. This could potentially be creepy.

But it's not. For once, Jack delivers the line perfectly, so they're both in on the joke.

They crack up again. It completely clears the air. Cleo has never seemed so open and relaxed.

CLEO
Oh, God, it feels good to laugh.
It's been such a long time.

JACK
You too, huh?

Cleo stares at him, as if seeing him clearly for the first time.

CLEO
So I know you're not a serial
killer -- at least not so far.

Jack smiles.

CLEO (CONT'D)
So why are you here?

JACK
What?

CLEO
In town. Earlier you said you had a
really good day. What did you mean?

JACK
Oh. Well, that's a whole story.

CLEO
Yeah?

JACK
And isn't it getting kind of late?

CLEO
Yeah, I guess.

But now she lingers. It's almost like she's dreading something. Or afraid to be alone.

CLEO (CONT'D)
But ... I was going to stay up a
bit more anyway. I mean, before...

They both laugh again at the recent misunderstanding.

Jack stares, assessing her. Finally:

JACK
I guess I can stay up a bit.

He takes a seat.

Cleo takes a seat across from him, settling in.

Jack shifts -- not nervous now, just trying to get comfortable.

CLEO
Well?

JACK
What? Oh. The story.

She nods, encouraging him on.

He searches for the right words.

JACK (CONT'D)
Well ... I guess you could say that things don't usually work out very well for me.

CLEO
Work out?

JACK
Like when I was a kid. Life always had a way of disappointing me.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY - FLASHBACK

JACK AGE 10 sits behind a lemonade stand, counting all the money in his cigar box.

Score! His business is a big success.

JACK (V.O.)
Even when things seemed to be going right...

TWO BULLIES, both early teens, appear on their bikes.

They circle the lemonade stand, laughing and jeering.

Jack Age 10 tries to protect both his money and the stand, but the bullies pull a head-fake, one pretending to snatch the lemonade while the other grabs the cigar box.

Then the first bully pours the pitcher of lemonade over Jack Age 10's head.

JACK (V.O.)
...somehow they always went wrong.

The bullies ride on, still laughing, and Jack Age 10 is left alone and distraught.

EXT. ANOTHER RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY - FLASHBACK

Jack Age 10 has cleaned himself up as best as he can. Now he walks home, carrying his supplies and looking glum.

JACK (V.O.)

And even when things went wrong...

A PRETTY GIRL, about Jack's age, walks by.

Jack Age 10 brightens.

She stares at him for a second, then turns and runs off, laughing.

Perplexed, Jack Age 10 looks down at himself to see...

...that when the bully poured lemonade on his dark shirt and lighter pants, he made it look exactly like Jack peed himself.

JACK (V.O.)

...somehow they could always get worse.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - DAY - FLASHBACK

Jack, in college, sits at a table collecting bags of dirty laundry -- a business he's running for the other students.

Again, it looks very successful.

JACK (V.O.)

As I got older, I decided it must be partly my own fault. That I needed to stand up to the bullies in my life.

A BULLY appears, demanding his cash.

But Jack literally stands up to him.

CUT TO:

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Clothes tumble around inside a large, industrial-size dryer.

From within, a foot kicks the door open -- Jack, who was trapped inside.

He crawls out, battered and bruised, and covered with dirty laundry. Humbled.

JACK (V.O.)
It didn't make any difference.

EXT. OFFICE HALLWAY - DAY - FLASHBACK

Jack, in a non-tailored jacket and khaki pants, leads a client into his office.

JACK (V.O.)
Still, they say that if you really
wanna be successful in life, you
can't ever give up. So I didn't.

A co-worker, REBECCA, 35, bumps into him, spilling coffee on him.

REBECCA
(genuine)
Oh! I'm so sorry!

JACK
It's okay.
(to the client)
Sorry, I'll be right back, okay?

Jack leaves, and Rebecca steps up the client. Smiles warmly.

CUT TO:

EXT. OFFICE HALLWAY - DAY - FLASHBACK

Minutes later, Jack returns from the bathroom, cleaned up as best as possible...

...just in time to see the client disappearing with Rebecca into her office.

As the door closes, she leans out and gives Jack a victorious smile -- this was clearly her plan all along -- then closes the door in his face.

Jack is alone, with the front of his pants wet again.

JACK (V.O.)
But that didn't work either.

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - DAY - FLASHBACK

It's another day, and Jack passes Rebecca's office.

JACK (V.O.)
Then a few months ago, I came
across a new opportunity.

He overhears Rebecca whispering into her phone. Listens in.

REBECCA (O.S.)
I know it's great, but it's more
Jack's specialty than mine. So I'm
worried they're going to give it to
him, not me. And then he'll screw
it up like usual.

INT. REBECCA'S OFFICE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

That night, Jack breaks into her office...

...and steals the file from her desk.

INT. JACK'S OFFICE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Jack reads the file. He turns and checks his computer --
doing research.

JACK (V.O.)
It really was a great opportunity.
And the details all checked out. So
I ran with it.

INT. JACK'S OFFICE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Jack pitches the project to a new CLIENT, who listens with
interest.

JACK (V.O.)
It was an easy sell to my clients.
They all said the same thing, that
it almost seemed too good to be
true. And maybe it was.

INT. JACK'S OFFICE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Jack talks on the phone.

JACK
Well, can you tell him I called?
Again. It's very important.

JACK (V.O.)
It wasn't long before I started
getting a bad feeling.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY - FLASHBACK

Another day, Jack making another call. But this time he gets
a JARRING BEEP.

VOICE ON PHONE (V.O.)
We're sorry, you have reached a
number that has been disconnected
or is no longer in service. If you
feel you have reached this
recording in error, please check
the number and try your call again.

He turns to his computer screen, punches up some kind of
account.

THE SCREEN

shows a disturbing number of zeros.

JACK (V.O.)
And the feeling quickly went from
bad to worse.

Jack looks out his open doorway, sees Rebecca across the
hall.

She gives him another knowing smile -- a victorious one? --
then closes the door on him again.

JACK (V.O.)
I didn't know what else to do, so I
tracked down the corporate
headquarters of the company I'd
been selling my clients on, and
went to see them in person.

EXT. POST OFFICE OUTLET - DAY - FLASHBACK

It's dark and wet outside.

Jack appears, looks up at the sign.

JACK (V.O.)
But it was one of those places
where you rent a fake address, and
the account had since been closed.

A car ZOOMS BY, hitting a puddle, which splashes up...
...hitting Jack right in the front of his pants.

INT. THE APARTMENT, FRONT ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Suitcase in hand, Jack keys his way inside.

JACK (V.O.)
That was yesterday. That's how I
ended up spending the night here.

He looks around, is confronted by his own face in the mirrors
all around him.

The face of failure.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY - FLASHBACK

Jack tries to make a cappuccino, but the machine isn't
working. The steam burns him.

JACK (V.O.)
But today, early this morning, I
got a call.

His phone RINGS, and Jack answers it.

JACK
Elliott? I've been trying to get a
hold of you...

Jack listens -- suspicious, but trending toward relief.

JACK (V.O.)
They had an explanation for
everything -- it was all a big
misunderstanding. Supposedly,
things were going even better than
expected. At first I didn't believe
it.

INT. THE APARTMENT, FRONT ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Jack is on his laptop, back in an account.

This time, the numbers are way above zero!

JACK (V.O.)
But everything they said was true.
Overnight, I had become rich and
successful.

INT. THE APARTMENT, FRONT ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Jack is on the phone with his client.

JACK (V.O.)
And so had my clients -- all
because of me.

CLIENT
(on Facetime)
Jack, I confess I was starting to
get worried there for a minute. But
you pulled it off!

JACK
You should've trusted me. I never
had any doubt! Let's talk soon,
okay?

Jack punches off his phone.

But right away, his smile fades. His eyes suddenly seem
weirdly hollow.

END FLASHBACK

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Jack is still talking to Cleo, finishing up his tale.

JACK
For the first time in my life, the
worst didn't happen. The best
happened instead. Because I didn't
give up.

But the same darkness from the flashback lingers in his eyes.

CLEO
(off Jack)
And that's taking some getting used
to?

JACK

What?

CLEO

Well ... you don't seem all that happy.

JACK

I guess I keep expecting the other shoe to drop.

CLEO

But you said it was all real. That you're rich and successful now.

JACK

It was. I am.

CLEO

You know, sometimes there is no other shoe. Sometimes good things really do happen.

JACK

Do they?

CLEO

Trust me.

But now a darkness lingers in Cleo's eyes too.

She shakes it off, brightens.

CLEO (CONT'D)

I mean, hey, you didn't murder me tonight.

JACK

At least not yet.

CLEO

(lightly)

At least not yet! That's a good thing, right?

JACK

I think you might be setting the bar kind of low, but okay, let's go with that.

CLEO

A great thing happened to you today. We should celebrate. I don't suppose this place has any alcohol.

She stands, looks around.

JACK
I think someone left some beer in
the fridge.

CLEO
Yeah?

She starts for the kitchen.

But in a subtle shift in perspective, the camera stays on Jack.

He thinks.

JACK
About that though.

CLEO (O.S.)
About what?

JACK
When you thought I was a serial
killer.

Cleo's found the beer, and returned with two cans. She's already opened one.

Now she opens the other. It makes a THUNK sound, like a stone dropping in a pond.

CLEO
What about it?

She offers him one of the open beers, but he nods it away.

CLEO (CONT'D)
(disappointed)
Really?

He ignores her, keeps pondering.

JACK
At one point, you said you didn't
care what I'd done, because tonight
was really important to you.

Cleo sets Jack's beer aside, takes a swig of her own.

CLEO
I did?

JACK

Yeah, when you asked me to leave.
You said you wouldn't say anything
to anyone until morning.

She takes another swig.

CLEO

I don't remember that.

JACK

And when I wouldn't leave, you
asked if you could leave -- and you
still wouldn't say anything. You
said you'd come back next week.
Like it was something about this
apartment. What did you mean by
that?

CLEO

Oh, who knows? I was trying to keep
from being murdered, remember?

She laughs -- but it sounds a little forced.

Jack smiles.

JACK

Yeah. That makes sense.

But his smile quickly fades.

Cleo clutches her beer can a little too tightly.

JACK (CONT'D)

You're in town for a wedding?

Cleo sips.

CLEO

Was. I stayed an extra night.

JACK

To get the cheaper airfare.

CLEO

That's right.

She drinks again, a big gulp.

Meanwhile, Jack looks down at

- Her expensive shoes.

- A piece of her expensive jewelry.

She notices him noticing.

Suddenly:

CLEO (CONT'D)
Hey, if you don't want a beer, how
about some hot chocolate?

JACK
What? No, it's--

CLEO
Oh, come on. It'll be fun.

JACK
But I didn't see any--

CLEO
I have some in my bag.

She stands -- a little too quickly -- and goes into her room
to get the hot chocolate.

Again, the camera stays mostly on Jack.

JACK
(calling)
You brought hot chocolate?

CLEO (O.S.)
Worst bridal gift ever.

Jack stands.

JACK
I should probably get to sleep
soon.

Cleo returns.

CLEO
Come on, it'll just take a second.

JACK
Okay, I guess.

She carries the hot chocolate into the kitchen where she
looks for a pot.

As before, the camera remains mostly on Jack.

He waits, looking around the front room.

JACK (CONT'D)
Whoever owns this apartment,
they're obviously not a vampire.

IN THE KITCHEN

Cleo BONKS her head on a cupboard.

CLEO
What?

IN THE FRONT ROOM

Jack steps closer to her.

JACK
Are you okay?

CLEO
I'm fine. What, uh, did you mean
about a vampire?

JACK
All the mirrors?

CLEO
Oh. Right. Of course.

Cleo relaxes a bit, goes back to work on the hot chocolate.

Jack looks back at all the mirrors.

Grim reflections stare back at him -- some warped, some tinted.

JACK
What do you think that's about?

CLEO
(tightly)
I don't know.

JACK
It kind of creeps me out.

CLEO
The mirrors?

JACK
Yeah. Who wants to look at
themselves that much?

She focuses on the hot chocolate.

CLEO
What were you playing?

JACK
Hmm?

CLEO
In your room. Some kind of game? I
could hear it through the door.

JACK
Oh. Yeah.

CLEO
Can I see?

JACK
Really?

CLEO
Sure! I love video games.

He hesitates.

CLEO (CONT'D)
I really want to see it.

JACK
Well ... okay.

Cleo stays where she is, but we keep following Jack as he
crosses to...

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

...and picks up his phone, which has the game on it.

He returns to...

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cleo is waiting, facing Jack, holding out two steaming mugs.
She has a big smile on her face.

CLEO
Hot chocolate's ready.

It's kinda creepy. Or maybe it's completely innocent.

JACK
(flustered)
Oh. Okay.

He remembers he's holding his game. Shows it to her, demonstrates.

JACK (CONT'D)

Uh, see?

CLEO

That looks great. I'll have to try it later.

She holds the mug toward him again. Just a touch too eager.

Jack takes it.

JACK

Thanks.

CLEO

Sure.

She takes a sip from her own mug. Again, a bit too eager.

CLEO (CONT'D)

Hmm, that's better than I expected.

JACK

Yeah?

CLEO

Well, it's not the kind you make with real milk, so how good can it be? But still.

He looks down at it, smiles vaguely. But he doesn't drink.

JACK

So what games do you like?

CLEO

What? Oh. All of 'em.

JACK

All of 'em?

CLEO

Well, it's more for my nephew. I'm trying to learn how to not sound like an idiot whenever I talk to him.

Beat.

She drinks again. Smiles, stares at him. Expectant, but trying to hide it.

He raises the mug, gives her a half-hearted "Cheers!" salute, and takes a sip.

CLOSE ON JACK'S LIPS

He's only pretending to drink.

JACK
You're right, it's good.

CLEO
Yeah?

JACK
Yeah.

She drinks again, slurping it.

He drinks too -- a fake slurp.

He puts the mug to one side.

JACK (CONT'D)
Well, I guess I'll be...

CLEO
I'm still not tired. I think maybe
I'll...

JACK
What?

CLEO
...take a shower.

Is that a hint of seduction in her voice? Jack stares.

She smiles, back to being smooth as silk. Yup, he's reading this right.

CLEO (CONT'D)
Wait for me, okay?

JACK
Yeah, sure.

With another sly smile, she heads for the bathroom, slips inside.

Once she's gone, Jack stares down at his hot chocolate.

What exactly is he looking for? It seems innocent enough.

IN THE BATHROOM

The shower TURNS ON.

Jack immediately crosses to...

INT. THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

He looks around -- and spots a spoon on the counter.

So what? She probably used it to stir the hot chocolate.

But it's not wet.

Jack lifts the spoon, sees something underneath.

He turns on the stove light.

Now he can see a little bit of white powder underneath the spoon, and on the counter itself -- almost like someone used it to crush some kind of tablet.

To put in his hot chocolate?

Jack throws open the door under the sink, pulls out the garbage can.

On top of the shower curtain, he finds two torn-open packets for the hot chocolate.

But that's all.

He looks around the countertop, searching behind the different appliances.

He immediately finds a little prescription pill bottle.

THE LABEL

reads: "Will cause extreme drowsiness."

Jack stiffens.

He looks to the bathroom.

BEHIND THE BATHROOM DOOR

the shower still RUNS.

Jack dumps his hot chocolate down the drain, then crosses out into...

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...hurrying across the apartment, stopping in the doorway to Cleo's bedroom.

Jack looks back at the bathroom -- the shower is still RUNNING.

He slips inside...

INT. CLEO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

...moving in deeper, looking around.

CLEO'S OVERNIGHT BAG

lies on the floor, off to one side.

Jack stops to listen for the shower. But now he's too far to hear whether it's still running or not.

He crouches down, pulls open Cleo's bag, and starts to rifle through it. He finds...

- Travel clothing -- expensive, but nothing formal.
- Other personal items -- electronics, toiletries.
- A pistol.

Jack stares at the gun for a moment, shocked. WTF?

He keeps searching, and soon also finds...

- An antique glass vial, filled with what looks like holy water.
- An old leather bible.
- A wooden crucifix.

He sits back on his heels, staring at it all. Still shocked, but also confused.

CLEO (O.S.)
Find what you're looking for?

Now Jack jumps.

Cleo stands in the doorway, glaring. Cool and mysterious again, but also visibly annoyed.

JACK
Sorry, uh, I had a headache, and you were in the bathroom, so I thought you might have some ibuprofen in your...

CLEO
I see.

JACK
Yeah. But it's better now. You know, I'm really tired.

He fakes a yawn.

JACK (CONT'D)
I mean, I'm amazingly tired. It just came over me. So I guess I really will go to bed now...

CLEO
Jack, I know you didn't drink the hot chocolate. And I know you saw the things in my bag.

JACK
What things? I don't know what you're talking about...

Cleo sighs, not buying any of it.

JACK (CONT'D)
Okay, fine. But I'm sure there's an explanation for everything. Again!

He laughs.

JACK (CONT'D)
First you think I'm a serial killer. Then I think you're -- what? Some kind of ... vampire hunter? Like you said before?

He keeps laughing.

This time, Cleo doesn't join in.

Jack falls silent. Pales.

JACK (CONT'D)
You really are a--?

CLEO

No! Of course not! Vampires aren't real.

(an afterthought)

As far as I know.

JACK

Then ... is it something about me? Are you trying to sabotage the deal? Steal the money I made?

CLEO

Before ten minutes ago, I didn't even know about that.

JACK

Then why are you really here?

CLEO

I told you. A wedding.

He nods to the clothes in her suitcase.

JACK

You weren't in town for any wedding. And...

Now he nods to the different suspicious items.

She sighs ... reaches past him and gathers them up.

JACK (CONT'D)

What are you...?

Finally, she grabs the gun, checking the safety, then sticking it into the back of her pants.

JACK (CONT'D)

You don't need that!

CLEO

I might.

She nods to the front room.

CLEO (CONT'D)

Follow me.

She returns to...

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...setting the items on a table (but keeping the gun in her pants).

Then she heads toward the kitchen.

Jack does follow -- wary, but curious.

INT. THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

In the kitchen, Cleo finds the little prescription pill bottle. She shakes a tablet out into her hand.

Then she steps back out into...

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She faces Jack, holding the pill out in her palm.

CLEO

Take this and go to bed. I swear to God you're not in any danger, and I won't take anything. This has nothing to do with you. And when you wake up, I'll be gone.

JACK

I'd rather have the red pill.

CLEO

What?

JACK

The Matrix? I'd rather have the truth. I wanna know what's really going on here.

CLEO

Jack...

JACK

I'm serious.

CLEO

You won't believe me.

JACK

I just accused you of being a vampire hunter.

CLEO

That wasn't serious. And if I tell
you the truth, you'll think I'm
crazy.

Jack crosses back to his chair, sits. He looks over at her expectantly, as if to say, "Try me."

She stares back at him for a moment.

Then wordlessly, she crosses to take her own chair again, directly across from him.

She gathers her thoughts for a moment. Then:

CLEO (CONT'D)

Well ... it's funny. In a way, my
story is almost the exact opposite
of yours.

JACK

How?

CLEO

I lived in this apartment before.
As a little girl.

Jack leans in, listening, as Cleo recounts her own story.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY - FLASHBACK

The day is bright and beautiful. In the past, the building is clean and well-maintained.

Cleo's mother, MEGAN, 38, and CLEO AGE 8 stand in front of the structure. Megan is covering Cleo Age 8's eyes with her hands, about to reveal a surprise.

CLEO (V.O.)

My mom was a single mother. And we
were far from rich. So she was
really excited that we were able to
move into this building.

Megan removes her hands, revealing the building to Cleo Age 8.

Cleo Age 8 smiles, dazzled.

She and her mother laugh, then, holding hands, they head into the building together.

INT. THE APARTMENT, THE FRONT ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Megan and Cleo Age 8 enter, looking around.

Megan takes it in, still beaming. She turns to Cleo Age 8 for her reaction.

She isn't smiling.

CLEO (V.O.)
But right away, something felt off.

Cleo Age 8 looks at the mirrors, at all the strange reflections.

Her own unsettled expression stares back at her from every side.

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Cleo Age 8 sits on the sofa, playing with a teddy bear. Megan cooks in the kitchen.

CLEO (V.O.)
Not long after, we learned my mom was sick.

IN THE KITCHEN

Megan has to lean against the counter. Her face is flushed. She wipes it with a towel.

She notices Cleo Age 8 noticing, and forces out a smile. Stands straight.

But right away, she loses her balance again.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Megan lies in bed looking terrible. Monitors BEEP.

CLEO (V.O.)
And this wasn't the kind of sickness where people get better.

Now we see Cleo Age 8 sitting at the foot of the bed, holding a teddy bear. Crying.

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Cleo Age 8 sits on the sofa with her teddy bear, too drained even to cry.

CLEO (V.O.)
My mom didn't want to die in the hospital, so she moved back home. But we both knew she was dying, and it was very sad. No, not just sad. It was fucking awful.

Cleo Age 8 looks up at one of the mirrors on the wall. From this angle, it reflects the interior of Megan's bedroom.

IN THE REFLECTION

Megan looks terrible, wasting away, hooked up to machines, sobbing into her pillow.

Cleo Age 8's eyes show a fear no child should ever know.

INT. THE HALLWAY - DAY - FLASHBACK

Cleo Age 8, coming from school, approaches the apartment door.

CLEO (V.O.)
But then something very strange happened.

She opens the door and steps into...

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS - FLASHBACK

Megan is in her robe, still looking terrible, but out of bed, leaning in toward one of the mirrors ... whispering to it.

CLEO (V.O.)
I started catching my mom talking to the mirrors.

Megan sees Cleo Age 8 and pulls away from the mirror. Suspicious.

MEGAN
Cleo! How was your day?

Cleo Age 8 looks from her mother to the mirror.

CLEO AGE 8
 (wary)
 Fine.

MEGAN
 (brightly)
 Get yourself a snack and come talk
 to me in the bedroom.

CLEO AGE 8
 Okay.

Cleo Age 8 drops her bag and heads into...

INT. THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - FLASHBACK

She gets out a loaf of bread and starts to make a sandwich,
 then glances past the cupboards, out at her mother.

IN THE FRONT ROOM

Megan -- thinking Cleo Age 8 isn't looking -- whispers into
 the mirror again.

CLEO (V.O.)
 It was like my mother thought there
 was someone ... in the mirrors.

Cleo Age 8 reacts, confused -- and horrified.

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Cleo Age 8 sits on the sofa, determined to play with her
 teddy bear.

CLEO (V.O.)
 Sometimes I felt like there was
 someone in the mirrors too. Someone
 watching us.

Cleo Age 8 stands and slowly approaches the closest mirror.
 She looks deeply inside, all around.

She spots a shadow on the floor inside the reflection -- as
 if cast by a man standing beyond the frame, just out of
 sight.

Cleo Age 8 whirls to see who might be casting the shadow...

...but there's no one there. And no "real" shadow either.

When she looks back at the mirror, the shadow is gone.

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Megan still lies in bed, even sicker than before, but looking happier -- a beatific smile on her face.

CLEO (V.O.)
Then one day, my mother called me
into her bedroom. We both knew she
was very close to dying.

Cleo Age 8 sits on Megan's bed.

MEGAN
(to Cleo Age 8)
It won't be long now, Cleo. And
it's okay to be sad when I'm gone.
But I don't want you to be sad
forever. Because I know for a fact
that you're going to be successful
at whatever you set out to do. And
it makes me very happy knowing that
you're going to be so happy.

Cleo Age 8 nods, holding back tears.

She and Megan embrace.

But Cleo Age 8 senses Megan is looking out into the front
room -- at the mirrors.

Cleo Age 8 turns to look.

But there's no one there.

Cleo Age 8 looks back at Megan.

She's smiling beatifically again -- but now it looks forced.

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Cleo Age 8 looks from the doorway into her mother's bedroom.
An AUNT attends to Megan.

CLEO (V.O.)
A few days later, my mom died.

IN THE BEDROOM

Megan turns to her sister, suddenly terrified. Of death?

But it's too late: the light fades from her eyes.

Cleo Age 8 turns away, walking back out into the front room.

She stands in the middle of the apartment, looking around at the different mirrors.

Once again, her own harrowed expression stares back at her from all sides.

She spots another shadow stretched across the floor. And once again, no one in the apartment seems to be casting it.

Cleo Age 8 can't see what's casting it in the mirror either.

This time, the shadow moves.

And then, ever-so-softly, someone or something inside the mirror LAUGHS.

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Cleo Age 8 stands near the front door, looking in at the apartment and its mirrors. She holds her teddy bear, and there's a little suitcase at her feet.

CLEO (V.O.)

I left the apartment after that, to go live with my aunt.

Her aunt takes Cleo Age 8 by the hand, leading her out of the apartment and away.

CLEO (V.O.)

And my mother was right about one thing. I was very successful at whatever I chose to do.

INT. GRADUATION CEREMONY - DAY - FLASHBACK

Cleo Age 18 gives the valedictorian speech at her high school graduation.

Cleo smiles, happy.

INT. ATHLETIC CEREMONY - DAY - FLASHBACK

Cleo Age 20 stands on a podium with a First Place medal around her neck.

The crowd APPLAUDS, but Cleo seems less happy now.

INT. BOARDROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Cleo Age 25 gives a presentation before COWORKERS.

CLEO (V.O.)
But she was wrong that it would
make me happy.

When she finishes, the room APPLAUDS heartily.

But this time, Cleo doesn't smile at all.

INT. POSH APARTMENT - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Cleo Age 28 stares out at the city, drinking a glass of wine.

Alone. Pondering.

CLEO (V.O.)
Because I quickly realized that I
was successful at literally
everything I did. I barely even had
to try. And there's no satisfaction
in that.

INT. CLEO'S OFFICE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Cleo Age 30 types out a report on her computer.

Every line reads: "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." A deliberately bad report.

CLEO (V.O.)
Before long I started trying to
fail.

INT. BOARD ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Cleo's co-workers APPLAUD her again.

CLEO (V.O.)
It didn't matter. I still
succeeded.

Now Cleo's jaw is clenched tighter than ever.

END FLASHBACK

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Cleo faces Jack, who's now hanging on her every word.

JACK

So ... you're not here because of
vampires. You're here because you
think there's a mysterious being
who lives inside the mirrors of
this apartment? And -- what? Your
mother made some kind of deal with
him before she died to make you
successful in life?

CLEO

I said you wouldn't believe me.

JACK

I didn't say I didn't believe you.

He stands and starts to pace back and forth across the room.
Cleo stays seated.

CLEO

What?

JACK

Oh God oh God oh God oh God.

CLEO

What's wrong?

JACK

I can't believe it! This so
figures!

CLEO

Jack?

JACK

Didn't I tell you there'd be
another shoe? That even when things
go wrong for me, somehow they
always get worse?

CLEO

Jack, tell me what's going on.

As Jack talks, we see a series of silent flashbacks -- what
happened the night before:

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK [SILENT]

Jack is sleeping. He starts awake.

He seems to sense someone or something out in the front room.

BACK TO SCENE

Back in the present with Cleo, Jack is still freaking out.

JACK
(impatient)
I know you're telling the truth,
okay? Your story.

CLEO
How? How do you know?

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK [SILENT]

In his undies, Jack steps out into the front room, looking around -- curious.

He focuses on something on one of the walls -- one of the mirrors.

BACK TO SCENE

Jack is still melting down. It's like he's finally reached some kind of breaking point.

JACK
Because I saw him last night! But
it was the middle of the night, and
I thought it was a dream! How could
it possibly be real?!

CLEO
Jack, listen to me. Who did you
see?

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK [SILENT]

FROM THE POV OF THE MIRROR

Jack steps closer, looking into the glass -- still curious, but now also ... frightened.

BACK TO SCENE

Jack's face is pale. It's like he doesn't dare speak.

Cleo stands, impatient.

CLEO
Jack!

JACK
What?

CLEO
What did you see?

He turns on her angrily.

JACK
The Mirror Man!

CLEO
The what?

JACK
The man in mirror! He said he could do things. I should have known it was too good to be true.

CLEO
Jack, this really isn't funny. If you're trying to get back at me for--

JACK
I'm not! I wish I was, but I'm not.

She stares at him -- the fear on his face. If he's lying, he's the best actor since Meryl Streep.

CLEO
What kind of man? What did he look like?

Slowly, Jack turns and looks at the mirror from the night before.

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK [SILENT]

FROM THE POV OF THE MIRROR

Jack keeps looking in, both fascinated and appalled. But whatever he's looking at is still unseen.

Jack listens intently (but we still hear nothing).

BACK TO SCENE

Cleo is impatient again.

CLEO

Jack!

He whirls on her again, away from the mirror.

JACK

A man! Just ... a man.

CLEO

And ... what exactly did he say to you?

JACK

He said he could make what I wanted come true -- that the deal I was working on would be real, not a con, and that everyone would see me as the hero for once, not a loser. But I'd need to do something for him.

CLEO

What did you have to do?

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK [SILENT]

FROM THE POV OF THE MIRROR

Jack reaches up with fingers outstretched, about to touch the mirror.

BACK TO SCENE

Jack looks truly defeated at last.

JACK

Touch him. That's all. Touch my fingers against his on the other side of the mirror.

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK [SILENT]

FROM THE POV OF THE MIRROR

Jack presses his fingers against the mirror.

Inside Jack's eyes, a light dims.

BACK TO SCENE

Still talking to Cleo, Jack turns to face to the mirror again.

JACK

He said that after that, we'd be connected. And he'd hold up his part of the bargain. And he did. The next morning, I got that call saying everything was great. And then when I die...

CLEO

What? What happens when you die?

JACK

The same thing that happened to your mother.

CLEO

So it's true. I was right. But...

JACK

She made a deal with him so you'd be successful in life.

CLEO

What kind of deal? Are you seriously saying she gave him her soul?

JACK

He didn't call it that. But yeah. Isn't that the story you just told me?

Cleo look around at the different mirrors, both horrified and confused.

CLEO

Part of me didn't believe it.

JACK

Part of me didn't believe it either. That's why it doesn't count. It can't.

(to the one mirror)

I thought it was a dream!

VOICE (O.S.)

Did you?

The voice comes from a different mirror -- not the one Jack is facing. One on the opposite wall.

Jack and Cleo both turn.

THE MIRROR MAN, 52, stands on the other side of the mirror's frame -- inside the mirror but not a reflection. It's like he's looking into the room through a window.

He looks like Travis, the unit host (from the earlier photos) -- like someone's friendly, suburban dad, with clothes that would embarrass a teenager and a body that's gone slightly to pot.

Avuncular. Approachable.

Harmless.

He even speaks with a Canadian accent!

Everything else about the mirror is normal -- including Jack and Cleo's reflections, which look out behind the Mirror Man, on either side of him.

Cleo watches the interaction between the Mirror Man and Jack.

MIRROR MAN

(to Jack)

Didja really think it was a dream?

JACK

I...

The Mirror Man lifts an eyebrow. His gaze is clear and penetrating.

He may look and sound harmless, but he's clearly anything but.

Jack surrenders:

JACK (CONT'D)

No. I knew it was real.

MIRROR MAN

You know how I knew that, Jack?
Because it doesn't work if you don't. That's why it doesn't work with kids.

With that, the Mirror Man turns to Cleo.

MIRROR MAN (CONT'D)

Hello, Cleo. I wondered if I'd ever see you again.

CLEO

You made a deal with my mother before she died. So I would never fail.

MIRROR MAN

(mock-sheepishly)
Guilty.

CLEO

Why didn't you just cure her?

MIRROR MAN

She did ask. But honestly, it's not really in my interest to make people live longer.

CLEO

So she asked you to make me successful in everything I ever did.

MIRROR MAN

A completely selfless request. The first and only one I ever had!

CLEO

You must have known it would end up being a curse.

MIRROR MAN

Oh, who's to say what's a curse and what's a boon?

While Cleo and the Mirror Man talk, Jack approaches the spot in the apartment where the man in the mirror would be, if he was really casting a reflection.

But when he feels the air, there doesn't seem to be anyone there.

INSIDE THE MIRROR

it's as if his hand disappears inside the Mirror Man.

At that, he gives Jack a friendly wink.

CLEO
(to the Mirror Man)
You knew. Admit it. Just like Jack
knew last night it wasn't a dream.

MIRROR MAN
I did what she asked. Haven't you
been successful in everything you
set out to do?

CLEO
She wanted me to be happy!

The Mirror Man purses his lips.

MIRROR MAN
Well, gosh, I sure wish she'd been
more specific.

Cleo stews somewhere between hatred and fear.

But her eyes find their cool confidence again. She
straightens.

CLEO
It doesn't matter. I want to make
another deal.

MIRROR MAN
Oh?

JACK
Cleo...

CLEO
It's okay, Jack. This is the reason
I came.

He nods in understanding.

MIRROR MAN
I'm all ears.

CLEO
Bring her back. My mother.

MIRROR MAN
And in return, you'll give me your
energy when you die, eh?

CLEO
Yes.

The Mirror Man considers the offer.

MIRROR MAN

My second selfless request. You
really are your mother's daughter.
Hmmm...

Still musing, he stares off across the room -- seems to see something interesting.

Cleo and Jack turn to look.

When they look back at him, he's gone.

No, not gone. Now the Mirror Man is standing in the exact same position, but one mirror over. The tint of this mirror is darker, giving him a menacing air.

Cleo blinks, confused.

Then she steps closer to the second mirror. There are lots of Cleos reflected in all the room's mirrors, and they all move in sync when she does.

But there's still only one Mirror Man.

She faces him again -- even as she's also confronting her own reflection.

CLEO

Well? Is it a deal?

MIRROR MAN

Sorry. No. Your mother's gone.

CLEO

I mean her soul -- her energy.
Bring that back. Let her go where
she was supposed to go when she
died.

MIRROR MAN

I didn't say she's dead, Cleo. I
said she's gone.

Cleo and Jack exchange a concerned glance.

When they look back at the mirror, the Mirror Man is once again one mirror over, standing face out, exactly like before.

Again, Cleo moves to face him.

CLEO

What does that mean? My mother's
"gone"?

But the surface of this mirror is vaguely warped, making his expression difficult to read. Unsettling.

MIRROR MAN

I'm not the devil, Cleo. I'm just a guy. Well, not a "guy," but you know what I mean. And I don't send souls to hell.

CLEO

You feed on them. You need them to stay alive.

The Mirror Man considers, shrugs.

MIRROR MAN

Close enough.

This time, he vanishes right before their eyes. Instantly.

Jack and especially Cleo turn to the next logical mirror in succession.

But the Mirror Man isn't there.

They look around, confused again.

Finally, Cleo talks to the room, to all the mirrors. Jack watches closely.

CLEO

But you can do things! Make people's wishes come true. You did it to Jack and me.

The Mirror Man speaks from another mirror, a tiny one, on the opposite side of the room. He stands closer, so his face fills the whole frame.

MIRROR MAN

Aw, shucks, I'm blushing.

Cleo locates him, steps closer.

CLEO

I bet you can also bring my mother's soul back. Recreate it somehow.

Once again, the Mirror Man vanishes.

MIRROR MAN (O.S.)
 Gosh, you're smart, Cleo. Even back
 then, I could tell how smart you
 were.

Cleo turns around, following his voice -- trying to locate him. Apparently, he can somehow "jump" between mirrors.

She finds him in another mirror, casually leaning back against it like it's glass in a window.

MIRROR MAN (CONT'D)
 That's what was so ironic about
 your mother's request. You would
 have been successful even without
 me.

CLEO
 Yeah, how funny -- my mother gave
 up her soul for no reason. Look,
 are you going to take my deal or
 not?

But the Mirror Man is gone again.

Cleo looks around for him.

His face appears suddenly in the mother-of-pearl bowl, on a shelf near Cleo.

His reflection is more disjointed than ever -- ugly.

MIRROR MAN
 No.

Cleo is startled despite herself.

As all this goes on, Jack watches -- and thinks.

CLEO
 (to the Mirror Man)
 Why not?

MIRROR MAN
 Because there's nothing in it for
 me.

CLEO
 Yes, there is. Me! My soul!

The Mirror Man is now in the reflection of the shiny metal umbrella stand -- his face and body very distorted in the sharply curved surface.

MIRROR MAN

But don't you see? That would mean I ended up doing two requests for a single energy. These things cost me, dontcha know.

CLEO

Then what? What do you want from me? How can I get my mom's soul back?

He appears looking down from the reflection in a metal fixture on the ceiling.

MIRROR MAN

Can I give you some friendly advice?

Cleo looks around, confused -- and finally finds him overhead.

CLEO

What?

MIRROR MAN

Forget your mother. She's gone.

CLEO

I'm not going to forget my--

He vanishes again.

MIRROR MAN (O.S.)

Even if I did bring her back, there's nowhere for her to go.

Cleo locates him, back in a regular mirror, sitting casually in a chair in the middle of the room.

CLEO

What?

MIRROR MAN

It's true. No heaven and no hell. At least as far as I know. And even I can't get a dead person back inside their body. That's why the deal I offer is such a fair one. I give people everything they want -- more or less. And all they have to give me is something they won't even be able to use anymore. Something that would just be wasted otherwise.

CLEO

Yeah, you're a real peach.

MIRROR MAN

I know you're being sarcastic, but I am. I am a peach.

CLEO

So much that the whole building moved out on you.

MIRROR MAN

Actually, I had nothing to do with that. A developer really is renovating the building.

CLEO

Fine. We'll do this another way.

She eyes on the items on the table -- the holy water, the bible, and the crucifix.

Hesitates.

MIRROR MAN

Yeah, good luck with all that. I told you, Cleo, I'm not the devil.

CLEO

All right then.

She pulls the gun out from the back of her pants, unlocks the safety...

...and aims it at the Mirror Man, inside the mirror.

MIRROR MAN

(mock-concerned)

You're gonna shoot me?

She aims at one of the other mirrors.

CLEO

Not you. The mirrors. But don't worry. Bring my mother back, and we're good.

MIRROR MAN

Honestly? I couldn't care less if you shoot the mirrors.

CLEO

You're lying.

MIRROR MAN

I don't lie. People never believe that about my kind, but it's true.

JACK

Your kind?

MIRROR MAN

There may be a few others -- mostly in funhouses and dressing rooms, I'm told. But they can't help you. Our powers don't work against each other.

CLEO

(to the Mirror Man)

I mean it! You can't make any deals if you can't talk to people. And I'll break every mirror in this place.

The Mirror Man rearranges knickknacks on the coffee table -- completely indifferent to Cleo's words.

Jack looks over and sees that, yes, the "real" knickknacks are shifting on the coffee table too.

CLEO (CONT'D)

Fine.

She FIRES, point-blank into the mirror. Jack jumps.

The mirror doesn't break -- the bullet makes no mark whatsoever.

Cleo stares, confused.

She FIRES again.

Still no effect.

And AGAIN -- no effect.

She tries wrenching the frame off the wall, first with her hand, then with her foot.

The mirror doesn't budge.

Cleo kicks the shiny umbrella stand.

It doesn't move either.

CLEO (CONT'D)

God damn it!

Suddenly furious, Cleo snatches up the golf putter from the umbrella stand and swings it at...

The overhead fixture. WHACK! WHACK!

The mother-of-pearl bowl and pedestal. WHACK! WHACK! WHACK!

Another mirror. WHACK! WHACK!

No effect on anything.

Most items in the apartment act normally, but anything with a reflective surface is apparently invulnerable to destruction.

MIRROR MAN

Happy? You can't hurt my homes. Not unless I want you to.

Finally, frustrated, Cleo snatches up the vial of holy water, opens it, and splashes it on the mirror with the Mirror Man.

The Mirror Man is completely unaffected.

Cleo grabs the crucifix and bible and presses them against the glass of the mirror -- but these too seem to have no effect.

The Mirror Man sighs, sadly shakes his head.

MIRROR MAN (CONT'D)

Cleo, I don't know why you won't believe me. This isn't The Exorcist. I can't, like, twist my head around. Or wait, maybe I can.

He concentrates for a moment, then slowly his heads turns around on his neck.

Cleo stares, horrified.

The Mirror Man grins happily.

MIRROR MAN (CONT'D)

Oh! I've never done that before.

The Mirror Man crosses to a computer, up against a far wall.

MIRROR MAN (CONT'D)

Now do you mind? I have some messages to answer.

He sits and starts to type, responding to messages on the Airbnb website.

Out in the apartment, the "real" keyboard begins to CLACK, and words appear on the screen. It's as if he's actually sitting there typing.

Jack looks back and forth between the two computers, thinking.

He turns and talks directly to the Mirror Man again:

JACK
You're trapped.

The Mirror Man stops typing.

MIRROR MAN
What?

JACK
You can post on the internet -- at least as long as you can get to a reflection of that computer. But you can't get out of there. That's why you always need someone to act as the host.

Jack steps forward, confronting him for the first time.

JACK (CONT'D)
I'm right, aren't I? You're limited. You can't just do anything. You can grant wishes, but only under certain circumstances.

The Mirror Man doesn't move, but we see the truth of Jack's words in his eyes.

JACK (CONT'D)
(re: the mirrors)
What are these anyway -- windows into a different dimension? Can you travel to all mirrors, or just the ones in this apartment?

Jack looks around the apartment, reaches a conclusion.

JACK (CONT'D)
I think it's just the ones in this apartment.
(to Cleo)
That's why you never saw him again. When you left this apartment, he couldn't follow. That's why he pretends to be the host of this apartment.

Jack keeps looking around the room, into the mirrors. Thinking.

JACK (CONT'D)

Is it all the same dimension? Or are they different dimensions? Each one created by the mirror.

CLEO

Different. He said, "You can't hurt my 'homes.'" As if each mirror is a different one.

(to the Mirror Man)

That's right too, isn't it?

No response from the Mirror Man.

JACK

(to Cleo)

But he can move between them, at least if he can see them. So how did he get here? And why? Is he trapped? Is it some kind of prison?

CLEO

It's not a prison -- it's a lair. Like those little holes that certain spiders dig in the sand in order to jump out at their prey.

The Mirror Man reacts at last, sulking.

MIRROR MAN

(to Cleo)

I think I liked you better as a little girl. You weren't so mean.

JACK

(to the Mirror Man)

But you really can't get out, can you?

The Mirror Man just shrugs.

MIRROR MAN

Eh, who needs it? Especially these days. With AirBnB? Undercut the competition, and people come to me. Did you know that eighty-six percent of people search primarily by price?

JACK

We'll get you out. How about that?
If we find a way to help you cross
over, you bring back Cleo's mother
and give me back my soul?

The Mirror Man stands -- a bit weary. His first sign of age.

He approaches the frame, looks out, a hint of envy on his
face.

MIRROR MAN

Even if you could get me out, I
couldn't live there. Call it the
downside to relative omnipotence.

JACK

But--

MIRROR MAN

I really am telling the truth. Like
I said, I always tell the truth.

CLEO

But there must be something we can--

MIRROR MAN

There isn't.

(to Jack)

I own part of you. There's no
changing that.

(to Cleo)

And your mother is a part of me
now. There's no changing that
either.

Cleo and Jack both look more desperate than ever.

But they're also out of words.

As the Mirror Man responds, as his words become more vicious,
he loses his friendly smile at last:

MIRROR MAN (CONT'D)

I know you both think I'm this
horrible evil being. But what did I
do exactly?

(to Cleo)

I made you successful. You think
that's a curse because it feels
like you didn't earn it? Well, boo
hoo. Seriously, get a grip.
Everyone feels inadequate.

(MORE)

MIRROR MAN (CONT'D)

Some people get elected president -- and they still feel like a failure. Other people never find any real success at all, so they take some pathetic little success -- some cheap participation trophy -- and they tell themselves it matters, that they're special, even when they know in their heart of hearts they're not. The point is, you're no different than everyone else.

Cleo has no response to this fusillade of truth.

MIRROR MAN (CONT'D)

(to Jack)

And you? You're exactly what I'm talking about. You tried all your life to make your mark. But you failed, over and over again. Everyone saw you for the loser you are. But I made you successful too. It doesn't count because you cheated? Earth to Jack: no one else knows that! They think you're awesome. And whether you believe me or not, the only thing I asked for in return is something you won't have any use for by the time I take it from you.

Likewise, Jack wilts at the Mirror Man's pointed words.

MIRROR MAN (CONT'D)

So yeah, I'm the bad guy here. I've done such terrible things...

(to Cleo)

Making you successful.

(to Jack)

And making you successful and rich.

(to them both)

Excuse me while I go play the world's tiniest violin. In the meantime, get the fuck out of my apartment, because I'd like to rent it to someone who appreciates the things I do for them.

Beat.

Cleo and Jack look at each other.

Then, wordlessly, they turn and leave.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE BASEMENT - NIGHT

It's the dark bowels of the building, where tenants used to store extra stuff in a long row of storage units made out of chicken wire -- cages. But the tenants have all moved out, and the cages are empty now.

Bits of trash remain (but nothing with a shiny surface).

Water DRIPS. It's like the second-hand of a clock ticking away the precious minutes.

Cleo sits on an empty crate, looking glum -- her supreme confidence has been broken at last.

Jack paces -- edgy, nervous again.

JACK

What are we going to do? There has to be some way to beat him. I'm so tired of bullies.

CLEO

Do you think he was telling the truth about always telling the truth?

JACK

Yeah, I do.

CLEO

I do too. So ... maybe he's right about us. Maybe we should just ... move on.

JACK

Really? You'd just give up? Why?

CLEO

Because I'm scared.

JACK

You're...?

CLEO

Jack, I learned today I was right, that I literally can't fail.

(MORE)

CLEO (CONT'D)

Except I also learned that it doesn't apply to the one thing I most want, to save my mother. So yeah, I'm scared. This is the first thing I've ever done where I'm not sure I'm going to succeed.

Jack scoffs.

JACK

Are you looking for sympathy? From me?

CLEO

No. Jack, no. I'm explaining myself. Or trying to.

JACK

He has your mom. And when I die, he's going to have me too.

CLEO

He said there's no heaven or hell.

JACK

He said he didn't know for sure.

CLEO

But--

Jack stops pacing, faces her.

JACK

Cleo! We have to do this! We can't just give up.

Beat.

Cleo sighs. Nods.

CLEO

I know. But how? What do we do?

Jack notices Cleo's gun, still sticking up out of her pants.

He stares at it, thinking.

CLEO (CONT'D)

Jack? What is it?

He ignores her, but his eyes grow distant, like he's working through a math problem in his head.

Then he smiles.

CLEO (CONT'D)
You have a plan, don't you?

But then his eyes focus again, on Cleo.

CLEO (CONT'D)
What? Tell me what you're thinking.

He shakes his head a little too hard.

JACK
It doesn't matter. It won't work.

There's obviously something he's not saying. But weirdly, Cleo doesn't push it.

He turns and starts pacing again.

She shivers.

CLEO
Jesus, it's freezing down here.

She spots an old black velvet curtain in the trash on the floor. Picks it up, wraps it around herself.

Jack keeps pacing.

JACK
He said there were others like him.

CLEO
He also said their powers don't work against each other.

JACK
He could be lying.

CLEO
You literally just said you thought he was telling the truth about never lying.

Jack nods, conceding the point.

Then he sighs and sits down near Cleo. It looks a little like surrender.

He shivers too.

She opens up the black curtain, as if to share it with him.

He slides closer, and they nestle together for warmth.

CLEO (CONT'D)
You do have a plan, don't you?

JACK
What?

CLEO
Before. You thought of something.
But you don't want to tell me what
it is.

JACK
Maybe.

CLEO
Why?

JACK
Because it's too risky.

CLEO
You said it yourself. We have to do
something.

JACK
You don't understand.

CLEO
What don't I understand?

JACK
That you'd be the one taking the
risk. The plan won't work with me.

CLEO
Oh.

Cleo shivers again. Pulls her side of the curtain around herself. But that tugs at Jack's side.

CLEO (CONT'D)
I still want to hear it. It's not
like I'm just going to do whatever
you say. Let me decide if the
plan's any good.

Jack pulls farther away, out of the comfort of the curtain.

JACK
Don't you get it? It won't work.
It's my plan. And I always fail.

CLEO

And I succeed in everything but this. This is so bizarre.

JACK

It was one thing when I was failing by myself. That didn't affect anyone but me. But now there's you.

CLEO

You just met me today.

JACK

What difference does that make?

She looks at him, as if trying to figure out if he's for real.

CLEO

Jack, listen. He's wrong. The Mirror Man? He said he's done this great thing for me, making me successful in everything I do. But it's not great. It's hell. Hell is real in my life at least, because there's no point to anything. And I'd rather die than go on living like this. And I have a feeling you'd rather die than go on living like you do too. Wouldn't you like a nice clean victory for once?

JACK

But--

CLEO

So ... let's put a stop to all this once and for all. Both of us together. Okay?

Cleo lifts the curtain for him again.

Jack thinks. Makes a decision.

JACK

Together.

Jack slides back inside the velvet curtain,

And as they huddle together for warmth, Jack begins to talk about his plan...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - DAY

In one of the mirrors, the Mirror Man practices his putting, using a plastic hole.

Cleo and Jack enter through the front door.

MIRROR MAN
Well! Look who's back.

Cleo crosses to the mirror he's in, facing him directly.

CLEO
I want to make a different deal.

MIRROR MAN
I'm still all ears.

CLEO
Give me the ability to cross the mirrors. To go over into the places where you live.

MIRROR MAN
That's it? That's what you want?

CLEO
And I want to be able to come back out again.

MIRROR MAN
You do know the price.

CLEO
Yes.

MIRROR MAN
Oh, I get it. This is part of some plan. You think you're outwitting me, eh? You're risking your energy, because you think you'll end up with both your energies back, and I'll end up frustrated. Or dead.

CLEO
If you're so confident it won't work, you don't have anything to worry about. And you'll end up with my soul.

MIRROR MAN
Hmm, I am curious. But ... no. Sorry. No deal.

He returns to his putting.

IN THE FRONT ROOM

the putter and golf ball seem to be putting by themselves.

The Mirror Man makes a hole-in-one.

CLEO

All right then. You can have my soul right now -- you don't have to wait until I die. How about that? You just have to touch me a second time.

The Mirror Man ignores her, lining up for another putt.

Cleo steps closer, lifts her hand, and presses her fingers onto the surface of the mirror.

CLEO (CONT'D)

Come on. You know a good deal when you hear one.

He nods to the computer.

MIRROR MAN

If I wanted a soul right now, all I'd have to do is hire someone from the dark web to kill one of the people I own. Jack, for example.

Jack pales.

JACK

But...

MIRROR MAN

I agreed I'd wait until you were dead to take your energy. I never agreed I wouldn't arrange to have you killed.

CLEO

But this is my soul. You said you hadn't seen one like it since my mother.

MIRROR MAN

Sorry, not interested.

He putts.

But this time, he misses.

CLEO
I thought you said you never lied.

MIRROR MAN
I don't.

CLEO
You're lying now.

MIRROR MAN
How am I--?

CLEO
You want this deal.

MIRROR MAN
What makes you think--?

CLEO
I've seen your online reviews. Word is getting out about this place. At some point, it won't matter how low you set the price. This steady stream of souls is going to stop.

MIRROR MAN
That'll change once the building is renovated.

CLEO
Not if I have anything to do with it.

The Mirror Man thinks, finally places the putter to one side.

MIRROR MAN
You do realize that if I take your energy now, you die, right?

CLEO
I do.

MIRROR MAN
Good. For this to work, it's important that you understand.

He approaches Cleo, stopping right on the other side of the mirror.

MIRROR MAN (CONT'D)
I admit ... more than anything, I wanna know what you're up to.

CLEO
Only one way to find out.

The Mirror Man reaches out his fingers ... but stops right before he touches Cleo's.

His lips hold a mischievous smile. Cleo obviously thinks she's been playing the Mirror Man. But has he really been playing her?

Before she can pull away, he presses the tips of fingers against Cleo's.

They touch.

Cleo braces herself, prepared for anything.

She still seems taken aback by what she feels. She jerks her hand back from the mirror like she's been stung.

The Mirror Man inhales deeply, smiles. Whatever happened, he enjoyed it -- maybe even in a sexual way.

CLEO (CONT'D)
Happy?

MIRROR MAN
(creepy)
Very.

JACK
(uneasy)
Cleo...

CLEO
Jack, trust me.

The Mirror Man backs away from the mirror.

MIRROR MAN
I take it you're coming in here,
eh?

Cleo takes a breath for courage...

...then touches the surface of the mirror again, with a single finger this time.

This time, it sucks her forward, into the mirror, and into...

INT. THE FRONT ROOM, MIRROR IMAGE 1 - CONTINUOUS

It's exactly the same as the front room of the apartment, except everything is in reverse -- including Cleo herself.

She's disoriented.

Through the mirror on the wall, she can see Jack, out in the "real" apartment.

He looks scared for her.

MIRROR MAN

(to Cleo)

Hello, roomie! Technically, this is my side of the apartment, but I'm always happy to have guests. Get you a beer?

He crosses to the kitchen, opens the refrigerator, and pulls out...

Two more beers. But the words on these labels are in reverse.

He holds one beer out toward Cleo.

Cleo doesn't move to take it. Instead, she stands straighter...

...and whips out her gun.

CLEO

Okay, asshole. Now you're going to give Jack and me our souls back, and conjure up my mother, or I'm going to shoot you in the face.

MIRROR MAN

Well! That's certainly scary.

CLEO

I'm serious!

MIRROR MAN

I'm sure you are.

(re: the beer)

No? Suit yourself.

With a shrug, the Mirror Man puts the second beer to one side. Then he casually pops the top on the other. It makes an evil HISS.

CLEO

I mean it! I'll do it!

He drinks it -- still oh-so-casually.

MIRROR MAN

You wanna hear something funny? I have no idea what real beer tastes like. Is it any good?

CLEO

I'm about to start counting backward from ten. Ten. Nine.

The Mirror Man sets his beer aside now too.

MIRROR MAN

The problem is...

He takes an easy step toward Cleo.

MIRROR MAN (CONT'D)

...if you shoot me, your mother is gone forever.

Cleo stiffens. She's gripping the gun so tightly we can see her white knuckles.

CLEO

Screw that. I'm counting from three. Three.

The Mirror Man takes another step forward.

MIRROR MAN

Gosh, I really hate to break this to you, but I think I just called your bluff.

CLEO

Two.

He takes another step forward.

MIRROR MAN

So you're just gonna pretend I didn't? Hmmm.

The gun shakes in Cleo's hand -- she's nervous.

But she's not giving up yet!

CLEO

One. Last chance, asshole!

The Mirror Man takes another step forward. He winces.

MIRROR MAN

Oh, my. At this point, you're just embarrassing yourself.

CLEO

I loved my mother. But it's like you said: she's already dead.

She squeezes the trigger.

The gun EXPLODES.

But the Mirror Man instantly turns sideways, becoming as flat as a mirror's surface, making his whole body disappear into two dimensions.

The bullet SLAMS into the wall behind him.

The Mirror Man reappears.

Cleo FIRES again.

The Mirror Man pulls the same move again.

One more SHOT from Cleo.

But with the exact same result.

CLEO (CONT'D)

Fuck.

The Mirror Man faces Cleo again.

MIRROR MAN

You really thought that was gonna work, eh? I live in these spaces. Hello!

JACK

Cleo, get out of there! Now!

Sure enough, the Mirror Man lunges for her -- reaching out a hand to touch her.

Cleo whirls around to the closest mirror, which looks out into the "real" apartment, and Jack.

She touches the surface of the mirror.

But rather than draw her out into the apartment, it sucks her into...

INT. THE FRONT ROOM, MIRROR IMAGE 2 - CONTINUOUS

Now Cleo is inside the reflection of a different mirror. Once again, everything is in reverse, but the tint is different.

She looks up, then around, confused.

CLEO
Where...?

Through the mirror on the wall, she sees Jack, but he's still out in the "real" apartment.

CLEO (CONT'D)
Jack?

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jack hears Cleo's voice, looks into the mirror.

JACK
Cleo? What happened?

INT. THE FRONT ROOM, MIRROR IMAGE 2 - CONTINUOUS

Cleo talks to Jack.

CLEO
(confused)
I don't know.

The Mirror Man winks into existence nearby.

MIRROR MAN
I do. You jumped into another mirror.

Cleo gasps, reaches for the mirror again -- touches it.

Once again, she's transported, to...

INT. THE FRONT ROOM MIRROR IMAGE 3 - CONTINUOUS

Another mirror, this one warped.

Cleo appears, looking around -- dazed.

CLEO
No! How do I get out?

The Mirror Man appears again, disturbingly close by.

MIRROR MAN
It's harder than it looks, in'it?

She turns back the way she came, touching the mirror's surface -- disappearing again.

The Mirror Man laughs at Cleo's panic.

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jack snatches up the putter. He swings it at the place where the Mirror Man would be to cast the reflection he is.

Jack swings it hard!

IN THE REFLECTION

the putter passes through the Mirror Man, harmlessly, exactly like before.

The Mirror Man laughs again, this time at Jack's futility.

Jack whirls around, trying to find Cleo in one of the other mirrors.

JACK
Cleo? Where are you?

CLEO (O.S.)
Over here! I can't get out!

Jack whirls around to see that Cleo is now trapped in the reflection in the metal umbrella stand.

INT. THE FRONT ROOM, MIRROR IMAGE 4 - CONTINUOUS

This realm is much more distorted than the other three -- curved. It makes Cleo's whole body distorted too.

She sways unsteadily -- confused.

CLEO
Jack! Help me!

JACK
I will! I...

The Mirror Man appears nearby her, equally distorted.

MIRROR MAN
You know I only have to touch you again, and I own you, right?

He reaches for her.

She leaps for the umbrella stand's surface -- just barely evading his touch.

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Still holding the putter, frustrated, Jack takes another hard whack at where the Mirror Man would be...

...and once again, the reflection of the putter passes right through the being's body.

The Mirror Man looks out at Jack. His face is still distorted, but his anger is clear.

MIRROR MAN

Okay, now you're starting to piss me off.

INSIDE THE REFLECTION

the Mirror Man picks up a lamp...

...and smashes it over Jack's head.

Unlike the putter on the Mirror Man, this affects Jack: a levitating lamp breaks over his head.

Then the Mirror Man knocks over the shelves with the photos. They topple over, as if by themselves, right onto Jack.

Jack groans in pain, starts for the door.

INT. THE FRONT ROOM, MIRROR IMAGE 5 - CONTINUOUS

Cleo appears inside the reflection in the brass ceiling fixture. This whole realm, including her, is upside-down.

She's basically standing on the ceiling -- and more disoriented than ever.

But she's able to see Jack moving toward the door.

CLEO

Jack?

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jack stumbles for the door.

JACK
Cleo, I'm sorry!

INT. THE FRONT ROOM, MIRROR IMAGE 5 - CONTINUOUS

The Mirror Man appears near Cleo, perfectly at home.

She sees him, then jumps "down" -- trying to touch the reflection in the fixture, which is now sticking up from what seems like the floor.

She just manages to touch it.

It sucks her to...

INT. THE FRONT ROOM, MIRROR IMAGE 6 - CONTINUOUS

Cleo appears in a realm of mother-of-pearl -- the reflection in the decorative bowl.

She whimpers, more confused than ever.

CLEO
I don't understand! Why does this
keep happening?

The Mirror Man appears.

MIRROR MAN
I dunno. But I'm kinda loving it.

He lunges.

Cleo gasps, fumbles to touch the bowl, and disappears again.

INT. THE FRONT ROOM, MIRROR IMAGE 7 - CONTINUOUS

She appears in still another mirror realm -- once again, an actual mirror.

This time, the reflection is crisp and clear.

And once again, the Mirror Man appears near her.

But Cleo isn't whimpering anymore. Now she stands tall and proud -- confident.

She turns to face the Mirror Man.

CLEO
 Wait. I do know why it keeps
 happening. Because we planned it
 this way.

The Mirror Man looks around, surprised -- confused.

MIRROR MAN
 This isn't one of my mirrors.

CLEO
 No. It isn't.

She steps over to a mirror levitating in the middle of the room. It's the mirror from the lobby of the apartment building.

A flash of fear crosses the Mirror Man's face.

Cleo touches the mirror -- and disappears.

And suddenly the entire realm goes dark, like someone has dropped a black velvet curtain over everything.

INT. THE FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cleo stands before Jack, in the middle of the apartment. He's holding the mirror from the lobby...

...but he's since covered it with the black curtain from the basement.

JACK
 (to Cleo, breathlessly)
 Did it work?

CLEO
 I ... think so.

She talks directly to the mirror:

CLEO (CONT'D)
 You do realize what just happened,
 right?

Beat.

MIRROR MAN (O.S.)
 (muffled)
 Yes.

Beat.

MIRROR MAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(muffled)

What do you want to get me out of here?

CLEO

You already know. Jack's and my souls free and clear. My mother's soul back. And from now on, any success in my life will be because I earned it.

MIRROR MAN (O.S.)

(muffled)

What about Jack's business deal?

Cleo smiles at Jack.

CLEO

No. I think we should leave that exactly the way it is.

Jack smiles back, grateful.

MIRROR MAN (O.S.)

If I do all that, how do I know you'll let me out again?

CLEO

I guess you'll just have to trust us.

Beat.

MIRROR MAN

No. I'll do both your souls and the success thing. But not your mother's soul. Not until you let me out.

Jack looks to Cleo, who considers it. Finally:

CLEO

Deal.

Cleo and Jack both gasp, as if feeling something deep inside themselves.

Cleo and Jack look at each other -- and nod. The Mirror Man has delivered on his end of the deal.

Jack throws the curtain off the mirror...

...and the Mirror Man appears again in one of the mirrors on the wall.

He looks tired -- diminished. So much so he has to sit.

MIRROR MAN

Short-term renters are the worst.
They're just not invested in the
building or the neighborhood.

MEGAN (O.S.)

Cleo?

Cleo turns.

IN THE MIRROR FROM THE LOBBY

Megan stands staring out into the apartment. She looks healthy again -- but confused.

CLEO

Mom?

MEGAN

Cleo, is that really you?

CLEO

It is! It is really me.

MEGAN

You're all grown up.

CLEO

It's been a long time.

MEGAN

I'm dead, aren't I?

Cleo nods.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

And I was gone all this time?

Cleo nods again.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

So where am I now? And where do I
go next?

Cleo looks to the Mirror Man, in the other mirror.

He gives a hapless shrug.

CLEO
I don't know, Mom. I really wish I
did.

Megan turns to the front door of the apartment, almost like
she's heard some kind of call.

MEGAN
I ... think I have to go now.

CLEO
I love you, Mom. You know that,
right?

MEGAN
Oh, Cleo, I love you too. So much!

She turns toward the door again.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
But ... I really do have to go.

She starts moving toward the door.

CLEO
That's okay. I understand.

Megan reaches the door, puts her hand on the knob, but
hesitates.

She looks frightened.

She turns back toward Cleo.

MEGAN
Will you tell me something?

CLEO
Anything, Mom. Anything at all!

MEGAN
Are you happy?

Cleo's eyes meet Jack's. They both smile.

CLEO
(to Megan)
I think I might be now.

Megan smiles too, for the first time.

She opens the front door.

It looks out into an unsettling darkness.

But with newfound strength and courage -- and with another smile toward Cleo -- Megan steps right through.

Disappears forever.

Jack looks to Cleo, who has tears in her eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. AIRPORT - DAY - ESTABLISHING

It's raining -- still dreary.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

Cleo and Jack sit side by side, with their bags nearby. They're both on their media devices.

Cleo is looking at

AN ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

about the AirBnB unit they just vacated.

JACK

"Overall, how would you rate this unit?"

CLEO

One star.

JACK

Do they have zero stars? No? Okay, one star it is. Duh.

On their respective devices, they both rate the unit with a single star.

JACK (CONT'D)

"How likely are you to recommend this unit to other people?"

CLEO

One star.

JACK

Well, I can think of a few people I wouldn't mind sending his way. A certain president, a couple of reality stars.

CLEO
I'm sure we're already too late,
you know?

JACK
Already sold their souls, you mean?
Oh, good point. One star, it is.

CLEO
Another very satisfying one star.

JACK
And finally, "How well did the host
deliver on the experience that was
promised?" Hmm, that's kind of a
tough one.

CLEO
It's not tough. I requested a full
refund.

JACK
Really?

CLEO
Really.

JACK
What did you say?

CLEO
That the host was a raging asshole.

JACK
Seriously?

CLEO
Swear to God.

JACK
Oh, I'm requesting a refund too. In
the meantime ... one star.

CLEO
One star.

Smiling, they both put their media devices away.

JACK
So. Going home, huh?

She nods.

CLEO

It's going to be interesting, not knowing how the things I do will turn out.

JACK

It's not that bad, actually. It makes life interesting. And then when things do work out...

CLEO

It feels like you earned it?

JACK

(knowing)

Exactly. And there's no better feeling in the world.

Cleo grins.

CLEO

What about you? Eager to get back and celebrate with your clients?

JACK

Not just yet.

CLEO

Yeah?

JACK

Yeah, I decided I'd go somewhere warm for a while. I can afford it now.

CLEO

That sounds really nice.

JACK

(bashful)

It'd be ever nicer to have some company.

CLEO

(bold)

I'm in. Let's go.

JACK

Really?

She nods. She's beaming.

Jack grins.

They stand, happily gathering their bags. Then they turn for the ticket counters.

CLEO
Where did you have in mind?

JACK
I figured we could look at the board and go wherever sounds good.

CLEO
I like that.

They start forward.

JACK
One thing, though.

CLEO
What's that?

JACK
When we get there? Let's get private rooms -- in a hotel.

CLEO
Or maybe just one private room.

JACK
That works too.

Both smiling, free and content, they head off into a happy future together.

FADE OUT

END OF SCREENPLAY