

-HOUSE SHARE-

by
Damian Colomb

WGA West Registry
registration number: 2283807



damien.colomb@gmail.com
Vancouver, Canada
(438) 871 9124

INT. CLASSROOM UNIVERSITY - DAY

VIDEO CAMERA - RECORDING

Bill, from behind, sits in a lecture hall full of students. Ambient noise, people whispering.

On the blackboard is written: ULYSSES BLANC M.D.

An old professor enters in the room.

ULYSSES BLANC

Hello folks.

All the students fall silent and sit down.

ULYSSES BLANC

Thank you very much. There are so many people here today. Maybe there won't be so many of you at the end of my talk. Maybe some of you will wonder about your mental state and ask yourselves: Am I a danger to myself, or worse, to others?

Shy laughter from the audience.

ULYSSES BLANC

I hope that won't be the case. Anyway, there will be a Q&A after my class.

CUT TO:

CONTINUOUS

The room is in semi-darkness. A screen is unrolled opposite the painting. A photo of an old engraving of an old asylum is projected to the screen.

ULYSSES BLANC

As early as the eighth century, centers for mental illness were set up in present-day Baghdad, Iraq. Treatments were based on baths, music, some medicines and herbal therapy.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ULYSSES BLANC (CONT'D)

It's interesting to see how some societies in the world at that time became aware of these pathologies and tried to deal with them. Gentleness as a response to madness.

To become aware of sudden violence and tell yourself that it needs to be dealt with.

But how? By trying to calm things down with techniques that make us feel good. Soothing. It's a beautiful thing what human beings can do in society.

I have to admit that sometimes it's hard to see that today. But it's still possible.

CUT TO:

CONTINUOUS

Black-and-white images scroll across the screen on the wall. Pictures of patients being electro-shocked, in strait-jackets and other shocking photos.

ULYSSES BLANC

The 19th century. This period on which our current approach to psychoanalysis is based. You know the brutality of the treatments prescribed by medicine to people with or without mental problems. We know the worst, but there were also gentle methods. Sedatives, purgatives and lots of balneotherapy were common practice in insane centers.

What I find fascinating about this period is how they managed to coexist unimaginable violence and unsuspected gentleness at the same time.

They were able to combine gentleness and violence in the same protocol.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ULYSSES BLANC (CONT'D)

For example, they would bring a patient close to death in the hope that something would click, then have him undergo relaxation sessions in thermal waters. All this in a heavy atmosphere.

You have to realize that the number of inmates has increased tenfold in the last hundred years. People interned against their will, or under dubious pretexts. I think it's very important to be aware of things that have been.

But in those days, in these centers, called "asylum for the insane" or "hospital for lunatics", everyone lived in autarky. Outings were rare for patients. At another level, the staff were also subject to harsh constraints, hired according to very specific criteria. The doctors weren't to be pitied, but it has to be said that they also lived inside all this. People lived and died in the same place.

In those days, patients, staff and doctors lived together, inside the walls. In those conditions, it's hard to get an outside view of what's going on.

Silence in the auditorium.

CUT TO: CONTINUOUS

Bill is from the back, raising his arm.

ULYSSES BLANC

Questions ? Yes, young man.

BILL

First of all, thank you for your speech, it's very inspiring.

ULYSSES BLANC

Thanks to you young fool.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Laughs

BILL

In the preamble to your talk, you humorously said: "Maybe some people will discover a mental pathology after my speech". My question is this: have you ever had any doubts about your mental condition? Do you think you could be hiding a mental disorder that is dangerous for you and for society?

ULYSSES BLANC

Basically, you'd like to know if you're dealing with a madman who's talking to you about madness?

Laughs

ULYSSES BLANC

I believe that any work on oneself is the most essential thing there is, even more so today than yesterday. All I can advise you is to experience for yourself what's here.

Professor Ulysses Blanc touch his head with his finger.

Video Camera switches off.

INT. THERAPY ROOM - DAY

VIDEO TAPE

HIDDEN CAMERA

The camera is inside Bill's bag. He places it next to the sofa.

The therapist is in his chair, seated with a notebook in hand.

His face is blurred.

Bill, facing the therapist, takes a seat on the sofa.

THERAPIST 1

Hello, William right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL

William, yes. Most people call me Bill.

THERAPIST 1

Alright, so what's brings you here today?

BILL

It's the right time for me to resume therapy.

THERAPIST 1

Does that mean you've already started therapy before?

BILL

My parents, especially my mother, made me see a psychiatrist when I was very young.

THERAPIST 1

Was there a specific reason she thought you should consult a professional?

BILL

When I was little, I was apparently very quiet in class, quite introverted. I have some memories, but I admit I don't remember everything.

THERAPIST 1

What do you remember? Do you recall the feelings you had at that time?

BILL

I have very fond memories of my sessions. They lasted from when I was 8 to 17 years old.

THERAPIST 1

Almost 9 years, that's a long period.

BILL

My parents often told me that it was very beneficial for me, to find a balance and stability. I could shift between certain states very rapidly. Then it calmed down over time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THERAPIST 1

And these emotions that fueled you
in these states? Did you find
balance with them too?

BILL

I know my parents were happy. So,
I kept going, things were better
at home that way. But inside...

Silence.

THERAPIST 1

Inside? How did you feel inside?

BILL

Same as before. I imagined my
emotions as cartoon characters. I
had them talk to each other. It
was endless debates, but at least
I let them live inside me. My
parents didn't come asking me
questions like that anymore. It
allowed me to find peace.

THERAPIST 1

Interesting. And you managed to do
that for 9 years?

BILL

Pretty much, yes.

THERAPIST 1

And then? What happened that you
stopped at 17?

BILL

I left my parent's house for
college. I was on a campus.

THERAPIST 1

And what happened to you emotions?
Still debating inside you?

BILL

Always, yes. I let them be. But
college life meant I had a lot of
people around me. Sometimes it was
socially complicated; I felt
either alone or too surrounded.

THERAPIST 1

And today? How do you feel about
it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BILL

I think it's time for me to see
someone again. Indeed, it feels
like it's become a cacophony in
there?

Bill points to his heart with with finger.

THERAPIST 1

Hmm, I see.

EXT. FRONT HOUSE STREET - MORNING

Day breaks. The street is empty.

WE FOLLOW BILL AS HE WALKS DOWN THE STREET WITH HIS BACK
TO US, DETERMINED.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

THE CAMERA FOLLOW BILL FROM BEHIND

The front door opens. Bill enters, leaves his shoes at
the entrance and climbs the stairs.

He walks down the hall, enters his room and closes it.

In the corridor, the next door opens. Savannah emerges
from her room with a packet of cakes in her hand.

The bathroom door opens, steam escaping. Manon emerges
with wet hair and a towel.

SAVANNAH

Hey Manon !

MANON

Hey, what's up ?

Savannah comes down the stairs. She goes into the
kitchen.

John is with his headphones, cooking his breakfast.

SAVANNAH

Hey John.

Savannah finishes the last cake in the package. She
crumples it up and puts it in the garbage can.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

John is standing with his back to Savannah. She taps him on the shoulder and gives him a big smile.

SAVANNAH

Hey John.

John takes off his headphones.

JOHN

Hey Savannah, i'm sorry.

SAVANNAH

In your world.

JOHN

Always. How was your night ?

SAVANNAH

Not so bad, Did you go running this morning ?

JOHN

Guess.

Savannah approach John and smells him. John laugh.

SAVANNAH

The answer is YES. You're always cooking something delicious even for breakfast.

JOHN

That's what I love to do.

Savannah opens a cupboard and takes another packet of biscuits and a banana.

SAVANNAH

If i don't see you, have a good day.

JOHN

Have a good day to you Savannah.

Savannah goes up the stairs and comes across Manon dressed, her hair wet, with her bag and in a hurry.

SAVANNAH

You're going to be late.

MANON

I know, I know. Have a good day Savannah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Manon runs to the kitchen. John is watching the clock

JOHN

Hey Manon. You're going to be late.

MANON

I know !

Manon puts her purse on a chair in the kitchen.

She opens the fridge and takes an apple then she opens a cupboard and takes a packet of chips.

MANON

Have a good day John, see you tonight.

Manon is leaving without her purse.

JOHN

(yelling)
Your purse !

Manon moans. She runs to the kitchen, puts her packet of chips and her apple on the table.

She opens her bag and puts the packet of chips inside. She leaves, forgetting her apple on the table.

MANON

Thanks, bye !

John smiles as he watches Manon leave. He sees that she has left her apple on the table.

John smiles, picks up the apple, wipes it with his hands and takes a bite.

He puts his eggs on a plate, takes a glass of orange juice and crunches the apple.

He sits down on the sofa and turns on the TV. He watches cartoons and eats. A few moments pass.

Footsteps can be heard upstairs. The noises become louder and more erratic.

John looks up at the ceiling. Sounds of crackling fire.

JOHN

(keeping his voice
low)
Not in the morning. Please.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

John turns his head slowly towards the back of the room, which is very dark.

The television crackles. Tension builds. John tenses.

The footsteps stop, leaving only the sound of crackling.

John looks into the shadows at the far end of the room. A slight plume of smoke seems to emerge from the shadows.

BANG - A loud noise from upstairs startles John, who spills his orange juice and drops the apple on the floor.

Footsteps come down the stairs. Bill runs up the stairs and out the front door.

BILL

Bye !

The door closes.

Silence - the tension eases.

John turns around. A black shape lies on the ground in the shadows. It takes the form of an indistinct body.

John closes his eyes.

JOHN

No, please.

WOMAN SCREAM.

John opens his eyes, the coffee table is back with John's meal, the orange juice spread out and the apple on the floor.

John clutches his head in his hands and blows out a breath as he slumps back on the sofa.

INT. COOKING CLASS - DAY

Chef Bernard stands in the middle of the large kitchen, dressed in chef attire with a toque on his head.

He faces 10 students, also in white chef uniforms but without toques.

John is one of them.

CHEF BERNARD

Excellence and perfection are the
key words.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHEF BERNARD (CONT'D)

Discipline yourselves, trust
yourselves. I trust you. Let's get
started. You have 1 hour.

The students start working. They handle ingredients:
meats, vegetables.

CUE MONTAGE - WE SEE VARIOUS SEQUENCES OF THE COOKING
CLASS

Chef Bernard moves among the students.

CHEF BERNARD

And the peas? Have you counted
them?

STUDENT 1

Yes, Chef.

CHEF BERNARD

Keep going like this. You have 45
minutes left.

Chef Bernard walks past a pot where a sauce is heating.
He takes it and shows it to a student.

CHEF BERNARD

And what is this?

STUDENT 2

Pepper sauce, Chef.

CHEF BERNARD

No, it's not. It has never been
that. The base is burnt.

The chef stands in the middle of the kitchen and speaks
loudly to be heard. All the students listen while
continuing to cook, except one who stops.

CHEF BERNARD

I don't want to see this. Leaving
a pot on the burner doesn't lead
to beautiful things. Just because
you're racing against time doesn't
mean you can forget a part of the
dish.

The chef looks at the student and pours the sauce into
the sink.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHEF BERNARD

It's not time that made you forget
the sauce on the stove; it's your
lack of organization. Start over
and do better.

STUDENT 2

Yes, Chef!

CHEF BERNARD

(watching the one who
stop)

What are you looking at? Do you
expect me to cook for you?

STUDENT 3

No, Chef.

CHEF BERNARD

You have 20 minutes and only 20
minutes left.

The chef passes by John, who is preparing his dish. The
chef notices a bouquet garni on the table.

CHEF BERNARD

Simple question, what's in a
bouquet garni?

JOHN

Parley, thyme, pepper, and herbs,
Chef.

CHEF BERNARD

Clean you station for me.

JOHN

Yes, Chef.

CHEF BERNARD

10 minutes ladies and gentlemen.
10 minutes left.

The chef continues his rounds while the students finish
their tasks quickly.

CHEF BERNARD

5. 4. 3. 2. 1, and it's done!

The students clean the edges of their plated dishes.

INT. KITCHEN CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

All the students are in regular attire. They gather their belongings and exit at the end of the corridor.

John is the last. Chef Bernard catches up with him.

CHEF BERNARD

Good job today, John.

JOHN

Thank you, Chef.

CHEF BERNARD

I wanted to tell you. Do you remember when you enrolled two years ago?

JOHN

What should I remember in particular?

CHEF BERNARD

I ask because you were in a trial phase. You weren't here to train to be a therapist but rather to explore a world that interests you. You didn't want to commit in any way, and that's a perfectly honorable approach. I'm well aware that training is expensive and not always accessible to everyone.

JOHN

I can afford it, and I have no regrets about the money invested.

CHEF BERNARD

I don't doubt that. I just want to tell you that I'm happy to have you as a student. I wish you to continue, and I see a certain talent in you.

JOHN

Thanks for the compliment, Chef. I appreciate it a lot.

CHEF BERNARD

Good. And by the way, I was just wondering where you stand for the future. Have you decided to pursue this professionally, or are you still in the phase of discovery and experience?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN

(embarrassed)

I don't know yet. I really love everything I'm learning. It sparks desires, but I have a whole part of my life that requires me to do certain things and not others.

CHEF BERNARD

I didn't mean to put pressure on you, and your professional life is none of my business. Nevertheless, my door is always open, and I wanted to say that you have a place among us.

Chef Bernard touches his toque.

CHEF BERNARD

I think you can have a bright future in the kitchen, if you desire, of course.

JOHN

Thank you, Chef.

Chef Bernard gives John a small pat on the shoulder and smiles. Then he walks down the corridor and returns to the kitchen. John exits.

INT. ALOHA THEATRE - AFTERNOON

The cinema is old, in art deco style. John is dressed in his uniform, behind the waiter, selling tickets.

A colleague is making the popcorn.

There are a few people in line, most of them elderly. John gives two popcorns to a couple.

JOHN

Here's the pop-corn for you. Enjoy the movie.

John sees Sean, who is the only young person in the queue, accompanied by a woman of the same age.

Sean seems very sure of himself, young and athletic.

SEAN

I was sure I was going to see you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN

Sean! What are you doing here?

SEAN

Like all the fellas around me,
we're here to watch ...

He's watching the poster of the movie to be sure.

SEAN

... "LA GRANDE BOUFFE" on a
Thursday afternoon of course. And
it's pretty normal to me.

Sean is sarcastic and he smile as John. The woman next to
him, looks at him sternly.

STACY

I'm going to the bathroom.

Stacy pats Sean gently on his arm and walks to the
bathroom.

JOHN

So, who's she ?

SEAN

She's Stacy, a film student. She's
doing a PhD on Italian cinema or
something.

JOHN

(smiling)

That makes more sense. This is
your first time here, I think. And
how long is this one going to
last?

SEAN

As long as it takes. Give me two
pop-corn with butter, please.

JOHN

Let's roll.

John turns around and takes two popcorns, while Sean
pays.

SEAN

Take a break for a moment. I need
to talk to you.

John feels embarrassed. He turns to talk to his
colleague.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN

I'll be right back. Just a minute.

His colleague replaces him.

Sean picks up his popcorn and shifts a few meters away.
John joins him.

JOHN

What? Hurry up, it's a rush.

SEAN

Easy, buddy. Guess what? They made me an associate.

JOHN

What? Congratulation bro! I'm really happy for you.

They hug.

SEAN

Thank you very much. So, now more than ever, my proposal still stands.

John pouts.

SEAN

What? Don't tell me you're going to stay working in a crappy cinema that shows movies from a hundred years ago all your life. You can do your 12-month internship with us. I'll be your mentor.

JOHN

Sean, we've talked about this. You know that I did these studies just to get a backup. But it's not my thing. I'm trying to focus on another project.

SEAN

Your cook thing? Stop with that. You've got your accountancy training. I need an accountant and a personal assistant. You're going to have money and you're going to work with your best buddy. What more do you need?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JOHN

Look Sean, thanks but right now I don't see myself doing that.

SEAN

I' mean come on. In this profession, you struggle for years before making money. Make sure of something with me, and afterward, you'll be stable enough to launch yourself. It's your passion; you'll always have it, it won't disappear.

JOHN

(embarrassed)

Listen bro, I don't have time to speak about that.

SEAN

Yeah sure, sorry bro. Sell those thickets for this famous Italian movie.

Sean is sarcastic, John smiles.

Stacy appears right behind Sean.

STACY

What do you have against cinephiles who are passionate about Italian cinema?

Sean turns around a little embarrassed.

SEAN

Nothing, I'm just joking with my friend here.

JOHN

Well, I've got to get back. By the way, my birthday's at Hurley's.

SEAN

I'll be there tonight if you want to come by. I'm celebrating my promotion.

John returns to the waiter.

JOHN

I don't think so. I'll be at the hospital to see my mom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Sean hands the popcorn to Stacy.

STACY

Aren't we supposed to be together tonight?

SEAN

(feels embarrassed)
Come on, let's go or we'll miss the commercials.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - EVENING

John arrives at the hospital and heads for the secretariat. A woman is behind the waiter, eyes riveted on her computer.

JOHN

Hello. Room 202 please.

The lady at the desk keeps her eyes fixed on her computer.

RECEPTION LADY

Sign the register. You know the way.

John smiles. He signs the register on the waiter. He walks to the elevators and continues to the stairs to take them.

INT. HOSPITAL PATIENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The TV is on - the sound is very loud.

Ruth is in bed, mumbling to herself as she watches TV. A white curtain hides part of the room.

The door opens, John enters and squints. He immediately turns down the volume on the TV.

JOHN

Mom, how many times do I have to tell you to turn the TV down?

RUTH

Don't touch the buttons! Oh, it's you again. What do you want from me, lazybones?
How are you, COOK?

She insist on the COOK.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN

I'm doing well, mom. I love what I'm learning.

RUTH

Fast-food worker. 'Need cook lessons to be a fast-foos worker? Turn the volume up!

John sits down on a chair by the bed.

JOHN

Mommy, you're not alone in this room.

RUTH

He's asleep. It's like he's dead. That too, how many times do I have to tell you.

JOHN

You're not wrong there. How was your day?

RUTH

You tell me. Watched TV. The nurses took me for a walk. I'm going to eat soon. By the way, one of the doctors wanted to see you.

JOHN

To see me ?

The door opens again. A nurse enters with a tray.

NURSE

Hello dear Ruth. How is it going today? Oh hello sir. The son, I presume?

The nurse places the meal on the shelf of Ruth's bed. John stands up.

JOHN

Excuse me, my mother tells me one of the doctors wanted to see me?

NURSE

Oh, that must be Mrs Hung. She's head of department but not one of the medical staff. She's down the hall if you like.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN

Thank you very much. Mom, I'll say
goodbye. I'll see you in a few
days.

RUTH

That's right, lazybones.

John leaves the room. The nurse draws the white curtain.
There's another bed with an intubated person. She closes
the curtain directly.

RUTH

Turn up the volume !

The nurse blows to regain her energy.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

John is walking down the corridor. Mrs. Hung is writing
something on a notepad.

JOHN

Mrs Hung ?

MRS HUNG

Yes ?

JOHN

Hello, I'm John, tRuth's son. The
one who's listening to the
television at very high volume in
room 202.

They're smiling.

JOHN

You wanted to speak to me ?

MRS HUNG

Yes, thank you for coming to see
me. Look, I'm really sorry to
bother you with this. But we're
going to have to increase the
monthly payments. There are
certain clauses in the contract
which stipulate that treatment
costs can be increased when the
institution is going through
exceptional financial times, which
is the case at the moment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN

What's this ?

MRS HUNG

I'm really sorry. It's always things that come from above. The board thinks we're spending too much money. They've decided to raise prices exponentially over the next five years.

JOHN

It wasn't planned that way.

MRS HUNG

(gasps)

God, I hate doing this. I'm truly sorry. Of course, the board makes the decisions. They don't realize it's up to us to announce it. It's always the same thing, you know. Either you accept, or you find another place for your mother.

Madame Hung takes John's arm and looks sympathetic.

MRS HUNG

I'm deeply sorry, my boy.

Madame Hung leaves, her eyes riveted on her notepad. John looks back at her and blows out his breath.

INT. HURLEY'S BAR - NIGHT CONTINUOUS

Sean is at the waiter surrounded by two women, who behave like groupies.

SEAN

Three years. Three years is all I need.

Sean finishes his drink in one gulp.

SEAN

(to the waiter)

Same one!

John comes into the bar. Sean sees him coming.

SEAN

John! I knew you'd come.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEAN
(to the waiter)
An other one for my friend.

The waiter nods. Sean takes John by the shoulder.

SEAN
(to the girls)
This is John.

John whispers something in Sean's ear. Sean takes a step back.

SEAN
(with a big smile)
Seriously ?

Sean hugs John.

SEAN
I'm happy for you, you deserve it.
And believe me, you're doing the
right thing. And don't worry,
secure your future, then you'll be
able to pursue your passion.
You're smart bro.

The bartender places two glasses on the bar. Sean gives one to John. They toast each other and the two girls.

JOHN
What happened to the girl at the
cinema ?

SEAN
(smiling)
Well, I did my part. She did her
part. But ... She expected too
much.

John smiles.

JOHN
What about the movie? Did you like
"La Grande Bouffe"?

SEAN
'Didn't get it at all. Instead of
easting i prefer to drink.

Sean drinks.

Sean and John spend the night drinking and dancing with the two girls.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Music in the background. The microwave works. John is slumped on the sofa. He's hungover.

Savannah is at the table, eating peanut butter with a spoon. John stares at her in amazement.

SAVANNAH

What?

John is smiling.

JOHN

Nothing, you makes me laugh.

SAVANNAH

You've been sleeping all day because you got drunk with your stupid friend last night. And you're laughing at me? It's your face that makes me laugh.

John laughs, Savannah smiles. The microwave rings. John tries to get up, but grumbles.

Savannah gets up and takes out a plate of cheese legs.

SAVANNAH

I'll get it.

John lies back on the sofa. Savannah brings him his plate.

SEAN

See? I can cook too. Even though this one doesn't seem to be your best. Who's your roommate?

JOHN

(smiling)

You are.

It's from yesterday's lunch.

John grad his plate.

JOHN

How did you know I was with Sean yesterday?

SAVANNAH

You came home at three o'clock, totally drunk.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAVANNAH (CONT'D)

Apparently you're going to work
for him and that didn't make you
very happy.

John pouts. The front door opens. Manon enters and slumps
down on the other side of the sofa. Manon and John's feet
touch.

JOHN

I was convinced you weren't here
today. You were in a hurry the
other morning, weren't you?

BILL

I did leave in a hurry, yeah.

MANON

Where you late too?

BILL

Yeah, but my boss is always very
punctual, unlike yours.

SAVANNAH

Did he yell at you?

BILL

No, he's like that. He's very
aware that the he's hiring people
who are finishing their studies.
We're all a little out of it.

Bill takes an energy drink from the fridge and drinks it
in one gulp.

JOHN

Well, you were thirsty.

Bill holds his breath. Savannah rushes to close the
almost-finished jar of peanut butter. Her mouth is full
and she burps discreetly. Everyone laughs.

MANON

Same old, same old.

Bill throws away his empty bottle.

BILL

By the way, for your birthday, are
we still going to Hurley's?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN

Yep. And Savannah, sorry but I told Sean to come.

SAVANNAH

Don't worry about me. It's ain't a problem.

BILL

I'm in.

Bill sits down.

MANON

Bill. You're very intriguing.

BILL

(smiling)

I am?

MANON

No, but we never had much time to talk. Where are you at, what are you doing? Where do you want to go?

Bill smiles, everyone looks at him.

JOHN

Come on man. We're all ears.

BILL

I don't really like talking about myself. But as you know, I'm finishing my studies in sociology. It's the science of groups. Psychology is more about the individual. Both things interest me enormously and I'm looking to do an experiment.

MANON

What kind of experiment?

BILL

I really want to see how the group affects the individual and vice versa. I learn a lot about myself by getting to know other people. Now I want to see what others, as a group or an institution, see of me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JOHN

That's interesting. How do you plan to go about it?

BILL

It's still unclear, but I've got my own idea. I'm obviously interested in psychoanalysis and I'd like to see to what extent this group acts within the individual, and to do that I need to find out whether the collective unconscious that has developed since the emergence of this science is inscribed within the individual unconscious.

SAVANNAH

And how does that translate?

BILL

I'm going to consult some psychiatrists and compare their findings.

JOHN

Sounds interesting.

SAVANNAH

That's great, but hasn't that already been done? I mean, surely the protocols they're putting in place have been tried and tested for many years. I suppose.

JOHN

I agree, a lot of things have been tried and tested. both the good and the bad.

SAVANNAH

It's true, we can see that in the past and sometimes even today, unfortunately, there are things put in place that are more than questionable.

BILL

You're right. I don't want to call into question everything that's in place today.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

BILL (CONT'D)

But I do agree with you that serious things have been done in the name of medicine and psychoanalysis throughout history and even today. I find One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest a good reminder of what could have happened 40 years ago.

SAVANNAH

Oh I love this movie !

Everyone looks at Savannah.

SAVANNAH

(putting her hands to
her mouth)

Sorry, I got excited.

BILL

You're right, it feels good. But I think it's important to experience this for myself. Today, I'm not a doctor yet, but I'm a researcher. And I want to use a scientific framework in a very personal undertaking. And I hope it will fit in with my PhD. It seems important to me.

MANON

That's great, you're right. I'm with you on that. I think we're far too disconnected from human beings.

BILL

Thanks for the support, it's appreciated. On that note, I'll have to get back to it. Have a good day or early evening.

Bill goes upstairs.

JOHN

Ciao.

SAVANNAH

Bye, bye.

MANON

Good luck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

John finishes his mashed potatoes. Puts his plate in the dishwasher and heads for the stairs.

JOHN

I'm off too. Good night.

MANON

Night, night.

John goes upstairs. Manon turns to Savannah who is eating a banana.

MANON

Still no news from your chosen one?

SAVANNAH

Amanda? Nope. No comment.

MANON

I'm sorry for you.

SAVANNAH

You're sweet.

MANON

I love you Savannah. I swear. But, how that's possible that you can eat so much?

SAVANNAH

(mouth full)

Well, it's simple. You open your mouth, chew and swallow. Even you can do that.

Savannah throws her banana peel into the garbage can and falls right into it. Savannah claps her hands and raises them in the air.

SAVANNAH

Yes!

INT. HOUSE SAVANNAH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Savannah lies in bed with her computer on her lap. She eats cakes.

She opens an internet page to check the prices of plane tickets to Japan and Thailand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then, she opens a blog page about an expatriate in Asia, taking notes on her phone.

Her cellphone is vibrating.

Notification of new message - Editor: HEART ICON.

SMS :

HEART ICON: I'M THINKING ABOUT YOU.

SAVANNAH: I'M THINKING ABOUT YOU TOO. WHEN ARE YOU COMING BACK? I MISS YOU.

HEART ICON: SOON I PROMISE. I SUPPOSE THAT YOU CAN'T MAKE ANY NOISE.

Savannah is smiling

SAVANNAH: I DON'T SEE HOW I CAN MAKE ANY NOISE ALONE WITH MY PHONE. COME TO SEE ME. IT'S BETTER ;).

HEART ICON: I KNOW A LOTS OF THINGS TO DO THAT WILL MAKE A BIT OF NOISE ANYWAY. EVEN WHEN I'M ALONE.

SAVANNAH: IT'S EASIER WITH TWO PEOPLE ... I WONDER WHAT YOU HAVE IN MIND.

HEART ICON : I'VE GOT A LOT ON MY MIND. I'M AT THE HOTEL, I'VE JUST GOT OUT OF THE SHOWER.

SAVANNAH: SO YOU'RE NAKED UNDER YOUR BATHROBE ?

HEART ICON : WHAT BATHROBE ? ...

Savannah is smiling.

SAVANNAH: SHOW ME !

The front door downstairs opens. Mille sees the light come on under her bedroom door.

Cellphone is vibrating.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

New message from HEART ICON: blurred photo of her naked.

SMS:

SAVANNAH: WAIT, MY ROOMMATE JUST GOT HOME AND HE JUST BROKE SOMETHING. I THINK HE'S WITH SOMEONE.

HEART ICON: WHICH ONE ?

BILL

(from downstairs)

Don't bother, I'll sweep up. Sit on the couch while you wait. Watch your feet, you're wearing socks.

SMS :

SAVANNAH: IT'S BILL

HEART ICON : THE ONE YOU DON'T SEE VERY OFTEN ?

SAVANNAH: YES? HE SEEMS TO BE ON A DATE. MAYBE I SHOULD EXPECT TO HEAR THINGS FROM THE NEXT ROOM.

Sound of sweeping glass.

SMS :

HEART ICON: GREAT ! WE'LL DO THAT IN GROUP THEN. I'M TOUCHING MY SELF. SEND ME A PHOTO !

Savannah smiles and gets down on her stomach. She takes a photo with the flash, of herself with her buttocks exposed.

BILL

(really loud, from the hallway)

No, I don't agree. You have to take it easy at first and then, only then, you can let go. Watch your step!

Savannah is surprised. She turns and looks towards her door, very surprised. She sees a shadow of feet under the door.

Cellphone is vibrating.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SMS:

HEART ICON: HOLLY COW, I WANT YOU SO MUCH ... PLEASE ONE MORE.

SAVANNAH: BILL FREAKED ME OUT. HE'S RIGHT OUTSIDE MY ROOM. I DIDN'T EVEN HEAR HIM COME UP

Savannah hears sobs from the hallway.

Cellphone is vibrating.

SMS:

HEART ICON: WITH IS DATE ?

SAVANNAH: SO CREEPY ... I HEAR SOBBING

Savannah rises very slowly from her bed.

Her cellphone vibrates on the mattress. "Heart" calls.

Savannah slowly approaches the door. She stares at the shadows of feet appearing under the door.

She puts her ear gently to the door. She hears a loud knock - Savannah is startled.

Rapid footsteps come down the stairs and the door slams violently. Under the door, the light goes out.

Savannah locks her door and jumps into bed, retrieving her phone which continues to vibrate.

Savannah picks up.

SAVANNAH
(Whispering under her
blanket)
Oh, my God, honey. I've had the
fright of my life.

HEART ICON
(over the phone)
What's the matter? Call the
police!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SAVANNAH

It's Bill, he was standing by my door. I didn't even have time to open the door before I heard a loud bang. Then he took off.

HEART ICON

What ? So weird. Take care of yourself.

SAVANNAH

I thought he was with someone, but he seems to be on his own. Maybe he's just drunk, who knows. Wait, I hear something again.

A door in the hallway opens.

SAVANNAH

I think Manon got up. I'll go and see.

HEART ICON

Manon ? What Manon ? No wait!

Savannah gets up and open the door. Manon is in the hallway at his front door.

MANON

What was that?

SAVANNAH

I think it was Bill. He was on a date or something and I had glass break. Then he seemed to be talking, but I didn't understand.

MANON

Sis you hear the bang? It woke me up. Then the doors stalled. I don't know if it was his bedroom door.

SAVANNAH

I thought it was the front door.

They both look at the door at the end of the hallway. It opens very slowly and creaks.

Suddenly Bill opens it violently and steps out, towel in hand.

He walks quickly down the hallway, passing between Savannah and Manon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

BILL
(smiling and speaking
softly)
Hey girls; I'm really sorry about
the broken glass, I wasn't paying
attention. I swept downstairs and
will vacuum tomorrow. Make sure
you wear your flip-flops when you
go for breakfast. Sorry again and
have a good night.

Bill enters the bathroom and closes the door. Savannah
and Manon look at each other in astonishment.

SAVANNAH
Weird.

MANON
Well, I think that I'm going to
lock my door room for tonight.

SAVANNAH
Yeah, I'll do the same.

HEART ICON
(very faint sound)
Hello? Savannah? Hello?

Manon goes into her room and locks the door. Savannah
looks at the bathroom door.

Sound of running water.

She returns to her room and lock the door. She puts her
cell phone back to her ear.

SAVANNAH
Hello? ...

No answer. Savannah looks at her cellphone and blows. She
throws it on her bed.

She lies down her bed, taking all the cushions to make a
human)sized ball and hugging it as if it were a real
person.

INT. THERAPY ROOM 2 - DAY

The hidden camera is placed on a table.

Bill is sitting on a chair facing the table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The sound of a door opening, a man with a blurred face enters the frame and sits across from Bill on the other side of the desk.

The two men shake hands.

THERAPIST 2

Hello, Bill. How are you this morning?

BILL

Very well, thank you. And you?

THERAPIST 2

Good, good.

The therapist opens a notebook and takes the time to read.

THERAPIST 2

Yes, we met on Tuesday two weeks ago. I remember well. I took some time to reflect on our conversation. You were talking about a dream you had and connecting it with certain dreams you had as a child. Could we revisit that?

BILL

I remember, yes. I didn't connect them with dreams I had as a child but with situations that I felt like I was experiencing.

THERAPIST 2

Ah, I see. Can you tell me more about that?

BILL

I often had dreams where I was under attack, in urgent situations, life-or-death scenarios, extreme danger, where I couldn't scream. I know because when it comes to the point in my dream where I'm supposed to die, I wake up because my throat hurts from not being able to make a sound, even though I'm trying with all my might.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THERAPIST 2

Very interesting. Do you associate these dreams with any specific situations from your childhood?

BILL

It was more apparent for me to keep all my fears inside than to talk about them. Once a month, we would go to my father's family, a three-hour drive from our house. It was always a dreadful time because, on Sundays, I had to get up as if I were going to school. I was the only child, and I watched four adults in front of me, talking, debating, drinking, smoking, and eating, all the while sitting there. During that time, I sat on the couch doing nothing. The only attention I received was about whether I wanted to drink or eat. A whole day waiting to go home. Everything felt eerie, and finally back home, the only thing my mother asked me was if I had done my homework.

THERAPIST 2

Are your parents aware of this today?

BILL

I've mentioned some things; I don't know if they heard anything.

THERAPIST 2

When did your throat loosen up?

BILL

It never really did. I think that's why in my dreams, I'm not able to scream.

THERAPIST 2

You need to find your method today to loosen that throat, finally express yourself.

BILL

(disconnected)

I found moments to disconnect.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

THERAPIST 2

Oh, really? Which ones? Maybe it would be good to rediscover them.

BILL

It's like another world. When I was surrounded by people, at home or at certain times at school, it was easier for me not to talk. But afterward, I had to unload everything I couldn't express. Behind my parents' garden, there was an empty lot surrounded by trees. It was like a wild dump, full of broken glass, mirrors, old wooden furniture, washing machines... I was the place where i felt capable of speaking.

THERAPIST 2

But who were you talking to?

BILL

Other people who came there too, to be out of sight.

THERAPIST 2

What kind of people? Adults or children?

BILL

There were two children. They attended a different school than mine. It's thanks to that empty lot that I got to meet them, actually.

THERAPIST 2

But do you still see these friends? Do you know what they've become?

BILL

When I left for college at 17, I distanced myself. It was harder to stay in touch. Then the campus introduced me to new people. But we're still in contact. We exchange letters a few times a year.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

THERAPIST 2

And in that empty lot, were there only children? No adults? Children your age? Do you remember their names?

BILL

There was a man and a woman who came to see us a few times, but it was mainly my two friends and me who were there. And of course, I remember their names. We're still in touch.

CUT

The therapist takes notes.

THERAPIST 2

Listen, Bill, I think it would be good for us to meet once a week. It's been over 5 months now since we started seeing each other. You mention being in increasing communication with your two childhood friends in that empty lot, right? I would like to see you again next Monday. And I'd love to see these letters you exchange.

BILL

I think that's possible, yes.

The therapist stands up, and Bill follows.

THERAPIST 2

One last question, Bill. In that empty lot, were there any animals? Dogs, cats, rats, bugs maybe...

BILL

Yes, a few.

THERAPIST 2

How did you behave with them? You and your friends? Did you leave them alone, play with them, or, on the contrary, did you want to be mean?

Silence.

CUT

INT. HOUSE, JOHN'S ROOM - NIGHT

John is in his bed, lights off, eyes open. The clock on the bedside table reads 00:02.

John is restless. He gasps. He lies on his back and looks up at the ceiling. In the darkness, red flashes light up the room.

Siren sounds outside - Sound of doors opening and closing
- A knock at the front door.

Loud noises. Someone runs down the corridor and down the stairs. John turns on his side, eyes open, without any particular reaction, and follows the footsteps through the wall.

Distant, muffled sounds of people talking.

A woman screams. John clutches his blanket tightly around his heart. The woman stops screaming and cries.

The tension increases. John begins to tear up.

JOHN
(mumbling)
Don't watch.

John looks slowly towards the dark corner of his room.

JOHN
Please Mom, not tonight.

Red flashes lights from outside illuminate the room succinctly, revealing the walls in the darkness.

John peers around the corner and sees his mother appear, flash after flash. She's wearing a bathrobe, her hair is a mess and she's crying.

JOHN
(mumbling)
No, not tonight. Mom, stop it.

RUTH
Why stop?

The red flashes stop, the room is plunged into darkness. -
Silence

The door opens, letting in a trickle of cold light. A child's silhouette, holding the door, appears against the light. John is dazzled. He looks around again and sees his mother at the foot of his bed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She's screaming.

RUTH
(yelling)
Why him?

John's mother cries, John closes his eyes and turns away. He opens them again a few moments later and sees the same crushed head he saw in the living room.

Smoke billows from under his bed. John closes his eyes. Tension increases.

John wakes up suddenly. His room is empty and normal.

He's sweating and out of breath. He picks up his phone and puts the music on low. He turns on the light and buries his head in his pillow.

INT. HURLEY'S BAR- NIGHT

Bill, John, Savannah and John are seated at a table.

The bar is full - music and chatter.

BILL
I could literally kill.

Savannah, John and Manon look at him.

BILL
Sorry, I'm going far, but it's true that I'm having more and more trouble with people who talk and talk only.

We live in a world of talkers but doesn't act. I prefer doers.

I'll always remember my old roommates. Every night they'd come home and talk to me. They'd tell me about their day, or comment on what they'd seen or read.

Quite simply, it was them against the rest of the world. They were right, the others were wrong. Everything they did could be judged and criticized.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL (CONT'D)

They knew everything: politics, economics, sexuality, medicine, architecture, the arts... Whatever the subject, they knew what had to be. They judged and criticized everyone, every time they open their mouths.

I stayed with them for 9 months. You know what I saw them do in 9 months?

Nothing. Always eating in the kitchen or lying on the sofa.

JOHN

Yeah, it's like those who know sport better than anyone else and have done nothing but watch it from their sofa.

BILL

Exactly.

Bill looks serious and stares off into space.

BILL

I've heard too many people talk about respect and tolerance. Then to see those same people on the street, taking up all the space on the sidewalk and pushing people, saying "I deserve respect, so I impose it". Too many people talk about tolerance and end up grumbling and insulting a little old man who takes a long time to pay at the supermarket.

MANON

And what about you? Do you live up to your words?

BILL

I do my best. Sometimes I make mistakes, I must admit. But I avoid talking too much. That's why you don't hear me much at the apartment.

SAVANNAH

You're making up for it tonight.

All four laughs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BILL
(smiling)
Yep, you're right.

SAVANNAH
I, for me, am going to put my
money where my mouth is. I've got
to take a leak.

Everyone laughs. Savannah gets up and goes to the
bathroom.

Sean enters the bar, pushing people into the bar without
apologizing. Tall and imposing, he speaks loudly in
John's direction.

SEAN
Hey, Happy birthday bro'

John stands up.

JOHN
Here he is at last, always late.
(yelling)
Sean!

John and Sean hugs. John makes the introductions.

JOHN
So these are my famous roommates.
(pointing Bill)
Here you have Bill

Bill and Sean are shaking hands

SEAN
Hi, Bill. Nice to meet you, Sean.

JOHN
Here you have Manon.

Sean is joking about the pronunciation of the name MANON.

SEAN
Oh the well known Manon! How
should i pronounce it?

MANON
Whatever suits you. Nice to meet
you.

Savannah comes out of the bathroom and sees Sean from a
distance and blows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

John points at her.

JOHN

Then Savannah, whom you already
know.

Both of them shakes hands.

SEAN

(in a deep voice)
A manly handshake for Savannah.

SAVANNAH

Still the same one, as I can see.

JOHN

Easy Sean. It's my birthday, not
yours.

SEAN

It's okay, it's okay. We're just
talking. How are you? Manon.
John's told me a lot about you.
Communications student? Future
advertising executive?
I know a few people in the
business, I'll introduce you to
them if you like.

MANON

You're too kind, Sean.

SEAN

That's what they say about me.
Lovable.

Bill wraps his arms around John's shoulder and slaps him
on the chest with his hand.

SEAN

Well, I finally found my
accountant! After months and
months of struggle.

Manon, Bill and Savannah look at John.

SAVANNAH

Really?

MANON

Have you finally made up your
mind?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

JOHN

Yes, I've made up my mind.

MANON

I thought you wanted to wait until
you'd finished your cook training.

JOHN

I know i did. But there have been
certain circumstances over the
last few days that have made it
necessary for me to make my
decision.

Bill taps John on the shoulder.

BILL

If it's your choice, go for it.

SAVANNAH

Yes if that's your choice.

Savannah looks furtively at John. John taps his beer on
the table.

JOHN

Well, we're not here to talk
business, we're here to drink,
aren't we?

SEAN

Yes, we are! It's your birthday.
Come on, let's roll!

ELLIPSIS

INT. HURLEY'S BAR - CONTINUOUS

Manon, Bill and Savannah are at the table with beer in
hand.

SAVANNAH

Get ready folks.

MANON

For what?

SAVANNAH

For this.

Sean arrives from the bar with a bottle of liqueur, John
behind him, is carrying five shot glasses.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sean sets the bottle down hard on the table.

SEAN

Okay guys. The game is simple.
Scattegories, with alcohol.
Whoever loses drinks. Ready to go?

SAVANNAH

What the hell...

MANON

Fuck yeah!

BILL

Let's roll.

ELLIPSIS

INT. HURLEY'S BAR - CONTINUOUS

All the roommates are sitting at the same table, playing the same game.

SEAN

You've lost Savannah! Shot!

Savannah drinks here shot.

SEAN

A country beginning with the
letter. P.
Manon, you first.

MANON

Portugal.

SEAN

Puerto Rico.

SAVANNAH

Peru.

BILL

Paraguay.

John's thinking, he's stressing.

SEAN

Times up! Shot!

John drinks his shot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEAN

It's your birthday. Double dose.

Sean pours again, John looks around at everyone and puffing.

BILL

Come on, John!

MANON

Come on.

John drinks and pouts.

JOHN

Now it's your turn. A sport
beginning with a B. Basketball.

MANON

Badminton.

SAVANNAH

Beach Volley.

BILL

Baseball.

SEAN

Basketball.

SAVANNAH

Already said.

SEAN

What? Oh ...

Sean's thinking.

JOHN

Times up.

SEAN

Nah!

Everyone at the table laughs and exclaims loudly.

Sean drinks his shot.

He slams the glass on the table, John pours again.

JOHN

It's my birthday, a second one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SEAN

You can't be serious.

MANON

(drunk)

Come on, I'll go with you.

Manon pours herself another drink.

Sean and Manon toast. They clink their glasses back, clinking them on the table.

Manon lets out a scream.

SEAN

I've got to pee.

Sean drunkenly goes to the bathroom.

He shoves one man who spills his drink on another.

He don't noticed and go to the bathroom.

SAVANNAH

John, you should start watching him.

JOHN

Yeah, I know I should.

SAVANNAH

(getting up)

Come on, I'll go.

Savannah's going to hug John.

SAVANNAH

Happy birthday again John.

JOHN

Thanks for coming, I appreciate it.

Savannah hugs Bill and Manon.

SAVANNAH

Don't do anything foolish tonight. Say good-bye to Sean for me. Don't worry about the noise tonight at home. See you tomorrow.

John looks at Manon, who is also drunk and trying to fill her glass with the empty liquor bottle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JOHN

Manon?

MANON

(eyes fixed on the
bottle)

Yeah?

JOHN

The bottle is empty.

Bill laughs. Manon puts the bottle down, smiles and picks up Savannah's glass of beer, half filled.

JOHN

Don't you want some water instead?

BILL

No, it's your birthday. We're here to have a laugh. I'll get us another one. What do you want, John?

JOHN

Same one.

MANON

The same.

BILL

Let's roll and one for Sean.

Bill heads to the bar.

JOHN

(shouting)

Alcohol-free for Sean!

John watches Manon stare at something.

JOHN

Manon? Are you all right?

Manon doesn't answer, John checks where she's staring, it's at the entrance to the bathroom.

Sean is arguing with the man whose drink he spilt.

They start pushing each other.

JOHN

Damn it, Savannah was right.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

John gets up and runs to Sean. The two men start fighting.

John comes up behind him and simply pushes his arm away.

A general brawl breaks out.

Other people intervene and hit John and Sean, who in turn defend themselves.

John is hit in the head from behind with a bottle.

Bill sees this and enters the fight. He knocks down the man who hit John from behind.

He punches him in the face.

Bill wraps his hands around his neck and squeezes.

Bill's eyes go blank. The man is fainting.

Around him, the brawl continues.

The waiters come to fix everyone. Bill doesn't stop. The man is suffocating.

Manon looks into Bill's empty eyes. She puts her hand gently on his arm.

MANON

Bill? Bill?

Bill looks at Manon.

MANON

It's okay, you can let him now.

Bill comes to his senses and is astonished. He lets go of the man, who coughs and takes a deep breath. The waiters take him and Manon and throw them out.

WAITER

Come on bastard! Get the fuck out of here!

EXT. FRONT BAR, STREET - CONTINUOUS

It's dark and the street is empty.

The bar door opens and Bill and Manon are thrown out by two waiters.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WAITER

Don't ever come back here!

Bill is silent and steps aside. John and Sean are already outside.

John touches his bleeding lip.

JOHN

Are you all right?

MANON

Me yes, but you don't. Here take this.

Manon hands him a handkerchief.

Sean's eyebrow is bleeding. He's laughing.

JOHN

Does that make you laugh? What have you done now? You never know when to stop.

SEAN

What? A guy's messing with me because he spilt his drink. What would you have done?

JOHN

You spilled it. I saw you. You push everyone around when you're drunk.

MANON

(upset)

Shut up, you two! That's enough for tonight! Where is Bill?

Manon looks around and sees Bill, alone walking slowly down the street.

MANON

Come on, let's join Bill. Come along and I'd better not hear you.

Manon takes John's arm and puts it around her shoulders.

Bill walks ahead, John, Manon and Sean a few yards behind. It's starting to rain.

INT. THERAPY ROOM 3 - DAY

VIDEO TAPE

The camera is on the ground. Bill is sitting on a couch, and the therapist is in a chair opposite.

Their heads are out of frame. Bill's feet are moving in all directions.

THERAPIST 3

You seem very agitated today. Has something happened since our last session?

BILL

Not more than usual, I think.

THERAPIST 3

Come on, Bill, it's been 7 or 8 months since we started seeing each other. I've often seen you come in frustrated to my office, and we've always managed to communicate, you and I. There's no reason it should be different today.

BILL

This experience is sometimes challenging to live.

THERAPIST 3

What experience? You who decided to undertake psychological work with me? Yes, it's an exhausting but essential job.

BILL

The experience is bigger than that. It's not just about you; it has never been just about you.

THERAPIST 3

Who is this about then? Those children from the empty lot? I understood in the last two months that you hadn't received any more letters. I thought you had moved on. You spoke to me about new friends you recently made. Is that who you're talking about?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BILL

They're not friends. They're always there criticizing. They're not friends. Sometimes I turn around on my path, afraid they might be following me.

Bill becomes increasingly agitated.

THERAPIST 3

We agreed that every time you feel insecure, it's important to send me a summary of what you felt that evening. I don't think I've received an email from you.

Bill's legs stop moving. He calms down abruptly.

BILL

Don't worry; it wasn't very urgent. I assure you, everything is fine. It was just a moment where I was scared, but nothing more. I'm much better now.

THERAPIST 3

Are you sure, Bill? There's no problem in experiencing difficult moments. We're here to try to find a solution; that's what these sessions are for. It's not an obligation for you to always feel good; there are setbacks, and the work takes time.

BILL

I know, really, don't worry. I take this work very seriously, which is why I never miss an appointment.

THERAPIST 3

I know, Bill; I'm very pleased with your commitment, actually. Is everything going well with your roommates? Do you feel any oppression from them? It's entirely normal to have that feeling. Living in a community can sometimes be challenging to handle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SILENCE.

CUT

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Savannah has her hear-phones on. The music is loud. She shakes her head. She opens a cupboard. She takes out a bucket and mop.

She turns on the tap, water is running and steam is escaping. She fills the bucket while singing in a low voice.

She mops the living room, the kitchen and the stairs. The floors are slippery and she almost falls down the stairs.

She continues in the corridor on the second floor, energetically sweeping every wall and door.

She knocks on Bill's door accidentally.

Suddenly, Bill's door swings open and slams shut, causing Savannah to take a big, frightened step backwards.

Silence -

Savannah takes off her headphones, looks around, not understanding what has happened.

SAVANNAH
(whispering)
Rude.

Savannah gives the floor a final gentle wipe, then hurries down the stairs.

Halfway down she slips and falls on her bottom. She drops the broom and the bucket of water falls.

The water splashes all the way down the stairs to the floor below.

Her face grimaces with pain. She regains her senses and hears again the loud BANG of the door closing at the top.

She gets up quickly, but the pain makes her fall again. She struggles to her feet and limps to the front door.

BILL
Hey, are you alright? What happened?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Savannah turns around, surprised and frightened. Bill is at the top of the stairs.

SAVANNAH

No it's nothing. Everything's fine. I'm sorry, I slipped on the stairs. I'll clean it up.

Bill starts to descend. Savannah raises her arm and forces herself up quickly.

SAVANNAH

No, be careful, there's water everywhere, really, I'll take care of it. You can come back up, there's nothing to worry about Bill.

BILL

Are you sure?

SAVANNAH

Quite sure, I'll take care of everything.

Bill looks at Savannah in astonishment, then slowly climbs back up. Savannah, alone again, lets her pain explode as she holds back sounds with her mouth.

INT. HERNST & YOUNG BUILDING, LOBBY - DAY

John, wearing a suit, passes through the carousel doors and enters the lobby. A few people come and go.

Sean, also in a suit, is at reception talking to a hostess.

He sees John coming and heads towards him.

SEAN

John! Nice suit. Perfect.

They both shake hands.

SEAN

Don't worry, it's just a formality.

INT. HERNST & YOUNG BUILDING, ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

John and Sean are in the doorway, alone. This one looks out. Everything looks small from up here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

John is stressed and doesn't say a word. He turns to the window and looks out.

SEAN

If all goes well. You're on my team in a month. You'll see how nice they are. But I've already got to show my teeth, they're talking about cutting into my commissions. I don't like that. I've already slept with a colleague at the communication department.

Sean smiles. John says nothing and stays focused on the outside. Sean looks at him.

SEAN

John? Are you with me? You've got to be focused here. It's really important today.

JOHN

I don't like elevators. You should know that by now.

SEAN

Uh, yes. I remember. But if you're afraid of heights, why are you looking outside?

JOHN

I've never been afraid of heights.

SEAN

What? Are you claustrophobic?

JOHN

I'm not.

SEAN

Then what?

John is annoyed and closes his eyes. The elevator doors open. John quickly gets out first. Sean follows, walking down a corridor lined with doors.

SEAN

What's the matter? Are you stressed about the interview? It's alright, I'll be there, with the head of accounting and a girl from the HR department. No worries it's just a formality.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SEAN (CONT'D)

You say yes, smile a little and
it's a done deal.

JOHN

I'm no more stressed about the
interview than I am claustrophobic
or afraid of heights. I just don't
like elevators.

The elevator stops, the doors often do. John gets out
first fairly quickly, Sean following.

They walk in a corridor. At the end of the corridor is a
secretary behind her desk. She's relaxed and on her cell
phone.

Sean taps gently on the table.

SECRETARY

(to whom she's
calling)

Wait a second.

She puts her phone to her chest and looks at Sean.

SECRETARY

Yep?

SEAN

The 10 o'clock appointment had
arrived.

The secretary uses her office phone.

SECRETARY

(to the person on the
phone)

They're here. Ok.

(to Sean)

Just a moment.

Sean taps John on the shoulder.

SEAN

Come on, it's time.

John looks at the secretary, who rolls her eyes. She
resumes her conversation on the phone. The main door
opens.

The secretary nods for him to go in. John enters the
room, behind him Sean follows.

The doors close.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - LATE AFTERNOON

Christmas music in the background - people in the coffee shop.

John is sitting at a table with his laptop and a coffee. He's wearing the same suit as for his interview.

He's on Internet. We see ASHLEY the therapist's website page with a photo of her.

He opens his e-mails and sends one to Ashley.

He starts writing:

DEAR CHEF,

I'M WRITING TO INFORM YOU THAT I WILL NOT BE CONTINUING THE JOURNEY WITH YOU FOR THE UPCOMING SESSION OF COURSES. CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE ARISEN THAT PREVENT ME FROM DEDICATING TIME AND FUNDING TO THIS PROJECT.

I APPRECIATE THE TIME YOU HAVE INVESTED IN ME AND ALL THE TEACHINGS YOU HAVE PROVIDED. I AM CERTAIN THAT MANY OTHERS WILL SEE IN YOU THE MENTOR I HAVE WITNESSED THROUGHOUT THESE MONTHS OF LEARNING, BOTH WITH YOU AND WITH ALL THE OTHER STUDENTS.

THANK YOU, CHEF!

GOODBYE, JOHN.

John clicks his mouse on "send" but hesitates. He finally clicks on it. The e-mail is sent.

John exhales and stretches. He leans his head back and looks at the coffee shop upside down. He sees people talking, working and interacting backwards.

An employee drops a glass and breaks it. Everyone turns their heads and stares at the employee, who picks up a broom to clean up.

John straightens up, takes a sip of coffee. He goes onto Youtube, looks at a few sites and the algorithm suggests a video, one of which is called:

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND DIAGNOSTIC EXPERIENCE - EP 1

The video and the channel have very few views.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He clicks on it and switches to full screen.

Alternating editing of the different videos of Bill during his therapy sessions.

JOHN
(surprised)
What the...

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Savannah is eating chips on the sofa, watching TV.

Manon is coming down the stairs with her headphones and cell phone, holding a packet under her arm.

She's on video with her parents. All of them speaking french.

MANON
(speaking french)
Oui, ne vous inquiétez pas, je
suis à la maison. Savannah est
dans le salon.

MANON'S PARENT
(through the cell
phone)
Hello Savannah.

Manon turns her cell phone to Savannah, who gestures with a big smile.

SAVANNAH
Hello, Manon's parents!

MANON'S PARENT
(speaking french)
Comment vas-tu depuis la dernière
fois?

Savannah looks at Manon.

MANON
(to Savannah)
They're asking how you're doing.

SAVANNAH
Oh. Thanks, I'm very well, and
you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MANON'S PARENT

Regarde dans le paquet, il y a quelque chose pour vous.

MANON

(to her parents)

Ok, vous allez arrêter de l'embêter?

(to Savannah)

They say there's something for you in the package.

SAVANNAH

Oh, you're too kind.

Manon places the package on the coffee table and her phone on top of it.

MANON

(to her parents)

Attendez, je vais aux toilettes je reviens. Je vous mets en pause. Regardez Savannah, elle va vous faire des grimaces. Speak english for my roommates please.

(to Savannah)

Sorry, they're annoying, they never stop. You don't have to watch them, they can stare at the ceiling.

SAVANNAH

No worries, they're hilarious. I love them.

Manon rushes to the bathroom, and Savannah makes faces in front of the Manon's parents through the cell phone.

The front door opens, and John enters.

JOHN

Hey everyone.

SAVANNAH

Hey John. How are you today?

JOHN

I'm good, you?

John puts down his bag and leans against the wall.

JOHN

Hey, you know what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Sound of a flushing toilet, Manon returns to the living room.

SAVANNAH

Well... No. I'm all ears.

MANON

Hey John! How are you?

JOHN

I'm good, you?

MANON

I'm good, just on the phone with my parents. Again. Sorry, they wanted to see everyone. They sent me a package. Feel free to join us.

Manon picks up her phone again and turns on the speaker. She sits on the couch next to Savannah, John do the same. Manon's parents speak French.

MANON'S PARENT

Bonjour John.

JOHN

(speaking french with
an accent)

Bonjour. Comment vous allez?
Quelle heure est-il chez vous?

MANON'S PARENT

Five at the morning here.

MANON

They always get up very early.

SAVANNAH

(watching the
package)

Come on. Let's open it!

Manon takes a pen from her pocket and uses it to cut the tape around the package.

She takes out Calissons d'Aix and shows them to the camera.

MANON'S PARENT

It's for Savannah. Apparently, she likes sweet things, so she'll like this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MANON'S PARENT

SAVANNAH

(taking the
Calissons)

Oh, thank you! You're too kind.

MANON

(to Savannah)

It's almond paste.

SAVANNAH

My gosh, I love this.

Savannah opens the package of Calissons and starts eating.

Manon takes out of the package some dried bay leaves wrapped in a piece of paper.

MANON'S PARENT

(with an accent)

These are bay leaves from the garden. We dried them. They're wrapped in a piece of paper on which we wrote the recipes for ratatouille and pot-au-feu.

JOHN

(in french with an
accent)

Oh, merci. Je ne sais pas comment vous remercier.

MANON'S PARENT

It's our pleasure. Your French is improving.

JOHN

Oh, thank you very much.

Manon takes out a pipe from the package.

MANON'S PARENT

And this is for Bill. Pastries from south of France.

MANON

Bill is not there tonight. But thank you so much for all of this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SAVANNAH

If Bill pass his turn, those are
for me.

The front door opens, and Bill enters abruptly, heading
upstairs.

JOHN

Hey.

BILL

Hi guys.

John stands up but Bill goes upstairs quickly.

The door closes upstairs. They don't understand.

JOHN

Well...

Power outage. The room is in the dark.

MANON'S PARENT

We can't see you.

JOHN

Another power outage.

MANON

Sorry we got a power outage.

SAVANNAH

I'll get the candles.

Savannah takes candles on the coffe table. She lights
them and places them around the room.

Everyone settles back on the couch.

MANON'S PARENT

Do these outages happen often?

MANON

Lately, it does happen, yes, but
it's never long. Well, I guess
I'll cut it off. We'll catch up
later.

MANON'S PARENT

Sure, no problem. On t'embrasse ma
chérie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

SAVANNAH
(speaking french with
her mouth full of
Calissons)
Merci.

JOHN
Merci, vous êtes adorables.

MANON
Au revoir.

Manon turns off her phone. All three of them are on the couch, with Savannah sitting between Manon and John.

The candlelight illuminates their faces, but the rest of the room is in a total dark.

A gentle breeze makes the flames flicker.

Savannah takes out the last Calisson, puts it in her mouth, and then crumples the plastic wrapper into a ball.

The sound of the crinkling plastic echoes, and Manon and John turn towards Savannah, who feels observed.

SAVANNAH
(mouth full)
What?

JOHN
You can't be serious.

SAVANNAH
What?

MANON
(laughing)
This can't be real.

SAVANNAH
WHAT?

JOHN
You just devoured the whole pack
of biscuits, in what?

MANON
6 minutes. Holy cow.

Savannah gets up and heads to the trash bin in the kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

SAVANNAH

What? Anyway, we can't do anything with you guys. Plus, it was super good. It's like a drug for me.

John and Manon laugh. Savannah is in the dark in the kitchen.

As she throws the package into the bin, the electricity comes back.

The living room and kitchen light up.

Savannah closes her eyes to adjust and then screams.

John and Manon get up.

Bill is right behind her.

SAVANNAH

Bill, what the heck are you doing here?

BILL

Well, I was going to cook actually. Yes, i think I'm going to cook. I'm hungry.

SAVANNAH

But we didn't even see you go by.

BILL

Oh, really? I saw you on the couch, didn't want to disturb you.

John and Manon exchange looks. Bill closes the fridge and drinks a soda.

BILL

So, how are you guys? Did you have a good day?

JOHN

Really weird, man.

BILL

Oh, sorry about that.

Manon hands him a pipe from the package.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

MANON

Here, this is for you. My parents sent me lots of things, and they thought of you. Some pastries from south of France.

BILL

Awesome! Thanks to you.

SAVANNAH

If you don't want those, I'm here.

MANON

No, it's for you Bill.

JOHN

They gave each of us something.

BILL

Oh great, what did you guys get?

MANON

Bay leaves with cooking recipes for John and food for Savannah.

Everyone turns to Savannah, who is opening a bag of chips.

SAVANNAH

What?

JOHN

She's already finished the bag actually.

Savannah walks to the stairs with a sly smile, flipping everyone off.

John, Bill, and Manon laugh, and Savannah goes upstairs.

JOHN

So, Bill, how are you these days? We hardly see you.

BILL

I'm quite busy, yes. I'm doing an experiment for my PhD, which takes up a lot of my time and energy. Plus, work is still demanding. And what about you? How's it going? It's your last year with us, Manon, right? Are you ready for the final stretch?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

MANON

Yes, the last one. Fully focused on completing the thesis and the final internship.

BILL

Do you know where you want to do your internship?

MANON

Not yet, I have a few leads. But it remains to be seen. I still have a few months ahead of me.

BILL

Okay, that's great. I'm sure you'll find something. What about you, John? So, Ernst & Young? With Sean?

JOHN

Yes, it seems to be on the right track.

Savannah looks at him.

JOHN

But well, nothing's official yet.

BILL

(staring into space)
Oh, I see. I see.

Silence.

BILL

Well, I have to go back to my project. Have a good evening, all.

Bill goes upstairs. Manon and John look at each other with a pout.

JOHN

Alright. I'm going too. And thanks again for this. I really appreciate it.

MANON

You should thank my parents for that. Not me.

JOHN

\$No, I assure you. It's you that I thank.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (9)

John goes up the stairs, looking at Manon.

MANON

Have a good night, John.

John goes upstairs. Manon smiles and goes back into the kitchen.

INT. HOUSE, MANON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Manon's room is in darkness.

Only a faint stream of light seeps under the door from the hallway.

The bed is neatly made, and everything is well-organized.

The window is open, allowing the external wind to gently sway the curtains.

The camera moves towards the outside, through the window.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

The street is empty, without any cars, in darkness. Only the streetlight in front of the house is on, as well as the windows of the houses.

Further down the street, Manon is alone, walking, appearing lost.

She walks alone in this dark street. Behind her, the streetlight in front of her house shines.

She stops in front of a house. The lights inside are on. She notices on the ground floor, the silhouette of a child appearing in the doorway.

She observes the child alone. Upstairs, two windows are lit. On the left one, the silhouette of a woman appears, seemingly taking care of the child.

On the right one, the silhouette of a man appears, standing and taking out a mobile phone.

She gazes back at the child on the ground floor. After a few seconds, she leaves, leaving the doorway empty. The light goes out.

Manon looks at the illuminated windows above, with the man and woman she observes in silhouette.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She resumes her journey slowly, glancing behind her from time to time.

She walks down the street. All the windows of the houses are lit. In some, she sees silhouettes, in others, none.

She reaches an intersection and decides to take another direction.

The street she chooses is even darker and without suburban houses.

She walks, the few lights behind her from the houses gradually disappear.

In front of her, there is nothing but warehouses, discernible only by the moonlight along the road.

Manon turns around. She sees in the distance the street she was on. A bit more illuminated, it reveals people who seem to be walking.

Manon is immersed in darkness behind her. She breathes increasingly heavily.

The light from the streetlamp slowly appears behind her.

INT. UNIVERSITY, BREAK ROOM - DAY

Manon is sitting on a table near a window overlooking the street.

She is typing on her laptop, then pauses and sighs.

She rests her head in her hands, placing it on the table and closes her eyes.

Savannah is outside on the street, holding a large coffee. She taps on the window. Manon jerks up.

Both women smile at each other.

CUT

Savannah is next to Manon. They talk in whispers.

SAVANNAH

So? Are you tired? Hang in there.
It's the final stretch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MANON

Yes, just like John and Bill. The three of us are in the same situation every year. Sometimes I think I'd like to be more like you.

SAVANNAH

Without a diploma?

Manon laughs.

MANON

No, I don't mean it that way. It's just that doing a PhD is not always easy.

SAVANNAH

I've decided to do something else for sure.

Manon yawns widely.

MANON

Excuse me.

SAVANNAH

Didn't sleep well last night?

MANON

No, it was horrible. I had nightmares. I've been sleeping poorly for some time now.

SAVANNAH

That happens to me too. Even though it's not a full moon. What was the nightmare about?

MANON

I was thinking about family issues. I feel lost. A bit lonely, without keys to confront...

She points her finger out of the window, indicating the street.

MANON

All of that. Then everything felt eerie, so waking up this morning was very difficult.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAVANNAH

I have no advice to give you, but maybe seeing someone wouldn't be a bad idea.

MANON

You're not wrong. I used to do it a lot in my home country. Since I'm ere, I haven't thought much about it.

SAVANNAH

Maybe it's time? In the meantime, if you need anything, dear, I'm here.

MANON

You're sweet. And you? How are you? Where is Amanda?

SAVANNAH

Amanda... Still in Santa Fe for work. Weeks since I've seen her. And I feel like she could have made the detour to come see me, but the idea didn't even cross her mind.

Manon. Strikes Savannah's shoulder.

MANON

I'm sorry for you. It's true I've never met her, and you tell me it's been what? Over two years since you've been together?

SAVANNAH

A year and eight months. But I love her. So I accept.

MANON

You never complain. So I'm just saying right now, I find it unfortunate that you have to do everything.

SAVANNAH

I find it unfortunate too. But if I love her, I have to accept absolutely everything about her. Even her absences and the fact that the efforts come from me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MANON

That's beautiful what you're saying. You're honest. But take care of yourself. Look after yourself.

SAVANNAH

You're kind.

MANON

What were you doing around here?

SAVANNAH

I was strolling, got a bit lost, and realized I was near your campus. Thought I might see you, or John, or Bill. And it turned out to be you.

MANON

Speaking of Bill, can I ask you a question?

SAVANNAH

Yes, he's acting strange lately, if that's your question.

MANON

How long have you known him?

SAVANNAH

I've been in this house for nine years. There's been a lot of turnover, I think he's been here for about five years.

MANON

But how was he at the beginning?

SAVANNAH

Often present in the kitchen. He really enjoyed cooking. I know he asked a lot of questions. And since we've always liked having a lot of people from different backgrounds, he was always very interested.

MANON

But do you know anything about his personal life? Where he comes from? What's his story?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SAVANNAH

I think he's an only child. His parents live in the state of Washington. I feel like he's become more serious since he started his PhD. Super focused, that's all he thinks about. But it doesn't surprise me when I see all of you. Look at how stressed you can be, too—John with the bar exam approaching, not helped by his idiot friend Sean.

MANON

I admit Sean is not the greatest success. But for Bill, there's something I can't forget. That infamous night of John's birthday when they fought.

SAVANNAH

That was not a success either.

MANON

Indeed. I saw Bill take down the guy who was hitting John. I saw a different person.

Silence. Manon stares into space.

SAVANNAH

Manon?

MANON

I don't know how to say it. But he put his hands around the guy's neck on the ground. His eyes changed color, they were empty.

SAVANNAH

Don't forget you were half drunk.

MANON

I know, but now I can't shake the feeling that if I hadn't intervened, I'm convinced Bill would have killed him.

SAVANNAH

Fortunately, you were there then.

MANON

You always see the positive side; I wish I could be like you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

SAVANNAH

We all know the world is messed up. No need to talk about it. Might as well focus on the beautiful things.

MANON

(looking into Savannah's eyes)

Savannah, I assure you I saw absolutely nothing in his eyes. As if all traces of humanity had disappeared. I just can't get it out of my head.

SAVANNAH

What do you mean? Does it scare you?

MANON

Alone at home with him, I'm terrified.

Silence.

SAVANNAH

Well, I'm going to miss my Japanese class.

MANON

With the famous instructor?

SAVANNAH

(smiling)

Perhaps. Listen, Amanda is far away, she's not making an effort to come. If someone hits on me, I don't see any reason to refuse.

MANON

You're absolutely right.

Savannah looks out the window, the brightness has dimmed.

SAVANNAH

Look, night is falling.

MANON

(looking out the window)

Oh, Yep indeed.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

John is on the couch, the lights are dimmed.

On the coffee table, there is his laptop and books with titles: CPA LICENSURE EXAM - ACCOUNTANT...

On the TV, highlights of a football match are playing.

John slouches on the couch, his sleep is deep. Near the edge, he eventually falls to the floor.

HE WAKES UP ABRUPTLY.

The furniture has changed and belongs to another era. The brightness and colors have altered.

He observes the living room leading to the kitchen.

The oven is on, glowing vivid red inside. Smoke is emanating from it.

John follows the smoke with his eyes. It rises to the ceiling and continues its path, crossing the living room until it is sucked into a dark corner of the room.

The same red lights from his previous nightmare appear in a stroboscopic manner.

JOHN
(whispering)
No, not again. Please.

Noises come from the kitchen behind him.

He turns around and sees the top part of the refrigerator open. A plume of frozen smoke emerges.

A gurney emerges slowly, making a slight squeak. A body bag the size of a travel bag is placed on the gurney.

He sees the silhouette of his mother in the darkness of the kitchen.

RUTH
(whispering)
It wasn't him who was supposed to
leave. What am I going to do now?
The fridge is empty. Empty, always
empty. Empty.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The silhouette moves back and forth between the sink and the cupboards.

RUTH

(whispering)

Of course, only the weak ones are left. The strong one is gone. What do I have left? I can't do everything alone. I can't rely on anyone.

John's mother, still in a dark silhouette, slowly approaches John.

She holds a knife in one hand and a jar in the other.

The tension rises.

John has tears in his eyes. He looks up at his mother, creating a more imposing and frightening view.

John's mother stops and looks into the corner where the smoke lingers in suspension.

She stands in front of the refrigerator. She opens the bottom part of the refrigerator.

The light that comes out illuminates the kitchen and John's mother. She wears a dress with dull, faded colors.

She slams the refrigerator door violently.

The light goes out abruptly.

She throws the mortuary bag on John. In the air, it opens, letting pieces of the body come out and spread. John sees all these pieces and the bag, like a shadow, crossing the room. As the pieces reach John, he falls off the couch.

BANG

John opens his eyes. The light is dimmed. The football match continues on TV. The computer is on.

BILL

Hey! You okay, man?

John wakes up and sees Bill at the bottom of the stairs.

JOHN

(still gathering his wits)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN (CONT'D)

Uh, yes. I overslept, and I just
fell off the couch.

Bill goes into the kitchen and opens the fridge in the
same way John's mother did.

BILL

Still studying non-stop? You
should take a break. Take care of
yourself.

Bill closes the fridge, the door slams. Bill crosses the
room.

BILL

Good night man.

Bill goes back up stairs. The door slams upstairs.

Power outage.

The room is in the dark.

John is illuminated by his laptop. He turns on the
flashlight on his phone and stands up.

John goes toward the stairs and turns on the flashlight,
which only illuminates part of the upstairs.

TENSION RISES.

The front door opens. John startles.

Manon enters and takes off her earphones.

MANON

Oh, hi, John. What are you doing
in the dark?

JOHN

There's another power outage. Want
to grab something to eat?

MANON

Hmm, okay. Let me go drop my bag
in my room.

Manon walks past John, takes his lit flashlight, and goes
up the stairs.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

John and Manon walk side by side on a shopping street.
Manon is wearing a beanie.

JOHN

So, what's your story? We never took the time to talk much about you. I know a bit about your parents. I know you spend most of your time working

MANON

Like all of us in the house.

JOHN

True. But I feel like there's something bothering you. You don't have to talk about it, of course.

MANON

I don't work any more than you, you know. Studies are going okay for now. I'm just anxious about the end of the year.

JOHN

Afraid you won't get your diploma?

MANON

It's not so much that. I'm not boasting, but I think I can get my diploma no matter what happens. I'm really happy about this experience here in your country. I love being here, and I must admit I don't have the desire to go back.

JOHN

You'll have an internship like me for 12 months. That'll give you some more time, and if you handle it well, maybe they'll offer you a job afterward, right?

MANON

It's possible, yes. But it depends on so many things. Plus, it leaves me with no room to maneuver. I can't complain; I'm already grateful for this experience.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN

Don't speak in the past tense;
you're still here. You have time
ahead of you. Is it tough being
alone, far from your family and
friends? Again, they really seem
like charming people.

They pass in front of a fruit and vegetable store.

An employee drops a crate of apples that spill onto the
floor.

John and Manon avoid them as best as they can.

John picks one up to help the employee.

He lowers his head and apologizes. Another colleague
arrives.

EMPLOYEE

I told you not to do that anymore.
You have to stop.

Manon and John continue on their way.

MANON

My parents. Charming, yes. That's
often what people say.

JOHN

Ah, does it bother you?

MANON

It's not that. It's just that...

JOHN

If it makes you uncomfortable, we
don't have to talk about it.

MANON

I don't have any problem to
discuss about it. I just know that
openly criticizing our own parents
can be a complicated.

There are many people on the sidewalk; Manon and John
slow down and let the crowd pass.

JOHN

I completely understand what
you're saying. Idolizing the
family to the point of becoming
blind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MANON

Okay, I grew up in a typical middle-class suburb. The social circle I formed was with my school friends who came from the same village.

These childhood friends come from even more traditional families in their approach to life.

They're basically what you'd call working-class--the guys mostly do manual labor, at the factory, as artisans, or in public service.

The women work in administration, nursing, or are homemakers.

Not much originality.

Their parents all have roughly the same profile. The father is tough, also doing manual work, someone you have to stand up straight for. The mother is often stern too, content with her situation. Always yelling, never satisfied.

JOHN

I think that this category of people exists in every country.

MANON

I have the same impression.

JOHN

So, regarding your parents. What's the problem?

The street is too crowded. Let's go this way.

John takes Manon by the arm, and they turn into another street.

JOHN

Sorry, please continue.

MANON

I know too well what it's like to see my parents show off in front of my friends.

I don't know if they do it consciously or not, but it's becoming more and more complicated for me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MANON (CONT'D)

Everyone who knows them tells me,
"You're really lucky to have these
parents," "They're so cool, I
would have loved to grow up in
your house."
And when I dare to criticize them,
I come off as a spoiled child.
Someone with no gratitude.
It's tough; I want to be able to
talk about all this without being
judged, especially with my
friends.

JOHN

If I may ask, you say you didn't
grow up in a typical family, with
a violent father and a crazy
mother. So, where do you come
from?

The street they walk on is quieter and darker.

The houses lining the road are all brightly lit and
decorated.

John and Manon are alternately illuminated by different
colors coming from the houses.

MANON

Madness.

JOHN

Madness?

MANON

Yep, madness.

A truck passes, a car honks. It's hard to hear what Manon
is saying.

MANON

Madness comes from the fact that
every day at home, when I came
back from school, I had absolutely
no idea what to expect.
I didn't know if my parents would
yell, be silent, or be funny.
And when I say funny, I mean
laughing about taboo or even
strange situations. Nobody ever
told me what to do or how to do
things.
I was never taught anything.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MANON (CONT'D)

Simply put, I couldn't ask questions.
My parents were always angry, they didn't have time, or I just annoyed them.
It's difficult to navigate as a child when the only references you have literally tell you to go to hell.

JOHN

My poor, I understand better why you don't like to bother people.
Is that why you're so quiet?

MANON

You've got it. So when others see my parents, it's always cool because they're generous, no problem with that.
But I never had a framework. In essence, I always had the opportunity to do what I wanted. But as soon as I opened my mouth, I was a bother. And in another way today, it's still the case with them.

Manon starts to tear up and her eyes get wet.

MANON

It's hard to be free. Having choices at 5 years old is just as tough at 27. Sometimes I wish I had been born into a very devout religious family, or descended from a family of doctors or even poor.
I would have had structure and certainty.
It would have caused me fewer problems in life.

JOHN

I presume your childhood friends never had to ask these questions indeed.
A crazy father who beats you when he's not happy indicates a path. I suppose they do the same job as their parents today?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

MANON

You've got it, same job. They've never lived more than 30 km from where they were born. They've never seen much. I don't claim they haven't lived at all, far from it. But I know they decided to stay silent and never question their own lives. Unfortunately, I'm always in my head, asking questions. Sometimes I have no idea where I am or where I'm going.

John gently removes Manon's hat.

JOHN

If you live too much in your head, let it open up to the world and release the pressure.
(pointing Manon's head)
The world needs what you have here.

Manon takes the hat from John's hands, smiling. She takes a tissue and blows her nose.

INT. MEXICAN RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

John and Manon are sitting at the counter. The restaurant is bustling, and the staff is speaking Spanish.

A waitress brings their dishes.

JOHN

You know, what you told me about your parents and the image your friends or social circle have of you is something I completely understand. I feel like I have the same issue with Sean, in particular. Always pushing me, challenging me, constantly comparing. Every time I see him, it's frustration, anger, the desire to prove that I'm right. But I can't seem to do it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MANON

Isn't that what we call a toxic relationship?

JOHN

I think that's the word.

MANON

Why did you accept his offer?

JOHN

I didn't really have a choice. My mother is in a specialized medical institution, dealing with mental health issues. I've been covering the costs.

Since my father's death, I've used the little inheritance he left us to pay the expenses.

Unfortunately, I learned that the monthly payments will increase significantly next quarter.

I simply can't afford it if I continue with what I'm doing.

MANON

Your mother has mental health issues? For a long time?

JOHN

I don't want to bother you with my story, you know.

MANON

I just shared mine. We've known each other for a year, and we've never discussed these topics. I genuinely care about you.

JOHN

Okay, I placed my mother in that hospital when I was 18, after my father's death.

I had a brother, Trey. He was a talented athlete; at 16, he was contacted by numerous universities and professional football teams. He had a future all mapped out, and my parents saw in him the solution to all their social problems.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN (CONT'D)

Unfortunately, like many families, children are often pushed by their parents to become athletes because they know it can bring in a lot of money.

MANON

I understand; there's the same issue in Europe, especially with soccer.

JOHN

Exactly. Trey was ten years older than me. It must have been around 9 in the evening. I was in my bed, trying to sleep, and I was awakened by the most horrific scream I've ever heard. Like a pig being slaughtered. It was my mother. The police had just informed her that my brother had died.

John gazes at an employee behind the counter who opens the all-chrome walk-in freezer, from which a plume of frost escapes.

Sound of the cold room opening and gurneys in a large empty room - Morgue environment.

Manon looks at John.

MANON

John?

JOHN

(gathering himself)

Excuse me, it stirs up a lot of memories. Anyway, that's where the panic started. My brother dead, I see my parents collapse.

The kitchen is bustling. A huge flame shoots out of a pan. The chefs are on edge.

John smirks sarcastically.

COOK

Es suficiente, sigue adelante!

JOHN

Well, there is life here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MANON

John, I'm sorry about your brother.

JOHN

You're kind, thank you. But it was a long time ago. I don't think that's the reason for my problems today.

MANON

What is the reason?

JOHN

My mother never recovered. She fell into some kind of morbid senility. She rambles, talks about my brother all the time. My father became mute. Literally, I hardly ever heard the sound of his voice afterward. He died of a heart attack a few years ago. I didn't cry at his funeral. It's strange.

Manon gently strokes his shoulder.

JOHN

I visit her when I can. Since she lost her son, she has placed everything on my shoulders.

MANON

What do you mean by "on your shoulder"?

JOHN

My mother ended up with one less son and a mute husband. I was a burden to her. She expects me to replace my brother and now my father.

MANON

Do you feel forced to replace them?

JOHN

I was planning to visit her later. Every time it's the same. She rambles, says horrible things to me. Then I leave.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

JOHN (CONT'D)

But she expects me to replace
Trey, to be a great athlete with a
high social status.
But I have none of those
ambitions. I have others, but they
are mine.

MANON

How long has she been in this
center?

JOHN

Since my father died, I haven't
been able to take care of her. I
placed her in this mental
institution. My father's life
insurance helped me a lot in the
first few years.

MANON

Is that why you're working for
Sean? And you're giving up on your
cooking training.

JOHN

That's right.

MANON

I'd be happy to join you for
visiting you mom tonight if you
want.

JOHN

Honestly, I don't think it's the
best thing for you. You'll catch
some harsh words too.

MANON

Don't worry about me. I have skin
as tough as leather now. Plus, to
be honest, I'm going for you more
than for her.

JOHN

Well, ok then. I appreciate.

Manon takes a big bite of her taco.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - NIGHT

Background noise of the hospital. John and Manon enter
the lobby.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In the waiting room, there are patients in gowns, some standing, others sitting.

One of them mutters incomprehensible things in front of the coffee machine.

JOHN

Are you ready? Because it starts now.

Manon's watching John and she don't understand.

They go to the counter. John takes the pen and signs the register.

A woman in a white gown, her eyes fixed on her computer, sits behind the counter.

JOHN

Hello, ma'am. I'm here to see my mother. Room 202.

The secretary don't even look John.

SECRETARY

Second floor. You know the way. And don't forget to sign.

John looks at Manon with a slight smile. They both walk along the corridor.

MANON

Are they always so friendly?

JOHN

(smiling)

It depends. I see her often. She eventually makes me laugh. It sets the mood right away. When you see the staff, you get a taste of the patients.

MANON

I don't know if it's the profession or what, but I'm not even surprised.

JOHN

They have a tough job, I can understand.

MANON

We also work. It doesn't stop me from being kind and smiling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN

You're right on this point.

MANON

Where I come from, the customer is not always right. So, I'm used to it. Just open the door of a café in Paris, and you'll see the waiter sighing and grumbling just by seeing you enter.

JOHN

I've heard about that. I can understand that you don't want to go back there.

They arrive in front of the elevator. Manon presses the button. The elevator doors open. John seems stressed.

Manon enters the elevator and sees John staying in front.

MANON

John?

JOHN

Sorry, but I don't like elevators. Is it okay for you if we take the stairs?

Manon exits the elevator.

MANON

Sorry, I didn't know. Of course, we can take the stairs.

They head toward the stairs and climb them.

MANON

Why don't you like elevators?

JOHN

It's a long story. I'll tell you about it later.

They reach the floor. Manon opens the door.

They pass through the door, which slams shut.

INT. HOSPITAL PATIENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

John's mother, an elderly woman, lies in bed with an oxygen mask, grumbling while watching television at a high volume.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

An extremely pale man lies in the bed across from her, very old, sleeping with light snoring.

The door opens, and John and Manon enter.

John mechanically lowers the TV volume.

JOHN

Hi, Mom. How are you today?

RUTH

Turn it up, turn it up!

John and Manon sit on a bench.

JOHN

You have the volume too loud. The nurses say so, and you're not alone in this room.

RUTH

He's just. Sleeping. I've never heard him. We don't care. So, my boy, still doing your cooking stuff?

John's mother takes her glasses from the bedside table and puts them on. She looks Manon up and down.

RUTH

Hmm, what's this now?

JOHN

Mom, let me introduce Manon, my roommate for a year. You know, I've talked about her often.

Manon looks at John.

JOHN

(to Manon)

And this is my mother Ruth.

MANON

Nice to meet you, ma'am.

Manon shakes her hand.

RUTH

(staring at Manon)

I don't recall you telling me about that. It must not be very important.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN

Mom, at least force yourself to say hello.

RUTH

And you? What are you doing? Studying? Can't hold down a job at 25?

MANON

Yes, ma'am. In communication. My university is close to the place where John is taking his cooking lessons.

RUTH

(to John)

Do you remember Kamala? The little neighbor who lived next door?

JOHN

Yes, Mom, you talk about her all the time. The childhood love of Trey.

RUTH

Yes. She was so sweet. A good one to marry. I knew her mother Rosa very well. Do you know what Rosa managed to do when she was young? She was such a good cook for the family she worked for that she eventually started her own catering business. She was well-known...

JOHN

(looking at Manon)

Throughout the neighborhood.

RUTH

Throughout the neighborhood. She eventually resigned. She had so many clients that she refused to cater for her former employers' daughter's wedding. It was beautiful to see.

JOHN

Unfortunately.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

RUTH

(whispering)

Unfortunately, an accident and a lack of insurance forced her to sell her business. I never saw her again.

(with energy)

That's what happens when you live without insurance. You always need insurance in life! Working is ensuring you have a salary. It's not like studying those things. Cooking, communication, design industry. It's a nonsense. We have to work. Period.

JOHN

So... How was your day, Mom?

RUTH

There you go. What's the point of you coming to see me? I think you can go home. Your father wouldn't be happy to hear this, from you. Trey wouldn't be either, you know.

JOHN

I know, I know. We have to go, Mom.

RUTH

Yeah that's it. Go, you lazy bunch.

John and Manon stand up and open the door.

JOHN

Love you, Mom.

RUTH

Love you too my boy. Turn up the volume!

John increases the volume and leaves the room with Manon.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Manon and John walk along the corridor.

They pass swinging doors, and a sign indicates:

PSYCHIATRIC PATHOLOGY CENTER - CONSULTATIONS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN

Manon, I want to apologize for this. It's really...

MANON

(interrupts him)

John. Please, don't apologize. I knew exactly what I was getting into. I wanted to come for you. You're really brave to handle all of this. How do you manage to listen without ever saying anything?

JOHN

It takes practice. I haven't always been like this. I often criticized or judged people. I realized that there's no human judgment that matters. People are who they are, my mother is who she is. I decided not to abandon her. I fully accept what she is. Today, I know she suffers much more than I do.

MANON

It's a great quality. I've seen you listen to people for a year, without judging them. Listening to stories, all different from one another. It's not usual you know.

JOHN

Thank you. But you know, it's not always that easy. When I hear certain things, sometimes I come home, lie in bed, and waves of anger or immense sadness hit me. I can't sleep all night. So, it's exhausting, quietly.

MANON

I don't doubt it. Listen, John, I don't like giving advice to people. You're experiencing this regularly with your mother. You don't complain because you've accepted not to abandon her. It's commendable. However, you might not have to endure all of this with everyone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN

You're thinking about Sean, I presume?

MANON

You know it yourself, don't you?

JOHN

Yeah I know. It's a toxic relationship. I managed to cut ties with many toxic people in my life. I'm that I also was one too for many people. But I still need cut my relationship with Sean, I know that. But right now it's complicated.

MANON

I'm not saying this against you. Honestly. Take care of yourself.

They stop. John looks at Manon.

JOHN

Thank you, Manon. Thank you for coming with me tonight.

They share a brief hug. Looking over John's shoulder, Manon sees Bill coming out of a consultation room.

MANON

Hey, isn't that Bill over there?

John turns around and sees Bill walking determinedly towards the elevator.

John and Manon move towards the door he came out of. A doctor in a white coat emerges. John and Manon watch him.

PSYCHIATRIST

Here's the file you asked for this morning. Well, I'm done for the day.

PSYCHIATRIST 2

How was it today?

PSYCHIATRIST

(exhales tiredly)

Long. Fortunately, I'm off. I've known it for q long tome, but I can't used to it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

PSYCHIATRIST 2

What do you mean?

PSYCHIATRIST

I don't think that people, I mean the crowd, realized who's around them. I'm afraid sometimes. There are some real creepy and dangerous person.

PSYCHIATRIST 2

Hmm, Yeah. I know it and I'm still surprised too sometimes.

John and Manon look at each other, then head towards the stairs.

MANON

Do you think they were talking about Bill?

JOHN

It wouldn't surprise me. I need to show you something by the way.

John takes out his phone and opens YouTube. He plays videos of Bill and his medical experiment.

MANON

That's Bill. He has a channel?

JOHN

He uploads his experience. I stumbled upon it while looking for things about psychoanalytic work. He visits different psychoanalysts without informing them that it's an experiment. He wants to see what diagnoses they give him and intends to compare them.

MANON

Ah, I understand better what he was telling us the other night.

JOHN

In one of the videos, he supposedly has paranoid and depressive tendencies. What's interesting is that the diagnoses seem to change over time, and more importantly, they become increasingly severe.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MANON

That's unsettling.

They head towards the stairs, but they are closed. An employee looks at them, signaling that it's closed and points to the elevators.

MANON

We can take stairs elsewhere if you want.

JOHN

No, I need to get past this.

They enter the elevator, and the doors close.

John is stressed. Manon takes his hand and stands in front of him.

MANON

Look at me.

John looks Manon straight in the eyes and smiles.

MANON

Don't worry, I'm here. Are you claustrophobic? Or are you afraid it might fall?

JOHN

Neither one.

The elevator rings, and the doors open.

Manon exits, and John keeps his head down. In front of him, an empty and silent corridor. He is alone; Manon is gone.

The hallway is dimly lit with ambient sounds echoing in the large empty building.

John cautiously advances to the first open door and peeks inside.

A stainless steel table for corpses is in the middle of the room, surrounded by mortuary fridges covering the walls.

Tension rises.

John takes a step back, tears in his eyes.

He tries to avert his gaze but remains fixed on one of the fridges in the room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

The fridge opens slowly, releasing a plume of icy steam.
A stretcher inside moves out gently.

JOHN

My God, not again. Not now.

On the stretcher emerging from the fridge, there's a body bag the size of a small travel bag.

The stretcher is fully extended, and John focuses his gaze on the bag.

The light abruptly goes out in the room.

The elevator doors close abruptly with a loud noise, startling John.

He turns around and sees the lifeless head of his brother appearing, mirroring the earlier sequence in the living room.

The elevator rings again, and the atmosphere returns to normal.

Manon gently strokes John's arm.

MANON

John? Are you ok? I feel like I lost you.

A nurse emerges from the mortuary room.

RANDOM NURSE

What are you doing here? This area is strictly off-limits to visitors. Except if you were called to identify a relative.

John is still in shock.

He steps forward to go into the room. It is lit normally, none of the fridges are open.

The nurse goes to him and takes his arm.

RANDOM NURSE

Sir, please. Leave this floor right now.

Manon takes John arms and they return to the elevator.

MANON

Excuse us, ma'am. We were one the wrong floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

The elevator doors open. John and Manon enter. Manon looks at John, who is still in shock.

JOHN

I'm sorry, Manon.

MANON

Don't worry. Are you okay?

The elevator doors close.

EXT. STREET, FRONT HOUSE - NIGHT

John and Manon are on their way back to their street. Their house is just a few meters away.

MANON

Thanks for the restaurant by the way. It was cool, I needed that today.

JOHN

Manon, I'm sorry for what happened at the hospital earlier. Between my mother and my absence in the morgue. It was strange, and really, I'm sorry for making you go through all of that.

MANON

Don't apologize. Tell me, why don't you like elevators?

JOHN

(taking a deep
breath)

When my brother died, my mother forced me to come and identify the body at the morgue with her. We took the elevator, arrived in a corridor, then a cold room, almost similar to where we were earlier. They opened the fridge, and a gurney came out with a body bag far too small to contain a whole body. Especially my brother's, who was imposing. They opened the bag, and there were only pieces inside. But they showed us only the head, thankfully. My father collapsed.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN (CONT'D)

My mother screamed and fell to her knees. She hid behind me. I was facing my brother's head. Unable to say anything, not even to cry. The morgue attendant took me and put me in the corridor. She gave me a hug and came back to take care of my parents. That's why I'm never angry with hospital staff. They were the only ones who showed compassion for me that day.

MANON

My God, John. That's horrible.

Manon hugs John tightly. They say nothing.

JOHN

When we got back into the elevator after seeing all that, it broke down, and we were in the dark. For 30 minutes, I could hear my parents crying without seeing them. That's why I don't like elevators, and that's also why I have moments of absence. I still have nightmares about it.

MANON

For now, I'm here. And there's no reason for you to go through that again.

They resume their walk in silence. John stops and grabs Manon's arm.

Further down the street, the sounds of breaking glass and overturned trash bins can be heard.

A man who looks like Bill quickly exits the house and heads in the opposite direction of John and Manon.

JOHN

What was that?

MANON

Was that Bill?

JOHN

I think so, yeah. The more time passes, the more this guy freaks me out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MANON

I admit there have been a couple of situations that I found strange lately.

JOHN

Oh yeah? Like what?

MANON

The night of the fight at the bar, with Sean. Do you remember?

JOHN

Unfortunately, yes.

MANON

When you went to defend Sean, I don't even know if you realized that a guy hit you violently from behind, but you were already fighting with someone.

JOHN

So that's where the bump came from. I think I still have it.

MANON

Well, the guy who hit you from behind, that was Bill who came to take care of him. He knocked him down and started hitting him in the face. The other guy fought back, and that's when I saw Bill grabbing his neck.

JOHN

Strangling him?

MANON

Yes, but I especially saw his eyes change. I don't know how to explain it, but I saw someone else. He squeezed so hard and for so long that I saw the guy on the ground dying. I was sure he was going to kill him; that's when I intervened and told him to stop. He had a kind of grimace; I'll never forget it.

SAVANNAH

Yes, what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

John and Manon startle. Savannah is right behind them, eating a banana while holding her grocery bag.

MANON

Damn.

JOHN

Holy cow, you scared me. You should be careful.

John checks his phone.

SAVANNAH

Be careful of what? You do know that you're not far from where you live, right? You have the right to go home.

MANON

There was a power outage. What's going on with Bill?

SAVANNAH

What do you mean?

JOHN

Come on, Savannah. You've also noticed that there's something weird with him lately.

SAVANNAH

Yes, I admit that there have been some strange situations those past few months.

MANON

We just saw him storm out of the house.

JOHN

Well, come on. I need to show you something.

They all walk to their house. The window upstairs above the front door is lit.

In front of the porch, the trash can is knocked over.

JOHN

The power is back at least.

SAVANNAH

What's this mess? A coyote?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MANON

Well, no, actually, we think it's
Bill.

The three enter the house and close the door. The street
is quiet.

A silhouette briefly appears at the window upstairs, just
before the light goes out.

INT. HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

John goes upstairs.

Savannah goes to put away her groceries in the
refrigerator.

Manon slumps onto the sofa. Footsteps resonate just above
on the upper floor.

Manon looks up.

SAVANNAH

Damn !

MANON

What?

SAVANNAH

An egg broken. I just bought them,
damn it. There's nothing more
annoying to clean up.

MANON

Need help?

SAVANNAH

No it's ok, don't worry.

Two strange footsteps sound from the floor above, Manon
looks at the ceiling again.

SILENCE

Manon continues to stare at the ceiling while Savannah
continues to put away her groceries.

John rushes down the stairs holding his laptop and skips
several steps.

Manon is surprised.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He places his laptop on the coffee table and sits next to Savannah.

JOHN

Come and see, Savannah. I saw this a few weeks ago. And I see that there have been new videos posted. It's crazy.

INT. PSYCHOLOGICAL OFFICE - BILL'S VIDEO

FIXED SHOT

John is sitting in front of an empty desk.

Sound of a door opening. A man in a white coat with a file in hand enters the frame. He sits behind the desk.

PSYCHIATRIST 3

Hello Bill. So, I have the diagnosis regarding you. I would just like to know how you see the future today?

BILL

The future? It depends, sometimes I can see what I want, sometimes not. I must admit I have no insight into the future. I believe in living in the present. But I know that I want to finish my studies.

PSYCHIATRIST 3

Your studies are indeed something you're passionate about. Listen, Bill, I'll be direct. I sincerely think you should come stay with us.

BILL

It's not my plans.

PSYCHIATRIST 3

I know, but I think you need to take some time for yourself and stop your activities. It seems that you are tired. And I believe you need help.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Bill stands up abruptly. The psychologist remains calm. Bill takes on a more hesitant tone, his demeanor changes significantly.

BILL

But why, doctor?

PSYCHIATRIST 3

I just think you need help and rest.

BILL

But if I stay here, I can't finish my experiment.

PSYCHIATRIST

What experiment are you talking about, Bill? The end of your studies? Your PhD?

BILL

It's much more than that.

Bill walks around the room and goes out of frame. The psychologist continues to watch him.

PSYCHIATRIST 3

Tell me more then? I didn't know you were conducting an experiment.

BILL

We need to stop talking and start acting. That's what I've been doing so far.

PSYCHIATRIST 3

But you had a lot to say me recently.

BILL

That's true, but it's this experiment.

Strange noises come from off-screen. The psychoanalyst sits up in his chair and tries to puff up his chest.

PSYCHIATRIST 3

You know, John, I'll tell you something. There is nothing serious, absolutely nothing. But I think, for your own safety, you should stay with us and plan a stay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Bill enters int the frame suddenly and sits back down.

BILL

But why?

PSYCHIATRIST 3

I think that without realizing it,
you could harm yourself.

BILL

Harm myself? And not others then?

Bill puts his arms on the table and puts his head in
them.

PSYCHIATRIST 3

That's also why I think you should
stay with us for some time.
Perhaps those you've talked to me
about for so long, the people you
live with, might no longer feel
safe with you, or maybe you won't
feel safe with them anymore.
Wouldn't that be a shame?

Bill still has his head in his arms.

BILL

(muffled sounds)

No.

PSYCHIATRIST 3

What's the matter, Bill?

BILL

Everything's fine. I need to
finish the experiment. They will
agree.

PSYCHIATRIST 3

Who's they? Are you okay to stay
with us? These are the papers I
brought. Would you like to take a
look?

BILL

I have to go.

PSYCHIATRIST 3

Bill, please, at least take the
time to read the papers. Come take
a walk with me; you'll see that
you might enjoy it here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Bill abruptly stands up, pushing the chair behind him, which makes a loud noise as it falls to the ground.

He changes his voice again. The psychiatrist quickly stands up, startled.

BILL

I need to go, Doctor.

PSYCHIATRIST 3

Bill, calm down, please.

The door opens. A deep voice of a man off-screen.

NURSE 3

Is there a problem, Doctor?

PSYCHIATRIST 3

No, there's not problem. Right, Bill?

Bill laughs uncontrollably, then starts screaming. The image freezes, and the video ends.

INT. HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

John, Savannah, and Manon are left speechless.

MANON

What was that?

Power outage.

Only the laptop illuminates the faces of the three roommates. Manon sinks into the sofa.

Savannah gets up suddenly.

JOHN

What's going on?

SAVANNAH

Another power outage, let's stay calm. We're used to it.

MANON

But what's going on with Bill?

SAVANNAH

Turns your flashes on guys, I'll get the candles from the kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

John turns on his flashes from his cell-phone. He illuminates the kitchen for Savannah.

JOHN

We need to call the cops.

SAVANNAH

Hey, for now, we've only seen one video. Let's calm down.

MANON

What more do you need? I'm not sleeping here tonight.

SAVANNAH

Ok, I admit, this is getting creepy.

Sounds of cupboards opening. The light turns off.

JOHN

Damn, I'm running out of battery.

SAVANNAH

Light please!

MANON

My cell-phone is in my bag in my room. No way i'm going to get it alone.

SAVANNAH

Well, take mine, it's on the sofa.

John and Manon search, rummaging everywhere.

MANON

It's nowhere, not even under the cushions.

SAVANNAH

All right, you bunch of losers. I found it. I'll go to the circuit breaker.

Sound of a lighter flicking.

Savannah lights the candle. She moves in the dark to return to the living room.

The light is so faint that it doesn't illuminate even a meter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Savannah moves slowly. John and Manon stand up when she passes in front of them. They stand behind her.

JOHN

We can at least accompany you.

SAVANNAH

I really ended up with a bunch of scaredy-cats. I didn't expect that from you, John.

Suddenly the light reveals Bill.

Screams from John, Savannah, and Manon. Savannah throws the candle at him.

Complete darkness. A scream, then a loud thud.

Manon and John run upstairs. The blows downstairs resonate, then silence.

Footsteps follow them up the stairs and are faster than them.

Manon is held by the ankle and falls violently headfirst.

John turns around. Bill is assaulting Manon. John stands in the way and hits Bill violently in the head, causing him to fall backward.

John grabs Manon and helps her climb. They run up the stairs and into the upstairs hallway.

Footsteps in the stairs are approaching rapidly.

John and Manon rush into the back room and slam the door shut.

They enter the room, turn around, and see Bill's silhouette rapidly approaching them, making a loud noise.

They slam the door forcefully.

INT. BILL'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

BOOM from the door - The door vibrates.

Manon and John are pressed against the door. John locks it.

BOOM from the door -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They slowly step back while keeping their eyes fixed on the door.

Boom from the door -

John stands up and looks around.

JOHN
(whispering)
Manon, come. We need to get out of here. Let's go out through the window.

Manon panics and is in tears. Her face is swollen.

BOOM from the door -

John takes Manon by the shoulders.

JOHN
Come on. Don't worry, I'm here.

John opens the window with difficulty.

BOOM from the door -

The window overlooks the street, and it's too high for them to jump.

John sees Sean coming down the street.

He's wearing headphones and has a bottle of whiskey in his hands. He seems to stagger, as if drunk.

JOHN
Is that Sean? It's Sean!

BOOM from the door -

John and Manon start shouting.

JOHN
Sean! Sean, call the police. Now!

Sean doesn't react immediately. Then he turns his head, pointing to his headphones.

MANON
Sean! Help!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN

Sean! Call the police right away.

Bill is trying to kill us.

In response, Sean lowers his arms, indicating his alcohol bottle.

BOOM from the door -

SEAN

(yelling)

John! I messed up.

Sean goes out of John and Manon's field of view.

JOHN

Sean! No.

John and Manon rush to the door and hold onto it.

BOOM from the door -

Noise from the front door downstairs.

SEAN

(from a distance)

Who are you?

Screams, dull thuds and intense fighting noises.

Then silence.

John and Manon, look at each other.

JOHN

What the hell?

Electricity comes back, the light dazzles them. Bill's room appears.

It only contains a bed with a sheet on it and a chair.

There are handwritten letters everywhere, neatly arranged.

Everything is well organized and in order.

The light is just a bulb placed in a corner.

John and Manon get up slowly.

MANON

John, I'm scared. What do we do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

John takes her in his arms.

JOHN

Don't worry, we'll get through
this.

John goes to the window. He sees that there's a tree less
than two meters in front of the window.

JOHN

You're going to jump onto the tree
and let yourself down.

MANON

What? But what are you talking
about? I'm not going to do that.

JOHN

Manon, you can do it.

MANON

I don't care if I can do it. I'm
not leaving you alone, with him
here.

John takes Manon in his arms.

JOHN

Don't worry, I just need to check
on Savannah and Sean. We'll meet
in five minutes.

John forces Manon to stand on the window sill.

Manon looks at him, takes his hand, and kisses him.

They look at each other, she turns around and jumps
awkwardly onto the tree but holds on.

JOHN

Great, keep going like that.

Manon looks at him and descends slowly. She sees John
turning around behind her and disappearing into Bill's
room.

In the room, John looks under the door.

He only sees a part of the illuminated hallway floor, and
it seems there's no one there.

John stands up and opens the door as slowly as possible
to avoid making noise.

EXT. FRONT HOUSE STREET - CONTINUOUS

Manon descends slowly but laboriously from the tree.

Still frightened, she looks around.

She sees the window on the ground floor illuminated.

Suddenly, the silhouette of a man appears.

Manon screams.

MANON

John!

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

John walks down the corridor very slowly. He descends the stairs and sees legs stretched out below.

He sees Sean with a bleeding head. His body lies half on the ground, leaning against the wall.

One of his legs has an open fracture and his arm is dislocated.

JOHN

(whispering)

My god, Sean.

He approaches him and touches his chest.

JOHN

He's alive.

Suddenly, Bill appears behind him. He pushes him, and they fall onto the coffee table in the living room.

JOHN

Bill, what's happening to you?

Bill shifts between laughter, screams, and tears.

The two men fight. John manages to push him back. They brawl beside Sean's body.

Bill gains the upper hand and presses John's head into the pool of blood from Sean.

Bill strangles him, and John defends himself as best as he can.

John is on the verge of losing consciousness.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Savannah, her face covered in blood, arrives behind them and delivers a massive blow with an iron rod to Bill's head.

Bill collapses to the floor next to John, who catches his breath and coughs.

The front door opens. Savannah startles and prepares to strike with the iron rod.

Manon rushes into the house carrying the lid of a trash can.

JOHN

Stop!

The two girls stop and scream. They look at each other and eventually burst into laughter.

John straightens up and leans against the blood-covered wall behind him.

He stands over Sean to his right and Bill to his left. Manon, Savannah, and John look at each other.

All three are exhausted, their faces covered in blood or bruises. They smile and nervously laugh.

Red and blue flashes appear, distant ambulance sirens.

JOHN

(out of breath)

Who called the cops?

MANON

I shouted outside. The neighbors came out. I told them to call the police.

JOHN

And you still came back?

MANON

Of course.

Savannah embraces Manon. John smiles.

Cars screech in the street. Doors slam. People run.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

10 MONTHS LATER.

INT. CREMATORIUM FUNERAL HALL - DAY

John is in front of an open casket. Inside lies his mother, Ruth.

Her face is peaceful, well-made up, and coiffed.

He looks at her. He touches her hand.

He takes a step back and leaves the room.

INT. CREMATORIUM - DAY

John is in a dark room, facing a video screen. An funeral employee is behind him, somber and silent.

The screen records the crematorium.

On the screen, facing the crematorium, a stretcher appears with Ruth's coffin.

FUNERAL EMPLOYEE

Whenever you're ready, sir.

John looks at the screen, unmoving and silent.

JOHN

It's okay.

The funeral employe presses a button below the screen.

The incinerator hatch opens, revealing the flames.

The coffin is placed inside with a very fast conveyor belt. The hatch closes very quickly as well.

John looks at the screen without a word.

He turns his head towards the door and sees smoke appearing from underneath. It's the same smoke from his nightmare in the living room.

He watches the smoke rise and hug the ceiling. It moves to the other side of the room and disappears into the darkness of a corner.

The funeral employe behind him approaches.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FUNERAL EMPLOYE

Sir?

INT. CAR - JOUR CONTINUOUS

John gets into the car on the passenger side, holding an urn.

Manon is on the driver's side. They look at each other.

MANON

Are you okay?

JOHN

Yes.

John looks into the distance, then turns to Manon.

JOHN

I'm glad I'm with you.

MANON

Me too.

They kiss. Manon starts the car and begins to drive.

They take a straight road. The weather is beautiful.

John takes a postcard from one of his pockets.

It's a picture of a paradise island with "Vietnam" written on it. He flips the card, and it says:

GOOD EATS, ENJOY - SAVANNAH

John places it on the sun visor.

JOHN

Vietnam, huh?

MANON

She met someone, apparently.

JOHN

Oh, really? At least it's done with the ghost.

MANON

She called me earlier. She wanted to wish you good luck and apologized for not being here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN

I miss her. Can't wait to visit her.

MANON

Chef Bernard paid for the end of your training, and you work as a sous-chef in his restaurant. It's not the time to go on vacation.

JOHN

Honey, I know. Because of him I was able to finish what I wanted to do.

MANON

And your mom were able to stay at the hospital till today.
Manon is waiting for us anyway.

John smiles, and his phone rings. John answers.

JOHN

Hello.
...

John hangs up.

JOHN

Hernst & Young.

MANON

They won't let go. Are you sure you want to do this now? I mean go to visit Sean at the prison right after cremating your mother?

JOHN

Yep, I want to settle all of this today. Today is the perfect day.

MANON

Sean... Embezzlement and sexual harassment.

JOHN

Who would have believed it?

MANON

I already wouldn't had believe that he would have survived Bill.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN

Bill... Hopefully he's where he is
now.

The car drives along the straight road.

INT. HOSPITAL PSYCHIATRIC DEPARTMENT

THE CAMERA MOVES DOWN THE HOSPITAL CORRIDOR, FOLLOWING A
NURSE FROM BEHIND.

He passes by Ruth's room, John's mother.

Continuing down the hallway, he arrives at the secured
psychiatric department. The doors are closed, and a guard
stands in front.

The nurse shows his badge to the guard, who opens the
doors.

The nurse walks along the corridor and reaches a closed
room. He swipes his badge on a card reader, and the doors
open. He enters.

Bill is sitting on his bed, calm and under medication.

PSYCHIATRIST NURSE

Hello, how are you today? We'll
take a shower slowly, okay?

The camera gently retreats from the room, while the nurse
attends to Bill.

INT. CLASSROOM UNIVERSITY - CONTINUOUS OF THE OPENING
SCENE

VIDEO CAMERA - RECORDING

ULYSSES BLANC

I believe that self-work is the
most essential thing, even more so
today than yesterday. All I can
advise you is to personally
experience what lies within.

Ulysses Blanc touches his head.

ULYSSES BLANC

Her.

He touches his heart.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ULYSSES BLANC

And it's crucial to discover what happens here.

But don't misunderstand, my friends.

Do you remember that student who wanted to conduct an experiment?

No answer from the audience.

ULYSSES BLANC

He went to see six specialists to compare diagnoses. At the end of his experiment, healthcare professionals found him in states of complete dementia, paranoia, and schizophrenia.

He wanted to kill his roommates.

He tried and fortunately he missed. You see, my friends, even after 30 years of experience, I still encounter situations that are increasingly novel. I wonder how far we will go.

Ulysses Blanc stretches his arms and hands throughout the amphitheater.

ULYSSES BLANC

Times up my friends.

The students rise and leave slowly. Ulysses Blanc gathers his belongings and leaves slowly as well.

THE END.