

FADE IN:

A SURREAL ENVIRONMENT

A dark, dense fog. It soon dissipates and an elevator door APPEARS. The door slides open and WE MOVE inside. A disembodied voice floats in.

DR. ALDEN (V.O.)

As you enter the elevator, the doors close and it begins to take you down. You can see the floors go by as you sink deeper, deeper...

The walls of the elevator VANISH, leaving only the door. The floors roll by in what looks like a giant warehouse, whose details disappear into the darkness.

DR. ALDEN (V.O.)

Every floor you pass takes you further down, down, into your mind.

(pause)

You reach the bottom.

The elevator comes to an abrupt stop.

DR. ALDEN (V.O.)

When you step out, you're going to find yourself in another place, another time, long ago, that was very important to you.

(pause)

The door opens.

The door slides to the side and reveals a CHILD'S BEDROOM. A LITTLE GIRL sits on the floor, playing with her toys.

DR. ALDEN (V.O.)

Where are you?

CUT TO:

INT. THERAPY ROOM - DAY

A middle-aged woman, CAROL, lies back on a recliner -- her eyes shut tight, her breathing rapid.

Beside her sits DR. ALDEN, 45, a rail-thin man with a compassionate squint built into his features.

DR. ALDEN

Now, Carol, remember to stay
outside the scene. You're safe.
You're only an observer.

CAROL

I see myself when I was four.
I'm in my room, playing.

Only Carol and Dr. Alden occupy the room, but one wall has a
large mirror built into it, which hides the...

OBSERVATION ROOM

On the other side of the one-way mirror, TWENTY STUDENTS watch
the session. Up front, SEBASTIAN BECK, 24, good-looking but
intense, listens intently.

DR. ALDEN (O.S.)

Are you alone?

THERAPY ROOM

Dr. Alden continues the regression.

CAROL

I hear a scream!

DR. ALDEN

Who is it?

CAROL

My mother! Something's happening!
I'm running down the stairs.

DR. ALDEN

You're there now. What do you see?

Carol cannot speak.

DR. ALDEN

Carol, you are watching this as
an adult. Use the resources and
strength you've acquired over the
years to help your younger self
make sense of the scene.

Nodding, Carol catches her breath.

CAROL

M-my mother. She's on the floor.
There's blood everywhere.

DR. ALDEN
Is there anyone else in the room?

Carol starts choking back her tears.

CAROL
My father.

Dr. Alden leans back with the revelation.

THE STUDENTS

Look on impressed, though some roll their eyes at the show.

INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

Sebastian and the other students now sit before Dr. Alden.

DR. ALDEN
And as Carol's session showed,
using hypnosis to regress a
subject into her past can break
through obstacles the mind
creates for protection. With
this new perspective, Carol can
come to terms with her memories,
and begin the healing process.

Sebastian raises his hand. Alden stifles a sigh.

DR. ALDEN
Yes, Mr. Beck?

SEBASTIAN
What if her problems lie even
further back? In another life?

The Students erupt with LAUGHTER but Sebastian remains unfazed.

DR. ALDEN
What Mr. Beck is referring to, is
that sometimes a patient will
witness an incident that they
believe is from someone else's
previous life.

STUDENT #1
Those are just therapist-nurtured
fantasies.

The students start AD LIB EXCHANGES. Alden interrupts them.

DR. ALDEN

But it doesn't matter. If the patient believes it to be real, then it can still be useful for therapy.

STUDENT #2

Isn't that supporting a delusion?

DR. ALDEN

Carol's mother was murdered by her father when she was a child, but it wasn't in her home, as she envisioned it. Is that important? No. Her breakthrough is that she now has moved beyond the mental block of the incident. Nothing more.

SEBASTIAN

But you just can't ignore these glimpses of other lives. What about the studies of Dr. Ian Stevenson, or Dr. Brian Weiss...

DR. ALDEN

We'll leave those musings to the philosophers.

STUDENT #3

And the occasional Fox TV special.

The others LAUGH as Dr. Alden glances at his watch.

DR. ALDEN

That's it for today. Make sure you have chapters twelve read by tomorrow, and I'll see you then.

Sebastian gets up to leave with the others when...

DR. ALDEN

Mr. Beck.

Sebastian walks back to the professor.

DR. ALDEN

I take it you haven't developed a new proposal?

SEBASTIAN

I'm still developing my original--

DR. ALDEN

The Review Board will never accept a dissertation based purely on conjecture.

SEBASTIAN

I'll get the proof. I'm hoping for a breakthrough soon.

DR. ALDEN

Hope won't earn you a Ph.D.

Dr. Alden collects his briefcase and brushes past Sebastian.

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI - DAY

The logo of the university dominates the side of an industrial building, as students migrate to their classes.

Sebastian walks down a path beside BLAKE DARNELL, 24, a shrewd man cursed with boyish looks.

BLAKE

Maybe it's time to let it go. You're in your final year -- you don't want to fall behind.

SEBASTIAN

But it's the reason I went on to grad school. If I give it up, then what's the point?

BLAKE

Look, we've both worked our asses off to get where we are here, and neither of us have rich parents to fall back on. Don't blow this. Get your degree, then you can go do whatever you want.

SEBASTIAN

Yeah, well, I'm going to give it one more shot tonight. With Risa. Why don't you come by and give me an outsider's opinion?

BLAKE

I have to help someone with a brief for tomorrow.

SEBASTIAN

You'd put some legal geek over your longtime dorm buddy? Come on. I'll even have Alyson there for you.

BLAKE

Lay off on that, already.
(does a double-take)
Hey, is that my shirt?

SEBASTIAN

Uh, I'm not sure.

BLAKE

I'm going to have to put a padlock on my closet.

SEBASTIAN

Don't worry; I'll wash it this time.

INT. STUDENT CENTER - DAY

Students buzz through this favorite hangout, which offers everything from food to bowling.

LOUNGE

At one of the tables, RISA DOMINGUEZ, 23, petite, with hair as black as her clothes, scans through a textbook. Nearby, JEREMY COELLO, 21, a gangly, wannabe tough-guy wearing an expensive, silk Hawaiian shirt, lounges on a sofa.

RISA

Here it is. Jeremy, come here.

JEREMY

I'm burned out. Let's grab a beer at the Rathskeller.

RISA

Am I wasting my time here?

JEREMY

No, I think you still get credit even if I fail.

Risa grumbles as she slams the book shut.

Jeremy gets up and walks behind Risa to rub her shoulders.

JEREMY

Hey, Risa, chill out, you're doing great. But I can only handle so much info at a time.

RISA

How you've gotten this far in premed, I'll never know.

Jeremy continues the massage when Sebastian and Blake approach.

SEBASTIAN

Is this how you get paid for tutoring?

JEREMY

She forced me to do it!

RISA

You wish.

JEREMY

Your girlfriend has no mercy for me today, man.

Blake and Jeremy nod to each other as Sebastian and Risa share a kiss.

SEBASTIAN

I can get into the lab at seven.

RISA

I'll be there, but you'll have to check with Alyson.

SEBASTIAN

What do you mean?

At that moment, ALYSON SHEPARD, 23, a woman with an executive elegance, steps up behind Sebastian.

ALYSON

She means I can't keep putting my time into this. Your experiments just aren't working, and our study load for pathology alone is--

SEBASTIAN

But I think I've been getting close with Risa, and she's the best subject I've found. Just one more night. Please. Even Blake's going.

Alyson glances at Blake, who smiles sheepishly.

BLAKE

Makes you want to just drop
everything and jump in, doesn't it?

JEREMY

What are you doing?

SEBASTIAN

Some hypnosis research, if I'm lucky.

JEREMY

Cool. I was hypnotized once.

SEBASTIAN

A drunken stupor doesn't count.

JEREMY

No, man, it was at a show. This
guy hypnotized people out of the
audience. I did all kinds of
goofy shit. I didn't know about
it until I saw the video later.

Jeremy laughs as Sebastian and Risa look at each other.

Sebastian puts his arm around Jeremy's shoulder.

SEBASTIAN

What are you doing around seven
o'clock?

EXT. STUDENT CENTER - DAY

Alyson exits the building and walks to a pretzel cart. As she
puts in her order with the VENDOR, Blake steps up beside her.

BLAKE

So what do you say we just end this?

Alyson gives him only a brief glance.

ALYSON

Am I supposed to know what you're
talking about?

BLAKE

This game we're playing. Ignoring each
other. Trying not to cross paths.

ALYSON

I never put that much thought into it. It just comes naturally.

BLAKE

You see, that was a cheap shot. That's how these things start.

ALYSON

You're making too much of it all.

BLAKE

That's funny. That's what I told you last semester.

ALYSON

And I took your advice, didn't I?

BLAKE

Maybe a little too well. But with Sebastian and Risa together, we're going to keep running into each other. At least if we're friends, it won't be so weird.

ALYSON

Friends? That's a big step. Are you sure you're ready for that?

BLAKE

Hey, it's not like I'm asking you for a second chance or anything.

ALYSON

Like that's even a remote possibility.

Alyson grabs her pretzel and walks away. Blake notices the Vendor eyeing him.

BLAKE

I think she's warming up to me. Don't you think?

INT. RESEARCH LAB - NIGHT

The room has a table in the middle, and a small control room to the side jammed with electronic monitoring equipment.

Risa listens to the phone by the door as Sebastian paces.

RISA

I'm getting his machine.

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For the complete script please contact Jennifer Brooks at
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