



THE DOUBLE

by

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(Based on an original idea by Avi Korine)

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ONE

FADE IN:

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN- VERY EARLY MORNING

CLOSE on SIMON JAMES. His eyes are closed. It is difficult to tell whether he is asleep or not.

We hear a voice off screen.

MAN

You're in my place.

SIMON opens his eyes. He looks up.

SIMON

Sorry?

MAN

You're in my place.

SIMON looks around the carriage. It is almost completely EMPTY.

He looks back at the MAN quizzically. The MAN stares at SIMON in a hostile manner.

Perplexed, SIMON gets up and stands by a hand rail. The MAN takes SIMON'S place, folds out a newspaper and starts to read. SIMON looks at the MAN who, from behind his paper, raises his middle finger at SIMON. SIMON looks at his reflection in the glass window of the SUBWAY train. He looks ghostly and half-formed.

SIMON is in his late-twenties to mid-thirties. He is of average height and build. His hair color and clothing are unremarkable. Although he is handsome, he is not overly so. In short, he is a thoroughly average man.

The title appears over Simon's face, so forlorn it almost makes you want to cry. "THE DOUBLE."

The train stops and the door opens.

A crowd of people spills in, pushing Simon back. He fights against the flow to try to get out. Several people bump directly into Simon without so much as a word of apology.

SIMON

(being pushed)

Sorry.

Simon waits for the others to get on the train. His path finally clear, he attempts to leave again.

As he steps forward one last person jumps onto the train bumping him to the side.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

The person doesn't even acknowledge Simon.

There is a beep and Simon has to leap forward, barely making it out through the sliding doors. As the train departs, we see SIMON getting smaller and smaller on the EMPTY PLATFORM.

EXT. STREET - VERY EARLY MORNING

We are in New York, or some comparable metropolis. Though everything is familiar the world is somewhat off, somewhat strange.

Simon walks down a MOSTLY EMPTY street, keeping his eyes lowered. There are huge buildings on either side of him.

Any other people on the street are walking in the other direction and Simon has to dodge them to avoid collisions.

EXT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

SIMON waits outside AN ENORMOUS OFFICE BUILDING. It's relatively deserted.

TIME PASSES and a few people come and go.

Eventually, SIMON spots a woman, HANNAH, approaching the LOBBY of the building. SIMON smiles, then composes himself and skips after her.

INT. OFFICE LOBBY - EARLY MORNING

Simon enters the lobby of the office building. A few steps ahead we see HANNAH. She is using a card to swipe through a barrier.

Hannah is Simon's age. She is a little unkempt, but very pretty.

SIMON

Hannah, are you going to...

Simon smiles and quickens his pace a bit. He takes out his card, and swipes through, but the barrier doesn't move.

A GUARD sitting behind a large marble desk calls out to Simon just as Hannah begins to turn around.

GUARD

You, hey.

Simon turns and looks at the guard, surprised to be singled out. He looks a little nervous.

SIMON

Me?

GUARD

All visitors have to sign in.

Simon moves to the desk where he takes a pen.

SIMON

My card's not working for some reason.

GUARD

All visitors have to sign in.

SIMON

I work here. I have a card. My name is Simon James - you don't recognise me?

He sees Hannah getting into an elevator and watches the door close.

Simon frowns and signs the sheet. His is the first name. He is given a DAY PASS that says 'SIMON AMES - TEMPORARY VISITOR'.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Oh, sorry. My name is Simon James. Not Simon Ames...

Simon trails off as he sees that the guard is no longer paying attention to him.

INT. ELEVATOR - EARLY MORNING

Simon rides up an enormous elevator. The biggest elevator you have ever seen.

We watch Simon from above as he STANDS ALONE in the middle.

INT. OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

Simon sits at his cubicle in the middle of an enormous office space. The place is separated into hundreds of cubicles. SIMON is the first person there.

His desk and cubicle are just slightly too small for him. Every cubicle has the same computer.

The computers are enormous, taking up half of the cubicle space. They are box-y and make loud whirring noises that fill the office.

The office has no windows other than wall made of tinted glass.

Simon sits down at his desk, adjusting himself in his too small chair.

He looks at a stack of paper and frowns a little.

A few people enter the office dressed as Simon is, with a white shirt and tie. Simon looks up and greets them with his slight, hesitant voice, but none of them acknowledge him.

INT. OFFICE - LATER

All the cubicles are now full with office workers. Everyone is much, much older than Simon. Simon sits at his desk, copying a hand-written page onto his computer. The pages are all questionnaires: long survey-like documents of various people, filled with categories like 'profession', 'marital status', 'personal habits', 'interests' etc

Simon finishes up the page he is copying and moves to the next page. He has nearly completed copying an enormous batch.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Simon stares off into the distance. He occasionally pecks something out on his keyboard.

Across the room we see MR. PAPADOPOULOS, an extraordinarily round man. He has thick eyebrows and his brown suit indicates that he is in management.

PAPADOPOULOS

That's right, that's great.
Making the big push!

Simon jumps up and approaches Mr. Papadopoulos. He fixes his hair and grabs the stack of papers he has just completed copying.

Papadopoulos talks to everyone and no one at all as he weaves his way through the maze of cubicles.

PAPADOPOULOS (CONT'D)

Excellent work everyone. We've
got to work double-time now,
making the big push.

We watch from above as Simon, carrying his stack of papers, triangulates his way through the cubicles to cut off Mr. Papadopoulos.

SIMON

Excuse me. Umm, Mr. Papadopoulos?

PAPADOPOULOS

Yes, what's that?

SIMON

I wanted to tell you I finished up. I've done the first...

PAPADOPOULOS

Excellent job!

(he takes the stack of paper from Simon)

That's the type of initiative we need. I'll tell the colonel right away. How long have you been here, son? Just started, eh?

SIMON

(frowning)

Seven years, sir.

PAPADOPOULOS

Ah, of course.

(slaps his head with realization)

Thank you.

SIMON

(confused)

You're welcome, sir.

(beat)

Actually, I have some rather exciting ideas I've been wanting to share with the colonel about what we could do with the computers, things that would make the reports much more powerful, and efficient and...

PAPADOPOULOS

Very interesting, I must say.

(pauses)

Come with me.

Simon follows Papadopoulos. He seems a bit startled and excited, he might get his chance to discuss his ideas.

PAPADOPOULOS (CONT'D)

My daughter's name is Melanie.

SIMON

(confused)

A nice name.

Papadopoulos has now stopped at a strange office behind the tinted glass. The door says, "The Colonel's Quarters. Executive Offices."

PAPADOPOULOS

She's interning for the holidays.

MELANIE is sixteen years old. She smacks her gum, has her foot up on the desk and is painting her toenails.

PAPADOPOULOS (CONT'D)
Say hello, Melanie.

Melanie doesn't even look at Simon.

MELANIE
Hey.

SIMON
(confused)
Hello.

PAPADOPOULOS
Stanley here's going to be your mentor.

Simon nods along happily for a moment, then looks at Papadopoulos.

SIMON
What?

PAPADOPOULOS
An hour a day... at your discretion.
(beat, quietly to Simon)
She's a good girl, but no head for figures.

With that Papadopoulos enters the strange office.

MELANIE
Idiot.
(to SIMON)
You can go now.

Simon remains, looking confused.

SIMON
Yes, I do have to be going, I suppose.

MELANIE
Because if I were to find out how depressingly meaningless what you do actually is I might be forced to feel sorry for you.

INT. COFFEE ROOM - LATER

Simon searches his wallet for a dollar. He can only find a five. He uses the change machine and picks up the heavy load of quarters.

INT. COFFEE ROOM - LATER

Simon sips his coffee and stares blankly ahead.

He sees a POSTER on the notice board that says, 'THE COLONEL'S BALL. DRINKS, DANCING, ENJOYMENT. ATTENDANCE MANDATORY.'

Harris enters the room. He looks through his wallet for a moment before turning to talk to Simon.

HARRIS
You finished your report yet?

SIMON
Just a little while ago.

HARRIS
You think you could help me out on mine?

SIMON
I did the entire thing last time.

HARRIS
I know. I still have the inspiration, it's just my powers of concentration seem to have waned.

SIMON
(shaking head)
Just leave it on my desk. I'll get to it.

HARRIS
Do you have any money?

SIMON sighs and gives HARRIS some coins for the machine. He makes a coffee.

HARRIS (CONT'D)
(smiling)
Fantastic.
(hesitates, not much to say)
Uh, what else is going on?

SIMON SHRUGS.

HARRIS (CONT'D)
You going to the Colonel's Ball?

SIMON
It's mandatory.

HARRIS
Some drunk girl's gonna get it.

There's a pause.

HARRIS (CONT'D)

See ya.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

SIMON stands with a large stack of paper under his arm.

INT. PHOTOCOPYING DEPT.

SIMON waits at the counter. He sees HANNAH approach.

Hannah's face is hard to read and she doesn't give out to many visual clues. She's different than the rest of Simon's coworkers, but inscrutable.

SIMON

Hi. Can I get these copied please?

HANNAH

(not unkindly)
I did these for you yesterday, didn't I?

SIMON

Well, it was something....

A TELEPHONE RINGS. HANNAH steps away to answer.

HANNAH

Sorry.

A MEAN-LOOKING woman, LIZ, TAKES her place.

LIZ

Why didn't you just print out two copies?

SIMON

Sorry...

LIZ

You shouldn't use this department for just one copy.

She takes the papers.

LIZ (CONT'D)

This is the last time.

SIMON watches HANNAH talk on the phone as we hear the rumble of PHOTOCOPIERS.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Hey, Hannah. Can you stay late?
I've got to get this lump checked
out.

HANNAH looks over and nods.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Simon sits alone at a circular table in the middle of an enormous cafeteria.

People sit together at tables all around him, while Simon barely touches his food and reads a book.

Simon looks up from the book and sees Hannah also sitting alone at a nearby table.

HARRIS sidles up beside him.

HARRIS

You hit it yet?

SIMON

What?

HARRIS

That chick, Hannah, you banged
her yet?

SIMON

I'm just trying...

HARRIS

That's the spirit!

SIMON

(frowning)

No! I've barely talked to her...

HARRIS

Make a move at the Colonel's
Ball. Those things end up like
Roman orgies.

SIMON

She doesn't strike me as the type
to go.

HARRIS

It's mandatory. Everyone has to
go.

SIMON

Not everyone goes.

HARRIS

She's pretty good looking, but as long as you don't talk much and she's wasted...

They sit in silence for a moment.

HARRIS (CONT'D)

Hey, I just realised: 'Colonel's Ball' sounds funny.

INT. OFFICE - EARLY EVENING

Simon sits at his desk. He looks very tired. He is talking on the phone.

SIMON

(into phone)

Yes, mother. I'll be there. I'm just working a bit late.

THE OFFICE is empty. HARRIS enters.

SIMON (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Goodbye, then.

HARRIS

See ya.

SIMON

Bye.

HARRIS

Hey - watch this.

HARRIS climbs up onto one of the desks and manages to jump across all the cubicles till he's by the door on the other side of the room. He bows and leaves.

EXT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Simon stands across the street from his office building, not many people are around.

Hannah exits the building alone. Simon slinks back into the shadows and watches her go. He sighs.

INT. OLD-FOLKS HOME - NIGHT

Simon sits in an uncomfortable looking chair, opposite his MOTHER.

Simon's Mother is not particularly old, but she has cloudy eyes and a generally vacant expression.

In the distance we see other residents watching a dated game show. All the furniture seems a bit strange.

Closer is a tiny old lady of unclear ethnicity, perhaps a GYPSY WOMAN. She is bundled up and seems to be staring at Simon.

Simon glances at her occasionally, looking uncomfortable.

SIMON

Things are going very well for me at work, you'll be happy to know. I expect to speak with The Colonel about some plans I've been working on. You wouldn't believe what these computers are capable of. I really think they're going to change things.

MOTHER

(a bit angry)

What are you going on about?

Simon continues as though he's used to this.

SIMON

There's also a girl that I'm interested in, and well, it's been going slowly, but I think something might be about to happen.

GYPSY WOMAN

Your mother says you are a strange boy.

SIMON

Strange? No. Well, she's never been particularly warm, and sometimes she gets confused.

MOTHER

(forceful)

You'll never catch a female using that puny worm as bait.

Simon's mother reaches for his lap but he uncomfortably pushes her hand away.

SIMON

Though she does have her moments of lucidity.

GYPSY WOMAN

Let me see your hand.

SIMON

No, thanks I'm fine.

GYPSY WOMAN

You're not right.

Simon looks a little concerned, but a man from the STAFF approaches him.

STAFF
May I speak with you?

SIMON
Yes.
(to Gypsy)
Excuse me.

Simon walks a few steps away to speak with the man.

STAFF
There seems to be a discrepancy
in your bill.

SIMON
Yes, well, there was a rather
large cost increase, and no
explanation, so I thought it
might be a mistake.

STAFF
There's a new price.

SIMON
And why is that?

STAFF
Improvements.

Simon looks around at the obviously unchanged room.

SIMON
But that seems a little...

STAFF
Would you like your mother to rot
on the street?

SIMON
(thinks a second)
No.

STAFF
Good. That's settled.

Simon seems about to say something, but shakes his head.

SIMON
She doesn't seem quite as well.

STAFF
(already hurrying
away)
It's because she's old.

Simon sighs and looks back at his mother. The gypsy woman stares at him.

EXT. APARTMENT COURTYARD - NIGHT

Simon walks home through an enormous complex of tall apartment buildings. They look so alike you can't tell the difference between any of them.

EXT. DUMPSTER OUTSIDE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Simon sifts through the dumpster behind an apartment building. Above is a shoot from which the trash comes.

A black bag drops down as Simon looks through the debris.

Simon has several scraps of paper in his hand but is still searching.

He finally finds another scrap of paper and greedily grabs it.

He steps down from the dumpster and is embarrassed to see a JANITOR watching him.

JANITOR

You shouldn't be doing that.

SIMON

Sorry.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING

Simon hurries across the courtyard to the apartment directly across from the building the dumpster was attached to.

INT. APARTMENT BLOCK STAIRS

SIMON hurries up the stairs, almost running into an old woman on his way up.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT.

Simon enters his apartment and quickly walks to the window, turning on a small floor lamp.

His apartment is very sparse and small; a bookshelf, desk, and a small television. There are few pictures on the walls and his bed sits on the floor. It is meticulously clean, the product of a very ordered personality.

Simon looks out the window to the hundreds of apartments in the building across from him.

Simon reaches up and lifts the window open as wide as it can go. The wind pours through the apartment and Simon leans out, looking into the great distance below.

He takes his jacket off and looks into a rather large telescope. It is trained on the apartment opposite his.

Hannah stands at a drafting table where she see draws a face. Her apartment is colorful and cozy, but there is something of the same feeling of loneliness in her room as well.

She is concentrated fully, biting her lip. She looks charming. She steps back from the drawing and we see it is Liz; the mean person she works with. It is very well done.

She is unhappy with the drawing, though, and tears it up, tossing it down the trash chute.

On her wall are a handful of completed drawings, presumably of other faces from the office.

Hannah has let her hair down. She looks very comfortable and walks to the window where she languidly stretches. We see a hint of her bare midriff.

She then walks to her couch and lays back, yawning deeply.

In his apartment Simon reaches for a simple chair and remains watching Hannah.

Simon takes the pieces of paper he collected from the trash and puts them on the floor, working to piece them together. We see that it is another of Hannah's drawings, an earlier draft of LIZ - but still very accomplished.

Simon looks up from the floor and returns to the telescope. He sees his reflection in the glass, hollow and ghostly.

SIMON

What's wrong with you?

HANNAH gets up and leaves the room. SIMON waits for a while before allowing himself to tilt the telescope and survey

A man watching a commercial.

A beautiful woman brushing her hair in the mirror.

Someone with his back to us peeing in the bathroom.

Simon moves the telescope to the apartment above Hannah's and we see a MAN dressed very formally in a tuxedo staring directly at Simon with his own pair of binoculars. The man has a piece of paper pinned to his lapel. He is holding a bloody handkerchief to the side of his head.

Simon takes a step back in shock and embarrassment before looking through the telescope again.

The man is still there, staring at Simon through his binoculars. The man waves at Simon.

He looks exactly the same as the man who told Simon to move out of his place n the Subway.

Simon hesitantly raises his hand in reply.

The man steps on the ledge of his window.

The man, now steadied on the window, again waves at Simon.

The man dramatically leaps from the window. The man seems to fall and fall. We never see him land.

Simon gasps and jumps up. He still has his hand up in response to the man.

TWO

EXT. APARTMENT COURTYARD - NIGHT

The flashing of police lights fills the courtyard. We hear voices in the background.

Simon leans against the side of the building, within the area cordoned off by the police.

Two police officers are carefully carrying a body, already enclosed within a bag, down a ladder. The body had landed on a hard veranda.

A FAT DETECTIVE is sipping on a cup of coffee and writing notes as he talks to Simon. A FEMALE DETECTIVE looks over his shoulders as he writes.

FAT DETECTIVE

And then what did you do?

SIMON

I called the police.

FAT DETECTIVE

Right.

(beat)

Anything else?

SIMON

He waved at me.

FAT DETECTIVE

(seeming momentarily interested)

Yeah?

SIMON

Right before he jumped. He waved.

FEMALE DETECTIVE

How'd he wave?

Simon makes a waving motion, looks embarrassed.

FAT DETECTIVE

Did you wave back?

Simon doesn't say anything for a moment.

SIMON

I wonder why he did it?

FAT DETECTIVE

His note said he was lonely.
Should of got a dog.

FEMALE DETECTIVE

Or exercised more. That's
important.

FAT DETECTIVE

Should I write that down?

FEMALE DETECTIVE

Maybe, in parenthesis.

Simon shakes his head.

SIMON

Did he suffer?

FAT DETECTIVE

Splat.

Simon grimaces. Two paramedics are loading preparing to load the body into an ambulance.

SIMON

Do you see this sort of thing
often?

FAT DETECTIVE

Every day. That's what we do,
suicides.

SIMON

Only suicides?

FAT DETECTIVE

Yep.

SIMON

For the whole city?

The detective looks at him like he's crazy

FEMALE DETECTIVE

We can barely cover the neighborhood.

(beat)

You know, the funny thing is he would have landed on the awning if he'd just jumped a few feet to the right. Probably survived if we'd gotten here quick enough. Horribly maimed of course, but still.

FAT DETECTIVE

If you can get them to the hospital quickly enough to stop the brain swelling.

FEMALE DETECTIVE

That's true.

We see Hannah a few feet away. Her hair is down and she is hastily dressed.

The detectives walks off to check on something and Simon watches them.

Simon walks up to Hannah.

SIMON

Hannah?

HANNAH looks at Simon, somewhat dazed.

SIMON (CONT'D)

It's Simon. I work in the same office as you. I often photocopy things...

HANNAH

What are you doing here?

SIMON

The man that jumped. I was the one who saw him.

HANNAH

How?

SIMON

I live in that building.

HANNAH

He lived above me. My neighbor told me about it.

(beat)

I didn't know him.

SIMON
He waved at me.

HANNAH
(shaking her head)
Strange.

As they watch the police work with moving the body. Hannah cringes and grabs Simon by the arm. Simon talks loud, as though he is resolved.

SIMON
It's the Colonel's Ball tomorrow.
(beat)
Do you think you'll go?

HANNAH
It's mandatory.

They stand in silence for a moment. HANNAH turns to leave. Simon shouts after her.

SIMON
Hannah.

HANNAH
Yes?

SIMON
It's terrible to be alone too much.

INT. DINER - EVENING

Simon and Hannah sit opposite one another in the booth of an ancient looking diner.

SIMON
Yes. So, I've been working on a thing to do with regression analysis. Like, in my spare time. I'm pretty happy with it. I'm hoping to show it to the Colonel when it's ready. I mean, you wouldn't believe what these computers are capable of. I really think they're going to change things.

HANNAH
(neutral)
I don't really understand computers.

They are quiet and a WAITRESS comes and drops off their drinks.

Hannah has tea in front of her while Simon has some blue soda. Simon looks a little confused.

SIMON
(Calling after the
waitress)
Erm, I ordered orange juice...

No reply.

SIMON (CONT'D)
But I suppose this is just as
good.

They sit quietly for a few moments. Hannah and Simon turn to a nearby television which is playing an odd futuristic sci-fi/noir movie.

Simon looks down at the table. Hannah's wrist is near his hand. It is fine and fragile, her hand is stained with pencil smudges. He slowly moves his hand forward.

Hannah turns to look at Simon and he quickly averts his eyes back to the television show.

SCI-FI DETECTIVE
(on the TV, dramatic)
There's no such thing as...
second chances.

SIMON
I like this show.

Hannah smiles at Simon. He finds it hard to read her expression. They return back to the screen for a moment.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Do you draw?

HANNAH
(looking suspicious)
Why?

SIMON
It's just your hand.

Hannah looks down and rubs the pencil marks from her hand. We hear a PHONE in the background.

HANNAH
It's from the printer.

SIMON
Because it's cool if you do, I
like...

WAITER
You've got a call.

SIMON
It's not for me.

WAITER
Frumpy looking guy named Simon.

SIMON
(hesitates)
That's me.
(to Hannah)
Hold on.

INT. PHONE BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER

Simon quickly grabs for the pay phone. He tries to look around the corridor into the restaurant but just barely can't see where Hannah is sitting.

SIMON
(into phone)
Mom?
(beat)
Yes, but it's just a night
terror.
(beat)
No that didn't ever happen.
(beat)
I know I'm a disappointment.
(beat)
I have to go, I'm with a girl.
(beat)
Yes, a female girl.
(beat, sighs)
I don't know if she's fertile.

INT. DINER - MOMENTS LATER

Simon stands at the table, but Hannah is now gone. Her tea is only partially finished.

He picks up a note, it reads, "Sorry, had to go. Maybe see you at the Colonel's ball - Hannah."

Simon looks both discouraged and excited. He lifts his eyes once again to the silly show on the television. It goes to a commercial break and we cut to an image of an enormous pile of papers, taller than a man.

VOICE OVER
Think of what your business
could do if it had a giant,
electronic brain.

The stack explodes and the sheets of paper begin to fall, tumbling one after another to reveal an enormous computer. A MAN is under it, typing away, smoking a cigar

This is THE COLONEL, a European-looking MAN in his 60s/70s dressed like a member of the British Royal Family.

VOICE OVER (CONT'D)

Well now it has. Meet the Colonel.

The Colonel walks through an enormous room of attractive women clacking away at computers.

VOICE OVER (CONT'D)

For years, the Colonel has provided your business with the most detailed personal profiling on the market. Using his powerful super computers to provide all the information you need to know exactly who your target consumer is.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - DAY

We reveal that Simon, Melanie and Harris watch an ORIENTATION VIDEO.

HARRIS

(whisper)

Did she say anything else?

SIMON

(whisper)

No. Just that she was definitely going.

HARRIS

You should have stroked her earlobe.

MELANIE

This is colossally boring.

Simon and Harris return their attention to the video.

VOICE OVER

The Colonel will go to any lengths to find everything about anybody.

We see a montage of data collection. In each shot, The Colonel is Co-ordinating. Men in overcoats conducting bubble tests: taking notes at what someone buys at a drugstore; looking through someone's trash.

SIMON

It's actually quite exciting, the new technology is incredibly powerful. Right now we're using a scattershot approach, but...

(MORE)

SIMON (CONT'D)

I've been meaning to talk to your father and the Colonel about this... using simple regression analysis and honing in on a few key signals we can use these machines to find out anything we need incredibly quickly. We could really reconfigure the entire business.

(beat)

You know, I really think computers are going to change things.

Both Melanie and Harris look at Simon as though he's crazy. We return to the video.

THE COLONEL is shaking hands with various people next to one of his enormous computers

VOICE OVER

Governments, corporations, foreign nationals... The Colonel can service all your needs.

MELANIE

Are you touching my earlobe?

We return to see Harris, reaching his hand behind Simon's head, limply holding Melanie's earlobe.

HARRIS

Yes, I am.

SIMON

Harris: that's not appropriate.

MELANIE

I'm going to leave now.

(beat, to Simon)

And, you're pathetic. She's got to be at the ball, it's mandatory.

HARRIS

Does that mean you'll be there?

MELANIE

I'm underage, you sack of shit.

HARRIS

Don't fight it.

She gets up and leaves.

MELANIE

(to SIMON)

I just hope I'm not so upset that I tell my Dad about this.

SIMON

(turning to HARRIS)

What are you doing? You shouldn't even be here.

He leaves. We see the projection screen.

VOICE OVER

Because The Colonel knows there are no special people

THE COLONEL

(straight to camera,
with a slight

Russian accent)

Just people.

INT. BATHROOM - EVENING

SIMON stuffs his work clothes into a bag. He is wearing a tuxedo. He looks in the mirror and practices introductions.

SIMON

Oh - hi Hannah. Hannah! Hi.
Hannah? Hey. Simon. From the scene of the suicide! Etc.

INT. OFFICE - EVENING

Again, Simon is the last one there. He dumps his bag underneath his desk. He looks around tentatively, then steps up onto his desk to repeat the trick Harris did. But, as soon as he sets foot on another desk an alarm sounds.

He looks around in panic.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Simon sits opposite someone who is typing up a report on him.

SIMON

What are you writing?

INVESTIGATOR ONE

Don't make this worse for yourself.

SIMON

I've never done anything like that before.

INVESTIGATOR TWO

Card please.

SIMON hands over his identity card. The PERSON puts it into a card reader and keys something in.

INVESTIGATOR ONE

This card's corrupted. You'll get a replacement in six to eight weeks.

INVESTIGATOR ONE cuts it up.

SIMON

How will I get in and out of the building?

INVESTIGATOR TWO

The card replacement fee will be deducted from your wages.

INT. LOBBY OF COLONEL'S BALL VENUE - EVENING

A large door, like that of an AMBASSADORIAL BUILDING.

Simon stands in the lobby, next to a MAN with a clipboard. Behind him a WOMAN is looking something up on a computer. Simon has clearly been waiting a long time.

GUESTS in evening wear arrive and enter the building. We hear a band play in the background.

SIMON

Why does no one else need to swipe in?

MAN

We carry out these checks at random. If you're suggesting you're being persecuted, you'll need to fill out this form.

He hands Simon a form which is headed 'YOU HAVE THE RIGHT NOT TO BE PERSECUTED'. HARRIS appears.

HARRIS

See you in there.

SIMON

See? He knows I work here. Harris! Tell him who I am.

HARRIS

I've never seen that man before in my life!

And he disappears.

SIMON
He's being a dick...

The man looks sternly at Simon for swearing.

SIMON (CONT'D)
-a silly person. I had my card
confiscated-

MAN
Because it was corrupted.

WOMAN
(calling out)
I can't find him on the list!

MAN
She can't find you on the list.

SIMON
Everyone is on the list. I've
worked here for seven years.

MAN
Please step away.

SIMON
I *work* here. Why would I try to
break in to something that's
mandatory? It's a job
requirement.

MAN
Are you planning to use force?

SIMON
Do you know what mandatory means?
No one *wants* to go to this.

We hear joyous cheers from within.

MAN
Please step away.

EXT. COLONEL'S BALL VENUE - MOMENTS LATER

Simon wanders around in disbelief. He tries to see what's
going on inside, but the angle is too steep.

EXT. SERVICE ENTRANCE COLONEL'S BALL VENUE - MOMENTS LATER

Simon creeps in through the kitchens. A couple of staff
members look at him suspiciously. Simon stops and looks
around and pretends that he's inspecting the premises.

SIMON

Very good. Excellent. I'll be telling the Colonel about the great work you're all doing.

INT. CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

SIMON, crouched down peers through a crack in the door. We see his POV of a grand ballroom. People are milling about, eating canapes, chatting, laughing and dancing to the music played by a band. The band are impossibly old. A WAITER swooshes by, leaving SIMON exposed in an odd posture. He walks forward in a crouched manner and tries to casually segue into standing up and walking properly. A few people notice him, but he's largely ignored.

INT. BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

SIMON picks up a drink and some hors d'oeuvres. He looks at a long table full of strange raffle prizes.

The band play a fanfare and people shuffle to attention. Mr. Papadapolous takes to the stage and stands on a pre-prepared box.

PAPADOPOLOUS

And now we take a brief break in our revelry to honour our Young Employee of the Year. And to present the award is last year's winner, Mr. Stevens.

Fanfare. Mr Steven's approaches: he looks between fifty and sixty. PAPADOPOLOUS gets down off the box and picks it up.

MR. STEVENS

And the winner is...

He produces an envelope from his pocket. Papadapolous comes over to help him, as Mr. Stevens has a prosthetic hand and finds it difficult to open it. The band's drum roll starts to become frighteningly long.

MR. STEVENS (CONT'D)

Mr. Harris.

We he hear a whoop of delight from HARRIS - a spotlight finds him. We have audience applause.

We see Simon, unable to believe his eyes.

INT. BALLROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Simon wanders through a series of rooms, looking for Hannah.

Various people enjoying themselves. Papadopolous is doing a vaguely racist impression of someone, to the delight of some business colleagues.

He sees Hannah sitting at the other end of a room. She's in a fifties-style ball gown and is smoking a cigarette. Simon watches her for a while. She looks a bit bored, alone, seemingly ready for someone to approach her.

Time seems to stand still. The song played by the band sounds epic and romantic.

Just as she looks up and returns his gaze, two men grab Simon and start dragging him out of the building.

MAN

You're not meant to be here.

SIMON

What do you mean? I work here.

SIMON looks mortified. He gazes at Hannah, who looks confused, but not particularly concerned. More and more people at the dance start looking around. The band stops playing.

SIMON (CONT'D)

You're making a mistake. I work here. I work here!

He tries to shrug them off.

SIMON (CONT'D)

There's no need to drag me.

They simply re-double their aggression - the struggle becomes more undignified.

A few steps away we see The Colonel. He listens to someone speaking, nodding with a benign, patrician air. He turns to look at Simon. Someone whispers in the Colonel's ear. Simon looks up: this is the first time he has seen this figure in the flesh.

EXT. COLONEL'S BALL VENUE

SIMON is thrown down the steps and onto the street.

MAN

The appropriate amendments will be made to your record.

Simon gets up. He is visibly shaken. Behind the doors we can just make out the sound of the band and see some movement in the hall.

Simon staggers about for a bit. He is frustrated, pacing back and forth, seeming almost like he's going to cry.

Simon starts to punch at the air and flail. Completely letting go.

SIMON

What's wrong with them? I'm a person, like other people. What's wrong with you?! It gives the Colonel the complete wrong idea about me. I have things to say to him. Ideas that he'd very much like to hear, I'm sure.

Simon pushes the glass door several times causing it to clatter as he continues to yell.

Finally he kicks the door which gives a shiver, but the only real result is a sharp pain in his foot.

Simon begins to curse to himself loudly.

The door swings open and the security man again looks sternly at Simon who continues to curse.

MAN

Did you want something?

Simon looks as though he's about to say something, really let the man have it, but as he clutches his foot he finds himself saying

SIMON

Nothing, I don't want anything.

The man stares at Simon, the party still going on in the background.

The man turns and the door slowly draws to a close.

As the door is closing we see a MAN not too far away in conversation. He turns around and we only catch a glimpse of him, but he looks exactly the same as Simon. The door clatters shut as Simon tries desperately to see.

Simon seems to go limp with horror. He slumps against the wall as though faint, lowering his head, apart from himself and lost in a nightmare.

EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Simon stands on a deserted bridge overlooking a great deal of traffic. He stares down. There is a strange feel in the air. We're not quite sure where we are and things seem a bit off, almost as though Simon is not in control of himself.

A long shadow appears, followed by the clip clop of feet.

A figure starts walking towards us. Simon doesn't look up until the figure passes him. The man glances back. Again, incredibly, he has the same face as Simon!

After he recovers from shock. Simon starts to follow him.

EXT. VARIOUS - NIGHT

SIMON follows the man through various streets. The man is walking so quickly that Simon can barely keep up.

EXT. SIMON'S APARTMENT BLOCK - NIGHT

The man reaches Simon's apartment block and, without looking back, skips into HANNAH's block of flats. SIMON rushes up to his apartment.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Simon runs to the telescope and starts scouring the various rooms to see if he can see where his double is. Something draws him to the flat above Hannah's.

He sees a door open and light pour in from the corridor. The main light is switched on. The figure walks to the window and stares almost straight at Simon before drawing the blinds. Although very distant, the face bears a striking resemblance to Simon's.

THREE

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Simon wakes up with a start. He is still wearing his dinner jacket.

INT. OFFICE LOBBY - MORNING

Simon - looking a bit tired and rumped - is signing in just as Hannah passes. This time he manages to get into the elevator with her.

INT. ELEVATOR - MORNING

Simon stands awkwardly at some considerable distance from Hannah.

SIMON

There was a bit of a mix up at the ball last night. Unfortunate.

HANNAH

I'm going down.

SIMON
I don't mind going down.

SIMON winces to himself.

SIMON (CONT'D)
And then up.

An awkward rest of elevator ride. Hannah says 'bye' and exits. The doors close and the elevator starts to travel back up. In frustration, Simon kicks the wall. The elevator stops and an alarm sounds.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM

Simon sits and watches the person type.

INVESTIGATOR ONE
Card please.

Off SIMON'S LOOK we cut to

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Dejected, Simon treads heavily through the office while people clack away at their computers. Occasionally someone looks up and smirks in memory of last night's events.

Simon sits down at his desk. He rolls his eyes at Harris who is standing nearby.

Simon looks past Harris and sees Papadopoulos walking closer and talking to a person obstructed from our view.

PAPADOPOULOS
We can really use a young man like you, especially right now with the big push and all.

Papadopoulos has now moved into Simon's field of vision, just a few cubicles in front of Simon.

Simon stands up to get a better look at the new person, but his view is blocked.

PAPADOPOULOS (CONT'D)
I'd like to introduce everyone to our newest co-worker. A bright young man who I'm sure will be an asset. He asked to be moved here from our sister offices. Heard it was the best.

Papadopoulos gives the man beside him a push in the ribs.

Simon moves a few steps to the side but Harris is in his way. We get just a glimpse of the man.

Simon continues to move closer, as though he is compelled.

Quite a few of the other workers in the office have stood up as well, getting a look at the new employee.

But now the new person has turned in the other direction.

Simon waits for him to turn around, but as he does Papadopoulos again obstructs his view.

PAPADOPOULOS (CONT'D)

I'll let you get started. Young hotshot, soon you'll have my job.

Simon is now quite close to Papadopoulos, and only a few paces away from the new man.

Papadopoulos moves to the side, and for the first time we see the new worker.

The man, JAMES, is the exact double of Simon.

Simon and James are played by the same actor. Every physical attribute is identical, except Simon's clothes are slightly more worn.

Simon gasps, his eyes wide and his mouth agape.

Simon continues to stare at James, who for the first time makes eye contact. James smiles at Simon, a strange half-friendly, half-threatening smile.

PAPADOPOULOS (CONT'D)

His name is James Simon.

Simon lets out a high-pitched SQUEAL.

Everyone in the office turns to Simon. He is embarrassed and smiles sickly. Across from him James gives a little wink.

Simon sways unsteady. His eyes roll and he tumbles backwards.

INT. OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Simon is on his back being fanned by Mr. Papadopoulos.

PAPADOPOULOS

Don't worry, my cleaner is a diabetic. We just need to jam a cookie down his throat!

Simon lifts himself up, looking around wildly.

SIMON

No, I'm not diabetic. What happened? Where is he?

He searches the faces around him but doesn't see his double.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Sir, it's just a shock that, well you know. The new man.

PAPADOPOULOS

(looking perturbed)

Don't worry son, we're not replacing you.

(beat)

I'm not one of these holier than though types. Drugs can be healthy for a person, just leave it out of the office.

SIMON

What, no, not drugs... Last night, a man I didn't know...

PAPADOPOULOS

No need for details, it's happened to us all. Back to work.

Papadopoulos reaches down and helps Simon up and sets him back at his desk. James returns and sits down opposite Simon. SIMON lets out another high pitched squeal.

PAPADOPOULOS (CONT'D)

I'll leave you to it.

INT. SIMON'S CUBICLE - LATER

Simon peers over his cubicle. He never takes his eyes off James. Simon runs his hands over his face. He is very flustered.

Simon frantically searches around his desk. He finds a stapler and looks into the shiny metal bottom.

We see his distorted reflection in the stapler.

INT. COFFEE ROOM - LATER

Simon drinks a glass of water to calm his nerves. He appears to be hyperventilating.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

Simon has finished washing his face in front of a long mirror. He has calmed down and focuses on his breathing.

SIMON

It's going to be okay. It's just a resemblance. You're just a little spooked, right?

Simon nods to himself slowly in the mirror. A flush comes from a bathroom stall.

Simon looks embarrassed and turns to leave the bathroom. As Simon tries to leave, the door to the stall swings open and James exits.

They are now face to face, and time seems to slow. They carefully inspect one another; they are mirror images.

They start to move again and begin to engage in that awkward dance one does when trying to get past someone.

Simon and James both attempt to go to the left, then to the right. James gives Simon a friendly smile.

Simon rushes from the bathroom.

INT. OFFICE - LATER

Simon is hiding behind a door at the side of the office. He is watching James sitting at his desk. Around James' desk we see several other employees, including Harris.

INT. OFFICE - LATER

Simon remains in his hiding spot, watching James.

Simon waits until he sees Harris leave for the elevator. He quickly sidles up to Harris and grabs him by the arm.

INT. CANTEEN - DAY

Harris has two extremely large hot dogs in front of him. The restaurant is busy, but Simon doesn't eat.

Harris takes a huge bite of the hot dog and moans with pleasure. He gets ketchup on his lips.

HARRIS

Thanks for the dogs. You want a bite?

Simon seems to be trembling.

SIMON

Harris, the new worker here, he...

(leaning in and
whispering)

You spoke to the new employee?

HARRIS

James? Sure, I met him.

SIMON

And?

HARRIS

Seems like an okay guy.

Simon looks around to see if anyone is eavesdropping.
Harris takes another bite of the hot dog.

SIMON

Did you notice anything strange
about him...I mean, did he remind
you of anyone?

HARRIS

Well...I don't know. Not that I
remember.

SIMON

I mean...me, for instance?

Harris thinks this over for a moment.

HARRIS

Yeah...you know, now that you
mention it...he does kind of
remind me of you.

SIMON

Yes, but, what I mean is...

HARRIS

Yeah, yeah...you know, you do
look related. Almost like
brothers.

Simon grabs Harris' arm.

SIMON

(in horror)

We look related? You think so?

HARRIS

(getting excited,
louder)

You do! It's true...I didn't
realize at first. You look just
like him! Or he looks just like
you. It's incredible!

SIMON

It is incredible! Why didn't you
notice?

HARRIS

I don't know, you're pretty,
well, unnoticeable. But it's a
miracle.

I met a man who had a moveable
tailbone. But that's nothing
compared to this.

(MORE)

HARRIS (CONT'D)

(beat)

It's like, destiny.

SIMON

There's no such thing. It's an incredible coincidence, but... I mean, there are six billion people on the planet. A few are bound to look the same.

HARRIS

(thinks)

If you were Chinese, maybe I'd buy it. No, this is definitely something. You'll probably end up wrestling at the top of a tall building before one of you falls to your doom. That's normally how they end doppelganger movies. Or you were twins separated at birth. That often happens.

SIMON

What's he like?

HARRIS

I don't know. He's a guy.

SIMON

Do you know why he transferred?

HARRIS

How should I know?

SIMON

But didn't they...do you know if they said anything about me?

HARRIS

What is there to say about you?

Simon opens his mouth and cocks his head.

INT. SIMON'S CUBICLE - AFTERNOON

Simon peeks cautiously over the top of his cubicle and watches James.

James bobs his head while Simon looks at him mistrustfully.

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - EVENING

Simon walks into the enormous and empty elevator. He waits for the door to close.

Just before the door closes James joins him.

INT. ELEVATOR - EVENING

Simon and James stand next to each other. Again the resemblance is incredible.

Everything about them is the same. They both clear their throat at the same time, then simultaneously frown.

James appears content, but Simon's face shows his concern.

INT. OFFICE LOBBY - EVENING

Simon and James walk through the lobby. They walk stride for stride, as though mirror images.

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Simon and James step out of the door at the exact same time and turn directly into each other. James, as though just deciding something, but still sure of himself, says

JAMES

Would you like to get a drink?

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

JAMES and SIMON run giggling from a bar. They howl down the street, kicking things over and laughing like children.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

Simon and James stumble through the door, drunk. SIMON disappears off to the kitchen.

SIMON (O.S.)

That was so much fun! Like when you said to that man 'who are you looking at, friend?' That was amazing! I would *never* do that. I mean, we were almost in a *bar fight* for god's sake. 'Who are you looking at? *Friend.*'

JAMES takes a look round the apartment. He strolls up to the telescope and looks through it. He sees Hannah's apartment. Hannah is curled up on her sofa watching THE SCI-FI DETECTIVE SERIES on TV. He gives a look of recognition.

He hears the sound of SIMON returning and walks back to the centre of the room. SIMON has returned with one can of beer and one glass.

JAMES

I'll take the can.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

SIMON and JAMES sit and finish their beer. They both seem pretty drunk.

JAMES

So what's the action like round here?

SIMON

Action?

JAMES

Yeah - in the office. That red haired girl who sits opposite us is a dirty, dirty thing.

Simon laughs uneasily.

JAMES (CONT'D)

And that french-sounding brunette with the red top and red nails. Maybe we should take them out. Which one do you want?

SIMON

What?

JAMES

I prefer the french-sounding brunette, but either way.

SIMON

(laughs)

No, that's alright, you can. You can have both.

JAMES

(shakes head)

Never again. So, you got a girlfriend?

SIMON

No.

JAMES

You a flamer?

SIMON

No. There's someone I've been thinking about a lot.

JAMES

Like some fantasy shit?

SIMON

No, she's real. A person.

JAMES

Well, what's the problem?

SIMON

I don't know. I have all these things I want to say to her.

He is sounding quite drunk now. The camera stays on him, moving closer and closer.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Like how I can tell she's a lonely person - even if others can't. Because I know what it is to be lonely and lost and invisible.

JAMES

Simon, let me tell you something. I'll help you out with this. You have to go after what you want. I'd tear the asshole off an elephant for a piece of trim I wanted that bad.

SIMON

I've tried talking to her but I don't know how to be myself. It's like I'm permanently outside myself. Like you could push your hand straight through me if you wanted to.

Simon looks at his hand.

SIMON (CONT'D)

I can see the type of man I want to be versus the type of man I actually am.

(beat)

I know that I'm doing it, but I'm incapable of doing what needs to be done. I'm like Pinnocchio. I'm a wooden boy, not a real boy. And it kills me.

SIMON looks over and sees that JAMES has fallen asleep.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Simon puts a duvet around JAMES and a pillow under his head. Then gently Simon traces a line from James's temple to his chin with his finger.

SIMON

I'm pleased we met.

Simon gets up, turns the light off and goes to bed.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Simon wakes up. He groggily gets out of bed and stumbles into the living area. JAMES is nowhere to be seen.

In fact, there is no sign that he was there at all.

FOUR

INT. OFFICE LOBBY - MORNING

SIMON is signing in at reception while people quickly swipe in and bustle on to the elevators. A beaming JAMES appears.

JAMES

It's okay: he's with me.

GUARD

No problem James.

(to Simon)

Just go right through.

SIMON uneasily puts the pen down and follows James. JAMES seems to already be on friendly terms with a number of people in the building. He walks to the elevator greeting a number of people.

EXT. ELEVATOR - A LITTLE LATER

Simon and James exit the elevator. James is obviously doing the capper line to a joke. The people in the elevator all laugh.

SIMON

What time did you get in?

JAMES

I don't know - about a half hour ago.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

HARRIS approaches.

JAMES

Hey - did you get a chance to look at that report yet?

HARRIS

Yeah - I left it on your desk.

JAMES

Thanks, man.

Simon gives a look.

INT. WORK BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

Simon and James stand side by side together in the bathroom. Their shirts are off and their pants rest at their ankles.

Simon looks very uncomfortable.

SIMON

Somebody's going to come in.

JAMES

Turn this way.

Simon shifts and James looks amazed.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Exactly the same.

SIMON

Down to the smallest freckle.

James looks pointedly at Simon's crotch.

JAMES

I think mine is a bit bigger.

Simon starts to disagree but just then we hear the toilet flush.

Mr. Papadopoulos emerges from a stall reading a newspaper and buttoning up his pants.

Simon frantically tries to pull up his boxers. James just stands there confidently.

PAPADOPOULOS

(not looking up from
the paper)

Keep up the good work boys.

Papadopoulos exits the bathroom, leaving Simon scrambling with his shirt and James still nearly naked.

SIMON

Jesus. I'm getting back to work.

Simon starts to leave but James calls after him.

JAMES

Wait!

(beat)

We're doing the switch right?

SIMON

I don't know. What if they find out?

JAMES

Look, I'm good with all this social stuff. You're an awkward misfit, but you can help me out and take the test for me.

(beat)

We look the same and nobody will find out.

SIMON

But Papadopoulos put me in charge of his daughter.

JAMES

Don't worry, kids love me, and you don't even like the little brat.

(beat)

You just take the test. I'll baby-sit for an hour.

SIMON

Do you know anything about what we do here?

JAMES

What's to know?

SIMON

Fine.

JAMES

Look, we're a team, now. I'll help you, you help me. Like this girl, Hannah, you've got to take a step back. You can't just stalk her. Chicks don't dig stalkers. Unless they're Sting in that song. Right?

(Simon nods)

Great. Within a week you're going to get hand on boob. That's a promise. Simon. Look at me. Within a week: hand on boob.

Simon half laughs, half-shakes his head with disbelief.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Simon sits at James' desk. He is working on a test.

INT. COFFEE ROOM - LATER

James sits at the same couch next to Melanie. Melanie, far from being sullen is now effusive and interested.

MELANIE

No, all of the boys in my school are so childish, so immature.

JAMES

Nothing but a batch of raging hormones.

INT. OFFICE - LATER

Simon is finishing up the test. He looks at the clock and it is well after noon.

EXT. COFFEE ROOM - LATER

James is sat much closer to Melanie. James talks near her ear.

JAMES

You need to realize that data entry and collection and computers and stuff can be sensual. It has a romance. All these lives that we're recording, their dreams, their hopes, their loves. Each person out there, apart, yet connected. We're giving these faceless people immortality...

MELANIE

Wow.

He starts to stroke MELANIE'S earlobe.

INT. OFFICE - LATER

Simon hands the test over to a secretary outside Mr. Papadopoulos' office. She looks up at him and smiles.

SECRETARY

Finished already?

SIMON

When do you think you'll have the results?

SECRETARY

For you? Right away.

The secretary smiles at Simon. He is puzzled, unused to such treatment.

INT. COFFEE ROOM - DAY

JAMES is looking out of the window, checking that the coast is clear.

MELANIE

Exactly. It's like Daddy wanting me to go out on a date with his friend's son. Like just because we're the same age doesn't mean we have anything in common, right?

JAMES

It's no substitute for real emotional connection, that's for certain. I've always felt emotional maturity is unrelated to material age.

(Beat)

You know, you have the most remarkable cleft in your chin.

MELANIE

You think?

JAMES closes the blinds.

JAMES

I think.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Simon sits at James' desk while Mr. Papadopoulos stands over him excitedly.

Simon doesn't seem to be paying much attention, instead focusing on his empty desk.

PAPADOPOULOS

I knew we hired the right man, I just knew it.

SIMON

Thank you, sir.

Simon continues to wait for James to return. He is looking at his empty desk.

PAPADOPOULOS

Where is the kid from that desk? He's been here a while. Just between you and me he hasn't impressed.

SIMON

I'm sure there's some explanation.

(MORE)

SIMON (CONT'D)
I've found him to be quite competent. He's probably doing something important.

PAPADOPOULOS
Sticking up for a co-worker, I like that, admirable.

Papadopoulos waddles down the aisle of the office and Simon stands, looking back at his desk.

James has suddenly appeared, sitting in Simon's chair. He waves to Simon and rushes over.

SIMON
(agitated)
Where were you?

JAMES
How'd I do?

SIMON
You aced it.

James claps his hands and does a spin.

JAMES
I knew it!

SIMON
I told you to be back an hour ago.

JAMES
Don't worry! The old man is an idiot. We're going to run this place.

INT. CANTEEN - DAY

Simon and James are finishing up their lunch. James is eating an apple suggestively.

In the distance we see he is making intense eye contact with Hannah. She looks up at him and then averts her eyes.

Simon is talking to James who is only half-listening.

JAMES
She's definitely looking at you.

SIMON
You think?

JAMES
What did I tell you? Just ignore them for a few days and they'll come crawling.

SIMON

I do feel like she's been looking at me a little.

JAMES

Of course she has. That's what you get when you listen to Captain Jim.

(suddenly urgent)

Look. She wants to come over. I'm going to hang back.

SIMON

What?

JAMES

Just remember what we talked about. Play it cool.

SIMON looks up. HANNAH is coming over to the table. JAMES scuttles away.

HANNAH

Do you mind if I sit here?

SIMON

Sure. As in no. I don't. Sit. Definitely.

(beat, trying to be cool)

I mean: it's a free country.

There's an awkward silence for a while.

HANNAH

I'd really plucked up my courage to do this, but now...

(laughs)

Do you think we could maybe meet after work?

SIMON

Okay.

HANNAH

It's just I don't want people round here to listen in on us. You know what it's like in these buildings. Is there a place we could meet where we won't have like work people around?

We see JAMES looking on from a distance. Hannah leaves Simon's table. He looks around and sees James. Simon smiles, James smiles back.

EXT. BRIDGE - EVENING

SIMON paces. He's wearing a relatively smart jacket and looks like he's taken a little more care with his appearance than usual. He sees Hannah approaching, casting a similar shadow to when Simon saw the Double after the Ball.

HANNAH

Nice spot here.

SIMON

I like to watch people as they pass. It's a good place to think.

HANNAH

Yeah, the fumes help with that.

(beat)

So: here's the thing. I have this crush on someone.

SIMON

A crush?

HANNAH

And this person on whom I have the crush doesn't know that they're the subject of my crush.

(beat)

And I'm pretty sure this person might have a crush on me too.

SIMON

How do you know?

HANNAH

I've seen him looking at me.

SIMON

Right.

HANNAH

He works in my office. So I often notice him looking at me.

SIMON

I see.

HANNAH

And he seems to have moved right next to where I live.

SIMON

That could be a coincidence.

HANNAH

It could be.

SIMON

Have you ever thought of telling him how you feel?

HANNAH

I wouldn't dare.

SIMON

Why not?

HANNAH

I don't know...

SIMON

You should tell him.

HANNAH

He just seems like one of those people who's really popular.

SIMON

Popular?

HANNAH

You know - everyone likes him - I imagine he has a lot of girls interested in him. He probably looks at everyone.

SIMON blanches.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

But you seem close to him so I thought you might know what he thought.

SIMON

Right. You mean James?

HANNAH

Oh God- is it that obvious? I don't know what it is. I've never met anyone like him. Not that I've really met him. I think I've said hello to him maybe once.

SIMON

You've never met anyone like him?

HANNAH

Do you think you could find out if he is interested in me? God this is so dumb!

SIMON

You really think he's so unique? What exactly is so unique about him?

HANNAH

I don't know.

SIMON

Try to think.

HANNAH

He has something.

SIMON

But you've never even spoken to him. How can you know if he has something?

HANNAH

You can tell by just looking at someone

SIMON

By just looking at someone?

HANNAH

Yes.

(beat)

Listen - maybe it's better if I just tell him.

SIMON

Don't do that. Look- I'll tell him. If you want.

HANNAH

Really?

SIMON

Sure. We're pretty close so... he listens to me.

HANNAH

Oh, thanks. Only if you're comfortable with...

SIMON

Of course!

HANNAH

I know it seems a little shallow of me...

SIMON

No. Sorry I didn't mean to pry or...

HANNAH

No. Thanks...

She's clearly forgotten his name.

SIMON

Simon...

HANNAH

Sorry! I'm just flustered. I'm...

She hugs him. We see SIMON allow his face to relax into disappointment.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

That's great.

There's an awkward pause.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

God. This is so *teenage*...

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

SIMON lies on his couch, looking up at the ceiling. He suddenly rushes to the bathroom.

INT. SIMON'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Simon vomits into the toilet. He stands up groggily and looks at himself in the mirror.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT. LIVING ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

SIMON looks through his telescope at JAMES' apartment. He is slumped on a chair playing a video game. He is greedily throwing popcorn into his mouth.

Below we look at Hannah's apartment. She is drawing at her desk. She seems to be happy, concentrating on her drawing.

A few feet away we see several drawings that she has made of James.

Simon sighs and hangs his head.

INT. OFFICE CORRIDOR - DAY

Simon walks, defeated, next to James. Throughout this walk James passes various people who all acknowledge him, but not Simon.

JAMES

Well I'm flattered, but she's not really my type.

SIMON

She's not your *type*?

JAMES

There's something slightly tragic about her. Melanie on the other hand...

SIMON
Stay away from Melanie...

JAMES
I'm only kidding. She's underage anyway. *Just.*

SIMON
I'm responsible for her.

JAMES checks out a girl who walks past.

JAMES
This may not be such a bad thing anyway. I mean she's obviously pretty shallow - she doesn't even know me.

SIMON
Why did I even tell you?

They bump into HARRIS.

JAMES
Hey, have you got change for the machine?

HARRIS
Sure. I always keep change in my desk.

Simon makes a face. They go to Harris's desk where there is indeed a stash of change.

JAMES
(picking up with Simon again)
Because you're a good person. I would have just gone as me.

JAMES spots MELANIE across the office and winks at her.

JAMES (CONT'D)
But look, we have an arrangement. I'll help you tonight, and you help me with the report for Papadopoulos. We're making some real progress here. He should know your name soon.

Off SIMON'S look we CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Simon and James walk along. Simon has his head down as though concentrating while James speaks like a professor, using plenty of hand motions.

JAMES

You need to have more of a swagger to your walk. If possible you want to kind of rotate your pelvis.

(beat)

It lets them know you have a full range of motion down there.

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Simon and James stand outside a restaurant watching as people walk in.

James stares intensely into the eyes of a MODERATELY ATTRACTIVE WOMAN and licks his lips slightly. The woman looks at James as she enters the restaurant.

JAMES

(triumphant)

Did you see that? She was all over me.

SIMON

She was?

JAMES

Of course. It's because of my lip action.

(beat)

Show the tongue, but not like a lizard. You try.

Another woman walks into the restaurant and Simon tries to lick his lip, but when he does so it somehow looks grotesque.

The woman huffs into the restaurant.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Simon and James are again standing close to one another.

JAMES

When you're standing next to them, or sitting, you want to put your hand on their lower back. See?

James reaches out and puts his hand on Simon's lower back.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Not the ass, they sometimes get upset about that, but just above them.

(beat)

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

It shows you're interested and you could push them down the stairs at any moment.

SIMON

Why?

JAMES

Because you've got the leverage.

SIMON

(confused)

Here?

Simon puts his hand on James lower back. James swats him away.

JAMES

Stop that. It's gay.

SIMON

You just did that to me.

JAMES

But it was me: you see the difference? You can't be doing anything gay.

(beat)

No ice cream cones.

SIMON

I like ice cream.

JAMES

Of course: it's delicious. Ice cream is fine - in a cup - but a cone is gay, unless you're with a woman at the time.

SIMON

(confused, but going with it)

Anything else?

JAMES

No riding on a motorcycle with another man.

(beat)

The only exceptions are drive by shootings, purse snatching, or bomb throwing. Anything else is gay.

SIMON

You know a lot about this stuff.

JAMES

Defense wins championships.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Simon and James again walking side by side.

JAMES

You need to tell them how great you are, all the time. Which means you'll have to make things up.

SIMON

What if they find out?

JAMES

Make it hard to research. Like you were the captain of a Jai alai team in high school and a brigadier general in the navy with four confirmed kills. Something like that.

SIMON

I don't think anybody'd believe that.

JAMES

Then change the subject, and deny everything.

SIMON

I don't know if this is me.

JAMES

How has being you worked?
(beat)
You understand everything I told you?

Simon looks a bit overwhelmed.

SIMON

I think so.

JAMES

Show me. Walk over to me and talk.

Simon looks hesitant. Finally he starts walking toward James with a strange, over-pronounced swagger while licking his lips furiously. He looks ridiculous.

SIMON

Hello, there. I did three tours with the merchant marines.

James smiles and nods at him proudly.

JAMES

This just might work.

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

SIMON sits opposite HANNAH in a restaurant.

He looks very uncomfortable. HANNAH shifts in her seat.

It is silent for a long, long time.

SIMON(V.O.)

You're fucking this up. Say something. Just say something. Anything. How can you be fucking this up so badly?

We see Hannah play with her food.

SIMON (CONT'D)

(to Hannah)

I used to be an Olympic swimmer.

SIMON(V.O.) (CONT'D)

Go to the bathroom now.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Would you excuse me?

INT. RESTAURANT BATHROOM - EVENING

SIMON/JAMES goes into one of the cubicles. JAMES is there waiting for him. He has a small radio transmitting device and headphones.

JAMES

What the fuck?

SIMON

I can't do this with you shouting in my ear.

Simon takes an earpiece out of his ear, and starts removing a clip microphone from underneath his clothes.

JAMES

Was your plan to spend the entire evening mute? I thought we'd planned this.

SIMON

She'd know I wasn't you if I kept opening my mouth. Even when I said hello I saw her fill with doubt.

JAMES

Did you even jam your knee
between her thigh like I
suggested?

(exasperated)

This'd be going fine if you'd say
what I tell you to.

SIMON

Like that I want her well-lubed
for later? I can't say things
like that.

JAMES

That's why you live alone with a
telescope.

(beat)

That was cruel. I'm sorry. It's
just I really want this to work
out, and it's frustrating me.
Come on, let's try again.

SIMON

I'm not going back up there. You
go.

JAMES

Are you kidding? After what
you've done? That's sending me to
my death.

SIMON

We can find out what it is she
likes about you. Then I could try
to be more like that on the next
date if there's a next date.

JAMES

Fine. But I'm not wearing that
thing.

JAMES indicates the microphone/transmitter.

JAMES (CONT'D)

You can watch. Isn't that what
you prefer?

SIMON

What's that meant to mean?

JAMES

I'm just messing with you.

SIMON

I happen to have very serious
feelings for this person.

JAMES

Hey - I'm trying to help. Do you think I like spending my entire fucking evening in the toilet?

SIMON

I'm sorry.

JAMES

That's alright. Remember: we're helping each other out, okay? Give me your clothes. From now on we should always wear the same clothes.

They start undressing.

EXT. BATHROOM CUBICLE - CONTINUOUS

JAMES steps out, quickly followed by SIMON. A man washing his hands at the sink double takes.

INT. RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

James and Simon get to the door leading back into the restaurant. James peeks through it, but can't see Hannah.

JAMES

Did you move tables?

SIMON

No-

Simon watches James walk into the restaurant and summon a waiter.

The waiter points to the door.

JAMES glances at Simon, then turns and runs.

SIMON pokes his head out more, trying not to be seen.

We see HANNAH collecting her coat by the front desk, on her way out. She leaves just before JAMES gets there.

JAMES runs over and follows her out of the restaurant.

Simon creeps out from behind the door, still nervous of being discovered.

He can see HANNAH and James engaged in a heated row outside. It is raining, and Hannah's starting to get drenched. JAMES offers his coat, but she rejects it.

Hannah turns to leave, but James pulls her back to him. She slaps his face, then he slaps hers. She looks completely shocked. She starts to cry.

James hugs her. Hannah punches him from within the hug.

James leans in to kiss her, Hannah struggles before seeming to submit completely.

The table at the front of the restaurant breaks out into spontaneous applause. We see Hannah and James look back in through the window, shy and coquettish, give an ironic bow and skip off into the night.

We stay on Simon, perplexed and breathless. As he gathers his wits and makes to follow, another waiter brings him the cheque for the meal.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT BLOCK - NIGHT

SIMON hurtles up the stairs to his apartment.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

He dashes over to the telescope and points it at HANNAH'S APARTMENT, but the blinds, for the first time, are closed.

FIVE

EXT. OFFICE - DAY

Simon waits for JAMES. He's still angry and is half-pacing. When he finally sees him, he bounds over to intercept.

SIMON

James!

James ignores him, swipes in using his card, skips through the lobby and catches the elevator, just as the door is closing.

He gives Simon a wink.

GUARD

(to Simon)

Visitors need to sign in.

SIMON

(frustrated)

I'm not a visitor.

He starts filling out the form, Simon looks up and sees Hannah, a dreamy look on her face.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Hannah! Wait up!

But she's gone.

INT. OFFICE. PHOTOCOPYING DEPT - DAY

SIMON watches HANNAH from afar. She seems very happy.

He approaches the desk, holding a few sheets of A4. Again Liz is there to greet him.

SIMON

Hi. I know the policy, but my printer's actually broken.

LIZ

Hannah! That creepy guy's here again.

Hannah comes over, still in a good mood.

HANNAH

Hi, creepy guy.

SIMON

Hey Hannah. I was just saying to your colleague that I know the policy, but that my printer's broken -

HANNAH

Do you want me to call and get it fixed?

SIMON

Sorry -

HANNAH

What's your desk number?

She's picked up the phone and is already dialling.

VOICE ON PHONE (O.S.)

Hello? Tech support

Simon quickly cuts off the phone.

SIMON

That's okay. I need a copy pretty urgently. And you know how long those guys take. Like forever.

HANNAH

I've found them to be very timely.

SIMON

Oh yeah- you had your date with James last night. Did you? Was that last night?

There's a pause.

HANNAH

Do you want me to photocopy these?

SIMON

Yes, please. That's why I'm here.

Hannah goes over to the machine. Simon has an agonising wait while his papers go through. Hannah returns with them.

HANNAH

One copy.

SIMON

So how did it go?

HANNAH

How did what go?

SIMON

With James. I just wanted to ask.

HANNAH isn't about to help out.

SIMON (CONT'D)

It's just seeing that I made the introduction-

HANNAH

Thanks for the introduction -

SIMON

I just wanted to make sure -

HANNAH

That he didn't take advantage of me?

There is a long pause.

SIMON

Did he? Do that? Because I feel sort of responsible. Seeing as I made the introduction.

HANNAH

That's very kind of you.

SIMON

But you're okay?

HANNAH

I'm okay.

SIMON

I'm pleased. That's a relief. Good.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Simon marches to his desk with the papers. He looks around for James, but he's nowhere to be seen.

INT. COFFE ROOM - DAY

Simon sees Harris banging the machine.

HARRIS

Hey, do you have any change for this thing?

SIMON

Have you seen James?

HARRIS

He's in with Papadopoulos.

SIMON

Papadopoulos?

HARRIS

I know. Do you think he'll take us with him?

SIMON

What are you talking about?

HARRIS

When he's promoted?

Harris gives the machine another violent whack.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Simon sits at his desk. JAMES is still not there. He looks through a report that's sitting on his desk, but he can't really concentrate.

He gets up and wanders up towards Papadopoulos's offices. He smiles at the secretary. She does not return it.

Then he hears voices come closer to the door. He scampers back to his desk.

He takes a clear plastic folder from an office supply table and sits down to cover the project that's lying on his desk.

James suddenly appears next to Simon.

JAMES

Do you have those papers, Simon?
Mr. Papadopoulos is waiting.

Simon looks at him.

JAMES (CONT'D)

The papers.

James says "the papers" very slowly as if Simon is deaf or stupid.

SIMON

What the hell happened last night?

JAMES

We can talk about that later. I'm just about to get promoted, which means you're about to get promoted, so why don't we get the papers to Papadopoulos before he puts Harris in charge.

SIMON can see Papadopoulos looking over from near his office. They start talking in hurried whispers with fixed smiles on their faces, for the benefit of Papadopoulos.

JAMES (CONT'D)

This was the plan, right? We were going to run this place.

SIMON

We had a plan last night.

JAMES

Which you fucked up and I had to save with some brilliant improvisation and anyway I said let's talk about that later so stop being such a freak I'm not even attracted to her.

SIMON

(reluctant)

Okay.

JAMES

The papers.

SIMON

Okay.

JAMES

Some time today...

SIMON

I'm just putting a cover on them.

JAMES

Let me give you a hand.

And with that James holds forth his hand as though offering a truce.

Simon, still fiddling with the report absently grabs the offered hand.

The hand comes off in Simon's. It is a fake hand. James cackles, uproariously.

JAMES (CONT'D)

But seriously, you need some help?

Simon shakes his head, annoyed. He is finishing putting the cover on the report.

SIMON

No no. That's all right. It's finished and I just have to...

Simon tries to put on the cover, but only uses one hand, holding the fake hand James has given him.

JAMES

Oh please. Let me do it.

James reaches for the project. Simon tries to grab it and they both start pulling, trying to get it out of each other's hands.

SIMON

(more insistent)

No. Really, it's okay. I can do it.

Papadopoulos is really staring now.

Simon stops, hesitant to make a scene in front of Papadopoulos.

Simon turns to pick up the project and realizes that it is gone. James has taken it and is walking toward Papadopoulos.

Simon trots after him.

Papadopoulos takes the report from James, as Simon stands dumbfounded.

PAPADOPOULOS

Great work, James. It's good to see you at it already. That's the kind of initiative I like.

JAMES

Thank you, sir. I just think that a man should do the best he can possibly do at the work he's doing.

PAPADOPOULOS
 (smiling)
 That's the spirit.

SIMON
 But, sir.

PAPADOPOULOS
 I don't know what I'm paying you
 people for. This guy just
 started.
 (to Simon)
 Why can't you work like that?

SIMON
 Sir! I think I have to make
 things clear.
 (beat)
 Umm...

James smiles at Papadopoulos with a pitying look.

PAPADOPOULOS
 I'm not angry with you, son, I
 just hope you can raise the level
 of your performance. Hell, why
 don't you work with James here.
 See if you can help him put
 something together.

Simon looks shell-shocked, he is so angry he can barely
 speak.

SIMON
 I can, I...will.

Papadopoulos finally seems to really look at Simon. He
 notices the hand that James gave Simon.

PAPADOPOULOS
 What's this, a joke?

SIMON
 What?

PAPADOPOULOS
 That is Mr. Steven's hand!

SIMON
 What?

Papadopoulos grabs it from Simon.

PAPADOPOULOS
 I don't know what kind of sick
 game you're playing, friend, but
 I won't have any of it.
 (MORE)

PAPADOPOULOS (CONT'D)

Mr. Stevens has been looking all over for that.

(beat)

Don't move, I'm armed.

Papadopoulos and James laugh at the joke and Simon turns around and sees Mr. Stevens, sitting at a cubicle. He only has a stump where his hand should be.

And with that Papadopoulos takes the hand to Mr. Stevens. James follows Papadopoulos back into the office, he turns to give Simon a smile.

Just before the door whooshes shut, Simon can see The Colonel walk up to JAMES and grab him warmly by the hand.

INT. OFFICE - EVENING

Simon is one of the last people there. We time fade. Simon is alone. Still no sign of James.

He walks up once more to Papadopoulos's office. He listens to the door. Nothing.

Confused, he leaves the office.

INT. OFFICE LOBBY - EVENING

Simon approaches the guard.

SIMON

You didn't see anyone leave -

GUARD

I see a lot of people leave.

SIMON

No, I meant a specific person. James Simon.

(beat)

He kind of looks like me.

GUARD

No offence, but I doubt I'd notice someone who looks like you.

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN - EVENING

Simon stands on an empty train carriage, looking at himself in the window, distorted and strafed with amber.

INT. OLD-FOLKS HOME - NIGHT

Simon stands a few feet away from his seated mother. His mother looks very bad, pale and thin, much worse than when we first saw him.

A few feet away the gypsy woman is looking at him.

SIMON

Mother, is it possible? Did I
have a twin?

She doesn't respond.

MOTHER

This used to be my favorite song.

SIMON

There's no song playing. And
besides, you hate music.

MOTHER

(whisper)

I think the nurse stole my
undershirt.

SIMON

She didn't steal your undershirt.
Are you listening to me?

MOTHER

She keeps looking at me through
her shifty eyes.

Simon, frustrated, tries to stop one orderly who walks by,
and then another.

Finally someone comes over to speak to him.

STAFF

You know, I'm busy.

SIMON

Yes, of course, but it's about my
mother.

(beat)

She seems worse. She hasn't even
insulted me.

The man looks annoyed, he flips through some pages of a
chart.

STAFF

Oh yes, she had some problem with
blood circulation to the brain
yesterday.

SIMON

Like a stroke!

STAFF

We prefer to call them cerebral
incidents. They happen all the
time.

(MORE)

STAFF (CONT'D)

(beat)

Cheers!

And the staff member moves off.

Simon walks over to his mother, her face seems slightly stricken, she stares at him, angrily, through one focused eye.

GYPSY WOMAN

Le Mark!

Simon turns around, surprised again by the woman.

SIMON

What?

GYPSY WOMAN

You have the mark. I see it in you. You're half a man.

(beat)

A person cannot be two, but one.

(hissing)

You must cut him out!

SIMON

You are talking about him, aren't you?

She leans forward and taking something from beneath her blankets she hands it to Simon.

SIMON (CONT'D)

What do I do? Won't you tell me?

The woman turns away and we hear a clattering from Simon's mother.

He looks at her, then down at his hands. The woman has given him a bone-handled knife. On the bottom we see a carved image of two snakes, each in the act of consuming the other.

GYPSY WOMAN

The double, must die.

EXT. SIMON'S APARTMENT BLOCK - NIGHT

Simon walks back through the enormous complex of tall apartment buildings. His feet click loudly as he walks. He looks almost like the last man on a dead planet.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Simon sits at his bed. He looks exhausted. He takes the bone-handled knife from his pocket and stares at it for a moment.

He places it into the drawer by his bed.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Simon is studying James's apartment through his telescope. He has been doing this for some time. There is no one there. Briefly, he tilts down to Hannah's apartment.

Hannah's watching the Sci-Fi show on TV, but occasionally she gets up and paces about. She seems agitated.

On her walls we see several more pictures that Hannah has drawn of James. There appear to be about a dozen of them. Simon sighs.

Suddenly she seems to hear a noise. Tentatively, she pads over to the door. She tries to listen to something that is happening outside. She opens the door but there is no one there.

Simon pans back up to James's window, just in time to see him tip toe in with MELANIE, they're giggling. They shut the door and start kissing.

James keeps motioning for her to be quiet.

Melanie goes over to the window and starts to draw the blinds, but James stops her, making sure they're open.

As he's kissing Melanie, he seems to glance over to Simon's window, deliberately putting on a show.

Simon covers his mouth with disbelief. He can't watch.

He thinks to himself, muttering.

He goes to the phone and stabs in a number.

HANNAH (O.S.)

Hello?

SIMON

Hannah? It's James. Come up. I want you.

He replaces the receiver and winces to himself.

SIMON (CONT'D)

She'll never buy it.

Simon returns to the window and watches Hannah beautify herself.

She decides between a couple of different outfits, tries one pair of shoes, then another, decides on a dress, before taking off the dress and putting a coat on over her underwear.

She checks herself in a full length mirror by the door, messes up her hair and walks out the door.

Simon swings the telescope to James' flat. He can't find where James or Melanie are.

After a beat, there's obviously a doorbell sound, because James gets up. He's naked.

He grabs a robe and shuffles Melanie off into the bathroom.

James answers the door and sees Hannah, who's allowed her coat to fall open. There's a clearly awkward exchange as James tries to shoo her out of his apartment. Hannah gathers up her coat, upset.

JAMES returns and sees MELANIE. They go through a virtual re-enactment of the same pantomime between James and Hannah outside the restaurant. But this time it ends with, Melanie storming out.

Simon watches with delight.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Simon and James sit next to one another at the counter of an old style diner. They read the menu in silence.

Simon looks a little uncomfortable but James seems to be composed.

The waitress comes over with a pad.

WAITRESS

What'll it be?

SIMON

Um...I'll have a coke and a bagel, please.

WAITRESS

We ran out of bagels.

Simon is flustered and looks through the menu again.

SIMON

Well, I guess I'll just have a coke then.

WAITRESS

A coke. And you?

JAMES

I'd like a coffee.

WAITRESS

A coffee.

JAMES

And some scrambled eggs.

WAITRESS

We don't serve breakfast in the evening.

JAMES

Why not?

WAITRESS

It says so on the menu?

JAMES

Do you still have eggs here?

WAITRESS

Yeah.

JAMES

And do you still have a frying pan?

WAITRESS

Yes.

JAMES

Then do me a favor and make me some scrambled eggs.

Simon looks very embarrassed and the waitress sighs.

WAITRESS

Fine. Anything else?

JAMES

Bacon.

WAITRESS

Bacon.

JAMES

And toast.

WAITRESS

Toast.

JAMES

And get me a glass of milk too.

WAITRESS

Anything else.

JAMES

That's it.

WAITRESS

You sure?

James hits his hand on the table and rattles the plates.

JAMES

Just get me the damn food.

The waitress scowls and heads off. Simon looks at James as though he's an alien.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Simon, I want to thank you for last night. Because after I caught up with Melanie in the corridor, we had the best make up sex I've ever had. In the corridor.

SIMON

I want you to stop seeing Hannah.

JAMES

I see.

SIMON

And I want you to stop messing round with Melanie.

Simon shrugs.

JAMES

What else?

SIMON

And I want you tell Papadopoulos that I've been doing all of your work since you got here.

PAUSE.

JAMES

You see, if I do all that, you'd have to explain to Papadopoulos some of your teaching methods.

He fishes some Polaroids out of his jacket pocket and puts them on the table. The pictures are of James and Melanie in compromising positions. It is mostly kissing and groping.

The waitress comes over and fills up their coffee cups. She looks at the pictures and then tuts at Simon.

SIMON

(hissing)

What the hell do you think you're doing? Put them away -

JAMES

And before you imagine you can pin this on me, who do you think Papadopoulos is going to believe? Some dink he still calls Stanley or this guy?

He slides over a card.

Simon picks it up. It is a photo ID of JAMES's smiling face. Underneath it says, 'JAMES SIMON: SENIOR EXECUTIVE'.

Simon puts the card back on the table and slides it back over to James.

He doesn't have the energy to speak.

The waitress comes over with the order.

WAITRESS

We're out of coke.

JAMES starts eating hungrily.

JAMES

Oh: I need your key.

(beat)

To your apartment. While I don't exactly care about Hannah, I don't want to be completely insensitive. You see -

(he leans closer)

Melanie's a bit of a screamer.

SIMON looks horrified.

JAMES (CONT'D)

It'll be easier if we use your place. .

Utterly defeated, Simon fishes out a key from his pocket and slides it over to JAMES.

JAMES (CONT'D)

You should be proud: every time she comes, she shouts out your name.

JAMES looks at an attractive woman, sitting next to them.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Hey. I'm James.

SIMON looks up at the TV. The Sci-Fi serial is playing.

SCI-FI DETECTIVE

Get up. Get up! Or do you want to die on your knees like a snake?

SIX

EXT. SIMON'S APARTMENT BLOCK - EVENING

SIMON paces outside his building. It's cold and he's shivering a little. He looks up to his window and mutters to himself. The light is on.

Later- he sees the light go out.

He walks up the stairwell, hiding in a nook until Melanie and James pass him. He climbs up the stairs.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Simon jumps up several times and tries to grab something from the door sill. He eventually scrapes a key off the sill and picks it up. He drags himself into the room and immediately strips the bed of its sheets.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

SIMON is sitting at his desk. He is typing at his computer. We see: 'REGRESSION ANALYSIS: A PROPOSAL BY SIMON JAMES. Much of the work we do here is inefficient, and could be vastly improved. In this report I will outline several keys ways in which efficiency...'

HANNAH

Simon?

Simon is taken off guard, surprised to see Hannah in his domain. She looks upset and nervous.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Do you think I can come to your apartment tonight?

(beat)

I know it seems weird - it's just - I think James is seeing someone else.

SIMON

Right...

HANNAH

- and he told me that you sometimes watch my apartment from a telescope in your room - which I'm fine with - I don't care - it's actually reassuring in a strange way -

SIMON

Do you want to go to the coffee room, it's a little public -

HANNAH

- and I thought it could be interesting to find out exactly who else he's seeing.

Simon stands up and starts to usher her into a corridor, away from the main room.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Not that he's even trying to hide it -

SIMON

Does that mean he's seeing you. Because I wasn't sure-?

HANNAH

I can hear them above me in that room of his.

SIMON

He's not a very good guy.

HANNAH

Which I know and always have known, but to be made a fool of by...

SIMON

A villain. It's not your fault.

HANNAH

Of course it is! I knew what he was. But then he'd say something about how he knew me. That he could tell I was a lonely person - because he knew what it was like to be lonely and lost and invisible. Like someone could push their hand straight through you, and I'd just melt!

Hannah reaches out, distraught, and puts her hand on Simon's chest.

SIMON

I think you should definitely not see him.

HANNAH

(recovering)

You think you're better? I've seen you with Melanie.

(beat)

HANNAH (CONT'D)
 Your apartment's right opposite
 mine so you might want to close
 the blinds next time you
 interfere with a minor.

Simon is petrified for a moment.

SIMON
 She's nearly seventeen.

HANNAH
 Fuck you, Polanski. Don't worry -
 I'm not going to tell - I just
 didn't think you had it in you.

She starts crying again, and leans in to Simon.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
 I just feel so fucking stupid to
 have fallen for it all.

He hugs her, nervous that someone from the office will
 intervene.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
 (really crying)
 He told me he felt like
 Pinocchio. I always loved that
 movie. I just wanted to help him
 and look after him!

We see Simon react, looking out over her shoulder.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
 Don't touch me! Why are you
 touching me?

SIMON
 I don't know -

HANNAH
 So can I come to your place?
 Tonight?

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Simon sits at his desk. He's working on his regression
 analysis report. James appears and sits on his desk

JAMES
 What are you doing?

SIMON
 It's private. Can you not sit on
 my desk?

JAMES
I need the key tonight.

SIMON
Again?

JAMES
What can I say?

SIMON
Can't you use your place tonight?
I have someone coming over.

JAMES laughs.

SIMON (CONT'D)
I do. What's so funny about that?

JAMES
Hey. Mr. Papadopoulos!

Mr. Papadopoulos looks over.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Simon has something he wanted to
show you.

Papadopoulos starts to waddle towards them.

PAPADOPOULOS
This better be good.

SIMON
Key -

SIMON (CONT'D)
I can't...

Papadopoulos gets closer.

JAMES
Key.

SIMON
No.

Still closer. JAMES let's a picture of him and MELANIE float down onto the desk, it tumbles onto the floor. Simon, puts his foot on it.

JAMES
I have more.

SIMON
Fine.

JAMES

I'll get a copy cut. Save future confusion.

James takes the key and scoots off, leaving Papadopoulos with Simon.

PAPADOPOULOS

Well?

SIMON

Er... Nothing. Sorry.

PAPADOPOULOS

You need to shape up, Stanley. I want to see some real work from you.

SIMON

Actually I'm working on something at the moment - something I think could help efficiency in the way-

PAPADOPOULOS

Don't mistake my kindness for weakness.

He waddles away.

EXT. APARTMENT BLOCK - EVENING

Simon is pacing outside his apartment. The light is on. He's urging them to hurry up.

Hannah approaches. Simon steels himself.

SIMON

Look, tonight's tricky.

HANNAH

Come on. I'm not in the mood

SIMON

I'm sorry, it's not possible.

HANNAH

You've been stalking me for as long as I've known you and now you won't let me into your apartment?

SIMON

I arranged to see Melanie tonight.

(beat)

I'm outside now because I have to sneak her in the service entrance so the doorman doesn't us.

HANNAH
You're a snake.

She shakes her head and walks away.

EXT. VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Over music, we see SIMON wandering around the city at night.

He goes to the Bridge.

He has a coffee in a diner.

He sits at a bench. An old, frightening looking man sits next to him. Simon gets up.

He tries to sleep in a doorway but is moved on by a policeman

INT. OFFICE LOBBY - MORNING

Simon turns up at work, and signs in looking totally dishevelled. Hannah walks by him with a look of contempt.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Simon's at his desk, staring, crushed with tiredness.

He sees JAMES and MELANIE flirting outside his office. She laughs loudly at his jokes and leans provocatively against the door.

EXT. VARIOUS - NIGHT

Simon walks through the city. At one point his shadow briefly seems like it's moving independently of him. He turns round and sees the frightening man who sat next to him on the bench.

EXT. APARTMENT DUMPSTER - NIGHT

Simon, out of habit, looks through the dumpster outside of Hannah's apartment.

Simon frantically pieces a few torn up strips of paper together. They are pictures of James, but somehow this time they look more like Simon.

EXT. SIMON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Simon watches Hannah enter her apartment from near the entrance to his. We see he wants to talk to her but holds back. She turns and sees him, she looks up to his apartment, she sees JAMES walk to the window, he has no top on, MELANIE approaches him and nuzzles his neck.

She looks back at Simon.

She walks over to Simon and slaps him hard on the face.

HANNAH
Who are you?

SIMON
(hesitant)
I'm sorry, I haven't done anything.

HANNAH
You haven't, have you? You don't do anything.

Simon doesn't say anything and Hannah turns, going back to her apartment. Simon puts his hand to his face.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT DOOR - NIGHT

Simon bangs on the door. There's no answer. We just hear giggling.

He bangs on the door again.

JAMES opens the door, brandishing a knife. He launches at Simon, knocking him to the ground. James straddles him and runs the knife along Simon's face.

JAMES
What did I tell you? What did I tell you about disturbing me?

Simon is terrified. He looks closely at the knife - with disbelief. On the bottom we see carved a picture of a snake eating another snake.

SIMON
Where did you get that?

JAMES
What's yours is mine.

SIMON
None of it's yours.

JAMES
You want it back?

James rests the knife on Simon's Adam's apple and gives it a quick flick. It starts to bleed.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Have it.

He throws the knife down next to Simon.

JAMES (CONT'D)
 Now, take care of yourself, we're
 in this together.

James slams the door shut.

MELANIE (O.S.)
 Who was that?

JAMES (O.S.)
 Oh - that James idiot...

Simon touches his neck and looks at the blood on his hand.
 He looks at the knife on the floor.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Simon walks down the street late at night. Many people are
 out, drunken and loud. He has been drinking, and looks a
 little unsteady.

EXT. UNDERPASS - NIGHT

Simon seems to be walking in a world of shadows. He hums
 quietly to himself and we hear footsteps behind him.

VAGRANT
 You have a cigarette?

Simon turns and sees three dirty looking men following him.
 They seem ominous.

SIMON
 I don't smoke.

VAGRANT
 You lying?

SIMON
 Fuck you.

Simon, drunk, seems to smile to himself as the men descend
 on him. They hit him and Simon collapses in a heap. They
 begin to kick at him and hit him in the face.

Simon almost seems to smile, as though he is floating out
 of his body.

VOICE
 Stop it, I know this guy.

The men mutter and move away. Simon is helped to his feet,
 we're not sure by whom.

EXT. BENCH - NIGHT

Simon is sitting with the frightening man. It's clear that
 they're familiar with one another now, almost friends.

Simon has bought some food for them both. His face is marked up with dried blood. They eat side by side.

FRIGHTENING MAN

In Russia we have a story. Two snakes are born, brothers. After a few months they grow and they shake the skin off so they can grow bigger. One snake he says it hurts too bad. So he's not going to eat no more. Just enough to live, so he doesn't have to get a new skin. The other snake, he eats everything, he wants to get bigger, so he eats everything he can, and he grows strong.

SIMON

And what happens? To the snakes?

FRIGHTENING MAN

The big snake, he eats his brother, the one who doesn't grow. He becomes the biggest snake.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT BLOCK - LATER

Simon tries to sleep in the stairwell of his apartment block. He is woken up by seeing MELANIE and JAMES leave. He collects the key from above the apartment door.

He looks around his apartment - it's a mess. Stuck between the frame and the mattress, Simon finds a pair of handcuffs. He picks them up and stares at them. He places them, along with the snake-handled knife, in the drawer next to his bed. To his disbelief, there's ANOTHER snake-handled knife already in the drawer.

He clears up some of the stuff lying around. He goes to the bathroom and sees the mark on his neck, it's ugly and bruised. He cleans it and covers it with a plaster.

The rest of Simon's face is bruised as well, including a dark and ugly black eye.

INT. OFFICE - MORNING

Simon, his face bruised and battered walks through the lobby. He's stopped by a guard.

GUARD

Over here.

SIMON

I know, I have to sign the guest book.

GUARD

Name?

SIMON

Simon James.

GUARD

I thought, so, you're wanted in worker services.

INT. SMALL OFFICE - DAY

Simon sits across from a man with a tiny bow-tie. The man smacks his gum.

OFFICE WORKER

You don't exist anymore.

SIMON

Excuse me.

OFFICE WORKER

You're no longer in the system. You're gone.

SIMON

I work here. I am sitting in this chair, am I not?

OFFICE WORKER

I smell you.

SIMON

(seething)

I've had some problems with my apartment.

(beat)

Put me back into the system.

OFFICE WORKER

I can't do that.

SIMON

Why not?

OFFICE WORKER

Doesn't work like that. You either exist, or you don't.

(beat)

You're welcome to carry on working here, it's just we won't be able to pay you anymore.

INT. SIMON'S CUBICLE - DAY

Simon hasn't even looked through the papers piled at his desk, instead keeping his eyes solely focused on James' desk. It is empty.

HARRIS
You alright, buddy?

Simon jumps to attention.

SIMON
Yeah, thanks Harris.

HARRIS
It's got to be tough on you.

SIMON
Yeah, yeah I guess it is.

HARRIS
I got this book for you.

Harris hands Simon a book whose title is, 'Conquering Substance Abuse.'

HARRIS (CONT'D)
James told us about
your...problems.

SIMON
Thanks Harris. But I don't...

HARRIS
You're welcome. You need to
finish it in the next week
though, it's only returnable
through Friday.

SIMON
Okay.

HARRIS
I was gonna ask you... But this
might not be the best time.

SIMON
Yeah, I'll help you.

HARRIS
Oh, thanks bud. If you could have
it ready by tomorrow.

SIMON
Fine. I don't like you at all,
but you're the only thing close
to a friend that I have here.

HARRIS
I feel the same way about you. I
just need to warn you though, I
think you're like, on some kind
of probation.

(MORE)

HARRIS (CONT'D)

You know: you've been showing up late, smelling kind of bad.

SIMON

Where is James?

Simon starts to walk back towards his desk.

HARRIS

I think he's in his office now.

SIMON

He has an office?

HARRIS

Yeah, Papadopoulos is pretty impressed with him. Apparently he's written this incredible report on how to increase efficiency in the department.

Simon doesn't even change expression.

HARRIS (CONT'D)

Hey: do you know what regression analysis is?

EXT. JAMES' OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER

James, indeed has a new office. Simon storms past the secretary.

INT. JAMES OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Simon opens the door. An irritated secretary is behind him.

SECRETARY

Mr Simon is in an important meeting...

James, leaning on the edge of an enormous desk, is finishing telling a joke. He seems extremely comfortable. Three or four people from the department are there, as well as Papadopolous and Mr. Stevens.

JAMES

So two Chinese virgins get married right? And it's the night of the wedding and they just finished boning.

The other workers chuckle, anticipating a joke.

JAMES (CONT'D)

And the husband says. That was great, is there anything you'd like to try? And the woman says...

Simon approaches, looking pale as a sheet. He notices that James has a plaster on his Adam's apple: it looks exactly the same as Simon's.

He also has a black eye, the same as Simon's.

SIMON

Mr. Papadopolous...

JAMES

Hold on a sec. The woman says,
I'd like to try a number sixty
nine.

(beat)

And the guy thinks for a second,
and he says, "You want Breef wiff
Broccori?!"

James roars with laughter and the other workers laugh as well.

SIMON

Sir, I need to talk to you.

PAPADOPOULOS

What are you doing here?

SIMON

I work here.

PAPADOPOULOS

You have a lot of nerve.

Simon points at James.

SIMON

This man is a fraud!

PAPADOPOULOS

You should talk! He's the finest
new employee we've ever had.

SIMON

He doesn't even know what we do
here!

They turn to James who remains calm.

JAMES

(shrugging,
confident)

Oh, you know. This and that...

PAPADOPOULOS

See there, calm down, son.

JAMES

He's an idiot!

JAMES (CONT'D)
 Sir, why don't I help him out, he
 seems like he's...

SIMON
 Stay away from me. Sir, this
 can't stand.

SIMON notices JAMES' eye, and the bruise, which looks
 identical to his.

SIMON (CONT'D)
 Where'd you get that?

JAMES
 Racketball. Hell of a sport, you
 should try it, relieves stress.

PAPADOPOULOS
 Son, I think you might be having
 a psychotic...

SIMON
 I took his test for him. And he
 ripped off my report. He's out to
 get me! He stole my face!

People exchange glances as though Simon is crazy.

Simon points at his face. He is wide-eyed and on the edge.

SIMON (CONT'D)
 He stole it from me!

For the first time Simon has really lost it, really out of
 control. His mild manner is gone. The whole room watches
 him.

James walks forward and grabs Simon's arm. Simon tears it
 away from him.

SIMON (CONT'D)
 Get off of me.

PAPADOPOULOS
 You need to leave, now.

SIMON
 (backing away from
 everyone)
 I need...
 (catching breath)
 To see the Colonel.

Simon seems to be losing steam, getting dizzy.

SIMON (CONT'D)
The Colonel will understand.
(breathing heavy)
I just need to see him.

PAPADOPOULOS
Son, you need some help.

We see JAMES press a button underneath his desk.

SIMON
I don't need help!

JAMES
We all love you, Simon.

There is a big scrum, a wild fight, Simon swings wildly. Somehow he manages to separate himself, and we see he has somehow grabbed hold of Mr. Stevens' hand.

Two security guards have now arrived.

GUARD
Please come with me, sir.

SIMON
No.

He holds it out in a threatening manner. As though it were a gun. His hand shakes.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Stay back.

GUARD 2
Sir, you need to come with us.

Simon runs at JAMES again but his arms are pinned by the security guards. They hold him down on the floor.

PAPADOPOULOS
You're a disgrace to the Colonel,
son!

JAMES walks up to Simon with menace, crouches and whispers in his ear.

JAMES
Your time is over, Simon.

The guards grab Simon by the arms and Simon does not protest as they lead him from the office.

SEVEN

EXT. BRIDGE - LATE AFTERNOON

SIMON is sitting on the edge of the bridge where he likes to think. He has his small cardboard box on his lap.

He looks up at the monumental office buildings around him and the cars rushing by below.

INT. ELEVATOR IN SIMON'S APARTMENT

Simon RIDES the elevator, holding his small box of office possessions.

INT./EXT. SIMON'S APARTMENT

Simon retrieves his key from the top of the door sill and wearily walks in.

The place is disgusting: a feral den. There are empty bottles and take away cartons on the floor alongside a pair of soiled latex gloves.

The bed has been dragged to the middle of the room and has a pair of handcuffs attached to it.

There is a video camera trained on a high tripod above the bed linked to the television which, in turn, shows the somehow frightening image of the bed. Simon switches the camera off. The television then shows a the SCI-FI SHOW.

SCI-FI DETECTIVE

Ruins. This World is Ruins.

Simon switches off the television.

Simon clears up the room and throws out various bits of trash. When he's finished, the room is almost completely bare.

He checks his phone messages. Nothing.

He takes the handcuffs from the bed and pauses a moment before placing them in a drawer by the bed. The same drawer that now contains the snake-handled knives.

He sits down at a table and starts to write. We see the start of the note

'To whom it may concern. I have decided to end my life because I no longer exist. A person should amount to something and not float around this earth like a ghost.' He pauses for thought. He screws up the note and starts again.

'To whom it may concern. I am a ghost.'

He then adds.

'I am sorry.'

He folds up the note, places it in his top pocket and walks to the window. He opens it and starts to climb out onto the ledge when he sees something. He almost falls, but manages to stumble back inside. He hurriedly locates his telescope and peers through.

We see Hannah lying on the floor of her apartment, completely inert. Simon pans and we see an empty bottle of pills just by her out stretched hand.

SIMON puts his hand to his mouth.

INT. HOSPITAL - LATER

Hannah rests on a gurney. She is being wheeled quickly down the hallway of a hospital. There is vomit on her top and she seems to be in some pain. Simon is running along side, trying to keep up.

SIMON

Is she going to be okay? I don't know how many she swallowed.

DOCTOR

You need to leave now, sir.

SIMON

We're married!

DOCTOR

Please, sir. We'll take good care of her.

SIMON reluctantly stops running and watches Hannah and the medics disappear through some double doors.

INT. HOSPITAL - LATER

SIMON is sitting in a waiting room. A doctor comes in. SIMON looks up.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR

DOCTOR

Has she done this kind of thing before?

SIMON

No. I don't think so.

DOCTOR

I'm afraid to say she's had a miscarriage.

(beat)

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. Was this your first pregnancy?

SIMON
Erm... yes.

DOCTOR
The good thing is, she's healthy. You've plenty of time to try again. How long have you been married?

SIMON
Not long. We're about to be. We're engaged. But I just lost my job so - I couldn't buy her a ring - and we had this fight so -

DOCTOR
Look after her.

SIMON
I will. Thank you.

DOCTOR
You'll work it out.

INT. HANNAH'S APARTMENT BLOCK

SIMON and a GROGGY-LOOKING HANNAH travel up in the lift together.

INT. HANNAH'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

SIMON
Thanks for letting me stay. I've been kind of sleeping rough since... for a while anyway.
He trails off.

SIMON (CONT'D)
They're normally gone by the morning...

INT. HANNAH'S BEDROOM - LATER

Hannah is under the covers. SIMON tentatively gets on to the bed and lies on top of the duvet, as far from HANNAH as he can be without falling off the side.

INT. HANNAH'S BEDROOM - NEXT DAY

SIMON wakes up.

He checks on Hannah - she's still sleeping.

He creeps out of Hannah's room and into the sitting room, unable to believe he's there. He searches in his bag and fishes out a book. He places it next to Hannah.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT BLOCK - LATER

Simon rides the lift up to his apartment. He almost looks happy.

INT. HANNAH'S BEDROOM - DAY

HANNAH wakes up and sees a book on the pillow next to her. It's the book that Simon left. She opens it and sees it contains the various pictures that she'd drawn, torn up and threw away. They have been carefully put back together again. In between one of the pages is a note written by Simon. It says: 'I think these are really good - Simon.'

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT - DAY

Again, it's a mess. But this time, Simon doesn't seem to mind as much.

He checks his messages.

We hear a voice.

VOICE

Er, hi. This is a message for Simon. We've been trying you for some time now. If you wish to attend your mother's funeral it starts at 11 am at the citizen's cemetery to the rear of the home. Goodbye.

Then a beep.

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

Simon runs through an enormous cemetery. It is remarkably ungreen and surrounded by huge buildings.

He looks around, frantic, trying to find where the funeral is being held.

He approaches one grouping that looks like it could be for his mother, all the people in attendance are quite old. A priest is quietly saying a prayer and everyone's eyes are downcast. Unable to ask who this is for, he joins the group and clasps his hands in front of him.

PRIEST

...He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul;

(MORE)

PRIEST (CONT'D)

He leadeth me in the paths of
righteousness for His
name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the
valley of the shadow of death, I
will fear no
evil; for Thou art with me; Thy
rod and Thy staff, they comfort
me.

Thou preparest a table before me
in the presence of mine enemies;

Simon looks up, past the priest.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

Thou anointest my head with oil;
my cup runneth over.

Far in the distance, impossibly, he sees James and Melanie standing next to another priest. Along with two or three people from the old people's home.

James is putting soil on to the coffin. An old man in a Napoleon hat is consoling him.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

Surely goodness and mercy shall
follow me all the days of my
life, and I will...

Simon, as angry as we've seen him, hurtles towards them.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

...dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.

We watch at a distance, as events unfold with grim inevitability.

James sees Simon approach and starts to back away.

OLD MAN

This is the crazy guy Simon told
us about?

JAMES

Look: I can get you help- but
this is a time for family.

MELANIE

What the fuck are you doing here?
His mother's just died!

Simon launches at JAMES. Unlike in the office, the old people assembled are unable to prise them apart. Simon lands a great punch, right on James's NOSE. James throws his head back and squeals with pain. He drops to his knees.

SIMON

Get up... Get up off your knees.

For a brief moment, Simon looks heroic, but then he notices his nose is bleeding. He checks it with his hand, and looks at the blood on his fingers

Then, a strangely demented scream. It's the (very old) priest running towards him. Simon backs away, but the priest manages to push him over and Simon falls backward into a freshly dug grave.

On the verge of consciousness, staring straight up at the sky, Simon sees the small congregation assemble at the grave's perimeter.

As James looks over the grave, a drop of blood falls from his nose and splashes on to Simon's face.

JAMES

Thank God mother didn't live to see this.

Melanie spits.

Simon blacks out.

INT. GRAVE - MUCH LATER

It is now dusk. Simon wakes up.

He feels a great pain at the front of his face. He touches his nose - it's agony.

He sits up and feels something dripping from this nose. He puts his hand to his face and his fingers become sticky with blood.

We see him think.

He smiles.

We cut to Simon climbing out of the grave, an absolute mess, looking half-crazy.

He runs up to a parked hearse and looks at his reflection in the black mirror. He looks at his bruised nose with delight, checking it from all angles.

EIGHT

EXT. STREETS VARIOUS - EARLY EVENING TO NIGHT

Simon runs. His face is smeared with blood. He is dirty from the grave. He has a strangely joyous look on his face.

He runs and runs until he reaches the apartment complex where he lives.

INT. APARTMENT LOBBY - NIGHT

SIMON runs in through the lobby and the janitor looks at him suspiciously.

JANITOR

Who are you going to see?

SIMON

Fuck off.

JANITOR

(happy)

Oh, sorry James, didn't recognize you at first.

INT. - HANNAH'S APARTMENT

SIMON runs up to the door and rings the bell. HANNAH opens the door. She is taken aback by how dishevelled he is.

Simon grabs her and kisses her.

SIMON

That's all I ever wanted to do. It's funny how it happens isn't it? You go along, and along, and along and then you just know.

(Hannah looks shocked)

I noticed you the first moment I saw you. And you recognized me too, didn't you?

HANNAH

I think so.

SIMON

I don't want to be a boy held up by string. I don't want to be Pinocchio.

HANNAH

Simon, what happened to you?

SIMON

I want you to be safe and whole and right. But I have something to do.

(beat, firm)

From now on you're going to need to call me James. I'll still be Simon, but you need to call me James.

He kisses her again.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Goodbye.

Simon turns around abruptly and leaves Hannah speechless.

EXT. APARTMENT BLOCKS - A LITTLE LATER

We see SIMON walking briskly to his apartment block. He looks back at HANNAH'S APARTMENT.

INT. HANNAH'S APARTMENT

Hannah looks out of her window at SIMON.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT

Gently, Simon opens the door.

In the dim light he can see James and Melanie sleeping on his bed.

Simon quietly locates JAMES' trousers and takes JAMES' APARTMENT KEY and IDENTITY CARD.

He finds his TUXEDO and silently changes into it. He puts the keys and card into his pocket.

He approaches the bed and inches open the drawer in the bedside table. In it are the snake-handled knives and the pair of handcuffs. He removes the handcuffs.

Carefully, he locks James' hand to the bed head.

He picks up one of the knives and runs the tip of it very near, but not touching, James' face before placing its tip on James' throat. He looks at JAMES'S SWOLLEN nose.

In a quick move he removes the plaster on James's Adam's apple. Underneath, is the same ugly pick gash as Simon has on his.

The phone rings

James stirs. Simon rushes over and picks up. He is still holding the knife.

SIMON

(whisper)

Yes.

HANNAH (O.S.)

It's Hannah. Are you okay?

SIMON

(whisper)

I'm okay.

HANNAH
 You left kind of abruptly. Can I
 come over?

SIMON
 (whisper)
 Not right now

HANNAH
 You're not going to do something
 stupid -

SIMON
 I don't think so. Stay in your
 apartment.

He hangs up the phone and walks over to James, holding the
 knife. He looks down at him.

INT. HANNAH'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

We see, from HANNAH'S POV SIMON running back across the
 courtyard and entering the base of the apartment block.

INT. HANNAH'S APARTMENT BLOCK - STAIRWELL

Hannah opens her door and walks to the lift. She checks to
 see if Simon is coming up.

Instead she hears him clatter up the stairs.

She runs after him, but only catches up to see him
 disappear into JAMES' apartment. She bangs on the door.

INT. JAMES' APARTMENT

Simon picks up the phone, as he holds it to his ear he
 starts to change out of his clothes and into the tuxedo. We
 hear Hannah banging outside the door.

INT. JAMES' APARTMENT

SIMON
 Yes. I need an ambulance. How
 long do you think it'll take?
 Okay. Good.

INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

HANNAH
 Simon, what are you doing?

INT. JAMES' APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Simon washes his face in the bathroom sink. He looks at
 himself in the bathroom mirror.

He takes out the snake-handled knife, raises the blade of the knife to his face and hesitates.

We see Simon draw the knife to a spot a fraction to the side of his left eye.

He cuts himself deeply and we see blood.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

We briefly see JAMES on the bed. He twitches in his sleep.

INT. JAMES' APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

We cut back to Simon, he has cut a deep gash into his face. He looks at himself in the mirror.

He picks up a white flannel and presses it to his face to stop the bleeding.

INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Hannah is running down the stairs.

INT. JAMES' APARTMENT

Simon finishes off a note and pins it to his lapel pocket.

SIMON walks over to the window and calmly opens it. He steps out onto the ledge. He looks down, and inches across, as though he's aiming for something. Once he's found his spot he waits.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT

JAMES wakes up. His face is covered in blood. He tries to get up, but the handcuffs prevent him. When he can't find the key. He starts to violently pull at them until they come off. His wrist starts to bleed. Melanie wakes up, groggy.

MELANIE

Simon, what are you doing?

She switches on the bedside lamp. James walks like an automaton towards the window.

We hear the distant sound of an AMBULANCE approaching.

INT. JAMES' APARTMENT

Simon stands calmly on the window ledge. He looks serene, but notes the light now coming from his apartment. He looks down, the ambulance is closer. He looks at his wrist, a line of blood appears on it. He sucks the blood off, staining his teeth.

EXT. HANNAH'S APARTMENT BLOCK

Hannah looks up at JAMES' apartment, trying to see what's going on.

HANNAH

Simon! What are you doing?

She hears the ambulance siren.

INT. AMBULANCE

The drivers look around, trying to find where they're meant to be.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT

James' looks out and sees a shape in the window of his apartment. He puts his eye to the telescope.

The image JAMES sees is very similar to the one that SIMON saw of the man about to jump.

Simon, dressed in a Dinner jacket, with a note pinned to his lapel. He is holding a bloody flannel to his cheek. He waves at JAMES.

JAMES waves back.

Simon jumps.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT

James watches as Simon falls.

MELANIE

Simon! You're bleeding! Why are you bleeding?

The sound of the ambulance is now LOUD. JAMES looks down at SIMON'S mangled body on the ground. He can see HANNAH next to him and the ambulance pull into his view.

JAMES

I need to be in that ambulance.

EXT. HANNAH'S APARTMENT BLOCK - EVENING

SIMON is lying, twisted on the ground, blood leaking from the back of his head. He looks barely alive.

In his POV, we see Hannah run in and crouch down next to him. She is completely shocked.

She looks at the suicide note pinned to his lapel. We see just the first line: 'the pressures of being an executive have caused me great distress', and the last line, 'James Simon'

banging the chain of the handcuff with the base of the lamp

EXT. SIMON'S APARTMENT BLOCK

SIMON
You know what I've done?

HANNAH
I think so.

She looks at the long gash on the side of his face.

SIMON
I had to cut him out.

Behind her, in a rush, the medics arrive. They start checking out the situation.

MEDIC
What's his name, ma'am?

HANNAH
What's his name?

MEDIC 2
It helps if we can call them by their name. It can make all the difference.

HANNAH takes a pause, as if trying to decide

HANNAH
His name is James.
(to Simon)
Your name is James, isn't it?

They exchange a look. Simon nods.

SIMON
(weakly)
My name is James.

SIMON is lifted up onto a stretcher. The medics take him to the ambulance. Hannah walks along side with him.

MEDIC
You're really lucky to be alive, James. We're going to get you to a hospital straight away.

MEDIC 2
Someone tipped us off - must've seen you were gonna jump
(beat)
If you'd been a foot to the right, splat.

SIMON looks up and smiles.

Just as they're about to get him into the ambulance, he sees JAMES run out of the bottom of SIMON'S APARTMENT. They exchange a look, before, all of a sudden, JAMES changes expression. A sickly spurt of blood comes out of his mouth and he drops, rigid, to the floor.

The medics put SIMON in the ambulance and slam the door shut. They start to drive away.

No one else seems to have seen JAMES.

VOICE

You're one in a million, James.
You know that?

He looks to where the voice has come from. We see SIMON'S POV. There, sitting in the corner of the AMBULANCE, is the COLONEL, dressed in a medical uniform. He has a warm and kind expression on his face.

SIMON

Maybe...

SIMON looks out the window and smiles.

Lights flash on his face. The sound of the AMBULANCE subsides.

FADE OUT.