

YOU, MEET YOURSELF

FADE IN

CLOSEUP

of a man's eyes, wide, desperate. MUSIC PEAKING.

CRASH CUT TO:

INT. CORRIDOR OF MIRRORS - NIGHT

We see CHARLIE, a man of 50, standing in a short corridor of mirrors, disoriented. He sways slightly as if he's just come off a roller coaster ride. He tilts his head, hearing faint CARNIVAL MUSIC outside. He shakes himself out of his stupor and turns his attention to the mirrors: a full-size mirror in front of him, another behind him.

The 2 mirrors cause his reflections to veer off to infinity. He seems to compose himself, as he is drawn to the effect.

CHARLIE

So cool!

Charlie steps to the mirror in front of him, puts both his hands up to the glass, fingertips outstretched, and tries to peer over his reflection's head to the next reflection beyond.

We hear a SQUISHY SOUND, and Charlie realizes, to his horror, that his fingertips are sinking into the mirror. His eyes widen as his whole body is drawn forward. He barely has time to yell as he is sucked into the mirror.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Hey! What is thiiss?!--

INT. INSIDE THE MIRROR - CONTINUOUS

Charlie finds himself in a cavernous black space. He is startled to hear a voice. It sounds like him.

CHARLIE-2 (O.C.)

Hello again.

CHARLIE

Huh?! Who's there?!

Charlie-2 steps from the shadows. He looks exactly like Charlie, except his hair is slightly thinning.

CHARLIE-2

Just me. Uh, I mean, you.

Charlie recoils with a shocked exclamation.

CHARLIE-2 (CONT'D)

Relax! The mirror never lies, right? I'm just a reflection.

CHARLIE

(regains composure)

Jesus! You scared me, fella! How'd you get that on so fast?

CHARLIE-2

Get what on, Charlie?

CHARLIE

I mean, that makeup looks just like me-- and hey! How'd you know my name?

CHARLIE-2

I told you, Charlie.

(conversationally)

Hey, you went to Harvard, didn't you? On a scholarship?

CHARLIE

Yeah, I won a scholastic contest and went to Harvard. So?

CHARLIE-2

So do you remember cheating in the contest, stealing the scholarship out from under the underprivileged kid who earned it?

CHARLIE

Oh, come on--

CHARLIE-2

That was his one opportunity to make something of himself. A year later, he dropped out of community college, joined a gang and was shot dead in a drive-by.

CHARLIE

(slightly shocked)

What?! Jesus! You morbid son of a bitch!

Charlie moves away from Charlie-2, looking for an exit.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

What do I care? How'd I get in here anyway? Where's the exit, man?

CHARLIE-2
 (pointing)
 Your path lies that way.

Charlie turns, muttering to himself, and hits a glass partition with his face.

CHARLIE
 (not looking)
 Yeah, right, 'my path' - you freako--
 ouuffh! Hey, you tryin' to kill me? Wha-?

Charlie is aghast as he somehow melts through the partition - to another black, dimensionless room. Another voice issues from the darkness, sounding like his own.

CHARLIE-3 (O.C.)
 Remember when you were a young man, you
 watched that woman trip in the street and
 her baby smashed its head on the road?

Charlie looks around for the owner of the voice, slightly annoyed now.

CHARLIE
 I was a kid! Not even 18! What is this?
 My life story in a funhouse mirror? Are
 you screwing with me, man?!

Charlie-3 steps into the light: he looks like Charlie-2, with a few more pockmarks on his face.

CHARLIE-3
 Small head drenched in blood; image
 burned in your brain; could've done more.
 You just watched as she cried.

CHARLIE
 (indignant)
 Hey, the way I remember it, I called
 someone!

CHARLIE-3
 You called your girlfriend.

CHARLIE
 So what? That makes me some kinda bad
 person?

CHARLIE-3
 No, not 'bad.' Just not good.

Charlie pulls his cell phone from his pocket, dials. He dismisses Charlie-3.

CHARLIE

So sue me! See? I'm calling someone right now... your boss, you freak - y'gonna see what happens when you screw with people...

Charlie-3 sounds ominously similar as he repeats the same dialog:

CHARLIE-3

That's right, Charlie: "Y'gonna see what happens when you screw with people."

--while taking Charlie by the arm and guiding him towards a wall, then at the last moment pushing him roughly at it.

Charlie, with his phone to his ear, screams as his face is about to impact the wall, but he goes through it like a membrane - to another cavernous dark space. He still holds his cell phone, which is silent.

INT. INSIDE THE MIRROR - CONTINUOUS

From the darkness, Charlie-4 speaks.

CHARLIE-4 (O.C.)

It's hard to face, isn't it?

CHARLIE

(startled)

What? Who?-- What are you talking about?
Where are you?

Charlie-4 steps from the blackness. He looks more haggard than Charlie-3. His clothes sag on his emaciated frame.

CHARLIE-4

Seeing yourself as you really are.

CHARLIE

Screw you! I know myself! First of all, that makeup is running - and get a facial, woudja! You look 70 - ladies still can't tell I'm 50.

Charlie is still distractedly holding the phone to his ear, but now removes it to look at the screen. It is dead.

CHARLIE-4

(ponders)

Mmm... but do you know yourself, Charlie? Remember that affair you kept so secret, you never even told your best friend - and your wife never found out?

CHARLIE

(startled)

Affair? Did Genevieve put you up to this?

CHARLIE-4

You know Genevieve's dead, Charlie--

CHARLIE

No she's not! She took those pills, but they put her in a hospital and she's back in Iowa now--

CHARLIE-4

Is that what you tell yourself? Of course you do. You told her you'd leave your wife. You lied to her as well.

CHARLIE

I went out of my way to pay her rent and keep her habit supplied--

CHARLIE-4

(ponders)

Maybe you should look deeper.

As he says this, Charlie-4 grabs Charlie and pushes him to another wall. Charlie flinches as he goes through it - to yet another dimensionless dark space.

Charlie hears a SHUFFLING NOISE.

CHARLIE

Who's there?!

CHARLIE-5 (O.C.)

Oh, just the devil you know. Or maybe the devil you don't want to know.

Charlie-5 emerges from the dark. He is almost bald, one of his legs bends awkwardly and his clothes are disheveled.

CHARLIE

(taunting)

So who are you, then? You gonna walk me through the time that slut accused me of giving her rufies?

CHARLIE-5
You did rufie her--

CHARLIE
So what? I didn't touch her--

CHARLIE-5
Not much.

CHARLIE
I was drunk! Who cares? She wasn't a virgin.

CHARLIE-5
Not after you.

CHARLIE
Y'know, all you guys in this madhouse can kiss my ass! What is this? A hidden camera show--
(scared)
Hey! What are you doing?--

Charlie-5 shuffles toward Charlie threateningly. As Charlie backs away, he falls through another membrane.

INT. INSIDE THE MIRROR - CONTINUOUS

Charlie looks fearfully into the blackness as Charlie-6 comes shuffling towards him, looking like Charlie-5, but now with rags for clothes, an eye bleeding pus and a deformed arm.

CHARLIE
You think you're gonna scare me with all these lies?

CHARLIE-6
The mirror never lies, Charlie. How can we? We're only your--

CHARLIE
No! Get away from me!

Charlie runs at the opposite "wall" and breaks through - to another space that looks exactly the same as the space he left - only now there is an even more disheveled version of himself waiting for him.

Charlie's face contorts in disgust, his eyes widen in terror.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
What are you?

CHARLIE-7
 (through rasping lungs)
 Your true reflection.

MONTAGE

as Charlie breaks through membrane after membrane and we see progressively worse-looking versions of himself staring back at him, or shambling towards him.

AUDIO

of Charlie-voices in Charlie's head during Montage.

CHARLIE CHORUS
 You smeared your partner to become CEO -
 you took bribes from lobbyists - you sold
 land that you knew was worthless - you
 made a family homeless - lost their jobs
 and turned to crime - twenty people shot
 dead because of your wage cuts -

Charlie starts screaming as he runs.

He eventually stops breaking through membranes to take a breath, doubled over, spitting on the floor. He shouts breathlessly into the darkness.

CHARLIE
 What's-- What's happening?! What is this
 place?!

From the darkness, the croaking voice of Charlie-145:

CHARLIE-145 (O.C.)
 (mocking)
 Mr. 'Harvard CEO,' Mr. 'Self-made
 millionaire' - don't you get it? For each
 person you've wronged - directly or
 indirectly - there must be a reckoning.

CHARLIE
 Whadayou mean by that? What are you
 trying to prove? None of this is me!

CHARLIE-145 (O.C.)
 We are not you. We are simply your true
 reflection...
 (a statement)
 See.

A SHUFFLING SOUND, SCRAPING across the floor. Before Charlie-145 can emerge from the dark, Charlie flees.

He breaks through a membrane and continues running.

SLAM!

In profile, we see Charlie run into a thick glass wall and fall to the floor.

As Charlie rises, nose bleeding, sweating, scuffed, disheveled, he hears from the darkness, a hissing, feral voice:

CHARLIE-146 (O.C.)

Remember your falsified environmental reportssss of the toxic chemicalssss you pumped into the ground?

CHARLIE

(indignant, wiping away blood)
It was the federal researchers! They're the ones who falsified how dangerous the chemicals were! They lied, not me!--

CHARLIE-146 (O.C.)

Those chemicals contaminated the wellssss that supplied water to two hundred thousand peeeeeople.

CHARLIE

No! There was no proof the toxins got into the wells--

CHARLIE-146 (O.C.)

800 people died, Charlieeee. Thousands more with debilitating diseasessss...

CHARLIE

(shouting)
Those numbers were never verified by any official entity!

Spittle flies from Charlie's mouth as he vehemently protests, tipping into insanity. We feel he has protested these charges before out of blind habit, and he is no longer even grasping the surrealism of protesting to his own reflection.

CHARLIE-146 (O.C.)

--and you covered it up--

CHARLIE

I had to answer to a board of directors, shareholders--

CHARLIE-146 (O.C.)

You directly caused their deathssss. They swam in agony; their fleshhh turning to paste, their bodies wassting away. You know thiss - but you told yourself there were otherssss responsible--

CHARLIE

(hands over ears)

I brought industry to the county! Without me, there would be no jobs, no growth surplus--

CHARLIE-146 (O.C.)

--there were middle men, laborers, lawyerssss, technicians, lobbyists, politicianssss; but you know - you know - in here, you know - that you alone caused all those people to die.

CHARLIE

(outraged)

Where are you, you gutless liar?! I was acquitted! They honored me with a Medal of Freedom! Who do you think you're talking to?!

From out of the shadows painfully crawls a naked, gangrel creature, mucus-covered, skin flaking off, broken limbs and open sores (think: Jeff Goldblum's THE FLY).

CHARLIE-146

Can you truly look upon me without sssseeing within you? I am... your true reflection!

Charlie screams and rushes the Charlie-creature on the floor, picking him up bodily and throwing him against the black walls.

CHARLIE

Noooo! No, you're not! You're not!

As Charlie-146 is beaten to a pulp by Charlie, he hisses and repeats like a mantra:

CHARLIE-146

See me. See you. See me. See you...

Eventually, Charlie-146 falls silent. Charlie, spent and bloodied, is silent for a beat. Then he rises screaming, desperate.

CHARLIE

Ooooh, God! Get me outta here! Help! Help
me! Somebody help me!

Charlie turns to the glass wall he slammed into and bangs it with his fists as he screams. He stops, realizes that beyond the glass wall - is the original corridor of mirrors where he started.

And in the corridor, he can see his original self from behind, fingertips up to the glass, peering into the mirror on the opposite wall.

Charlie's eyes widen in horror as he resumes banging on the glass wall.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(to his outside self)

Hey! Hey! No! Don't lean on it! Don't go
in! Don't go! Heeeeey! Charlie! Charlie!

Inside-Charlie puts his outstretched fingertips to the glass, mirroring the position of his outside self, and can only look on helplessly, as he sees his outside self slipping into the mirror.

CLOSEUP

on Charlie's eyes, wide, desperate. MUSIC PEAKING.

We see Charlie in the corridor slip INTO the mirror.

We see Charlie behind the mirror slip OUT into the corridor.

INT. CORRIDOR OF MIRRORS - NIGHT

Charlie is disoriented. He sways slightly as if he's just come off a roller coaster ride. He tilts his head, hearing faint CARNIVAL MUSIC outside. He shakes himself out of his stupor and turns his attention to the mirrors.

CHARLIE

So cool!

Charlie steps to the mirror in front of him, puts both his hands up to the glass, fingertips outstretched, and tries to peer over his reflection's head to the next reflection beyond...

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END

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