

Nerves
by
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She turns to the open door of the apartment--

INT. FLOOR 4 CORRIDOR CONTINUOUS

Amelia sticks her head into the corridor. Walls have a painted line, floor a garish carpet, doors numbered (4B, 4C...)

To her left is a bend in the corridor, going off to other apartments.

To the right, an elevator.

Amelia slides along the wall towards the elevator.

With a trembling finger, she presses 'Down.'

INT. LOBBY DAY

RUFUS LOCONO, 40s, sits at the lobby desk. He wears a brown hat and uniform, with a logo: "DromeLabs." Face rough, hands twice so, he doodles. This has his full attention, until--

SOUND: The "ding" of the elevator.

Scratching through his drawing (a nude woman with a word cloud: "Help!"), Rufus cranes for a better line of sight.

The elevator opens. No one gets out.

He steps around the desk, furrows his brow.

The elevator starts to close, but the doors bounce. Stuck on something?

A woman's bare foot blocks the door.

Quick-stepping, Rufus leans inside the car and sees:

Amelia, on the floor, foot past the sensor.

 RUFUS
 (callling out)
 Mr. Markham!

Using a key on the ring on his belt, Rufus locks the elevator and lets the ring dangle.

 RUFUS (CONT'D)
 Mr. Markham!

PAN OVER TO:

AMELIA

Yes.

GENE

What's your room number?
(to Rufus)
Do you recognize her?

RUFUS

What's your name, miss?

AMELIA

I know. I--

GENE

Don't worry, we'll sort it out.

Gene points to the desk. Rufus crosses and yanks a binder from the shelf, rifles pages.

The book contains dozens of photographs of men and woman, all young, each accompanied by columns of information.

Rufus finds the photograph of Amelia.

RUFUS

Amelia Riddle, age 27, Apartment
4A.

Gene, smiling, slides into an adjacent chair.

GENE

Ms. Riddle. It's a pleasure to finally meet you. My name is Gene Markham. This is Rufus Locono. I know you must be frightened. Everything will be explained. However, Rufus and I are not the ones to do it. So if you'll just be...

Amelia starts to become emotional -- afraid and confused.

GENE (CONT'D)

Would you excuse me for a moment?
I need to make a call.

Gene stands, gestures to Rufus to follow. They both enter the lobby office and stand half-hidden in the doorway.

For a time, Amelia watches them. Turning, she looks to the building's front door. Two steel bars, padlocked. She glances to the elevator, then again to the office.

Gene pulls a case from a drawer. From it, he withdraws a large hypodermic needle and a vial, prepares an injection.

Amelia slips off Gene's coat. She tests her legs, shakes her head to clear it. She stands, takes one step towards the elevator, then another--

She's about to cross the lobby office door.

Forcing her balance, she dives--

INT. ELEVATOR CONTINUOUS

Amelia flattens against the elevator wall. She presses a floor button. Nothing. She presses a different floor. The car is frozen.

She cringes, looks: the open elevator door, the lobby beyond.

CU:
Amelia's frustrated face.

She looks down. Rufus' keys are still in the elevator's lock. She turns the key, removes it, lets the ring fall to the elevator floor with a loud SMACK!

The doors begin to close.

SOUND: Rushed footsteps towards the elevator.

 GENE (O.S.)
 Where are you going, Ms. Riddle?

Amelia sees Gene's face -- just as the door shuts!

 GENE (CONT'D)
 Ms. Riddle! Wait--

She rides up, watches lighted floors count off - G, 2, 3...

The elevator slows and stops.

Doors open on 3.

INT. FLOOR 3 CORRIDOR CONTINUOUS

Popping out, Amelia assesses. Same layout as Floor 4 -- carpet and wallpaper, leading to a bend -- but a different stripe of color, different carpet pattern, different wallpaper.

Amelia steps forward, legs a little more sure. She walks the corridor. She reads numbers on shut apartment doors (3A, 3B, 3C...)

At the bend, she inspects. Another short stretch of corridor. More of the same.

Suddenly! -- an apartment door opens.

Out steps a pretty BRUNETTE WOMAN, 20s, in white pants and white blouse.

BRUNETTE WOMAN
Oh! You startled me.

Amelia lamely retreats to the elevator. The Brunette Woman follows her -- not chasing, more curious.

BRUNETTE WOMAN (CONT'D)
Wait a minute. Just wait a minute.

Amelia runs! She loses her balance and falls, short of the elevator.

She looks up -- the doors are shutting. The elevator's floor indicator is going down, back for Gene and Rufus.

Amelia pulls herself up and hobbles. Behind, the Brunette Woman keeps pace slowly.

BRUNETTE WOMAN (CONT'D)
You don't have to run from me. I'm not going to hurt you...

To the right, a door marked "Stairs."

INT. STAIRS CONTINUOUS

Amelia bursts out onto the stairs, awkwardly climbs two flights, and throws open the door to Floor 5--

INT. FLOOR 5 CORRIDOR CONTINUOUS

Floor 5 is like the others -- same layout, different stripe of color.

Amelia limps, rounds the end of the corridor -- a cul-de-sac of four apartment doors. She turns, starts back again, now panicked in this maze.

She bangs a random door.

AMELIA
Excuse me! Excuse me!

No answer.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
I need your help. There are people
after me. Can you, can you help
me? Please!

After waiting as long as she can, she moves to the next
apartment.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
Is anyone there? Please answer,
please!

Odd silence.

Amelia reaches down. The knob turns, easily opened--

INT. BLUE APT. (LIVING ROOM) CONTINUOUS

Amelia enters a pale blue apartment. Like the one she awoke
in, this one is sparse. No people.

Out of the corner of her eye, a telephone -- in the bedroom.

INT. BLUE APT. (BEDROOM) CONTINUOUS

Amelia enters the bedroom, slows and stops.

Lying stiffly on the bed is a BLONDE WOMAN, peaceful.

AMELIA
Hello. Wake up. You've got to
help me. Wake up, wake up.

She shakes the Blonde Woman, who does not wake.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
Please! Please!

Amelia backs into the telephone. She picks up, dials 'zero.'

TELEPHONE RECORDING (O.S.)
You have reached DromeLabs. If you
would like to speak with an
operator, please stay on the line.
(repeats)
You have reached DromeLabs...

Amelia hangs up, backs away, returns to the corridor--

INT. FLOOR 5 CORRIDOR CONTINUOUS

Amelia barrels to the next apartment, throws the door open--

INT. PURPLE APT. A MOMENT LATER

New apartment, same layout, slightly different decor.

Another ATTRACTIVE WOMAN is asleep in the bed, unable to be awoken by Amelia.

INT. ORANGE APT. A MOMENT LATER

New apartment, same layout, slightly different decor.

A BLACK WOMAN, non-responsive in the bed.

INT. FLOOR 5 CORRIDOR MOMENTS LATER

Amelia staggers into the corridor of Floor 5 from yet another inspected apartment.

PULL BACK TO
REVEAL:

All the apartment doors are now open.

Amelia falls, exhausted, emotionally and physically, onto the carpet...

Gene Markham, Rufus Locano, a NURSE, and the Brunette Woman, enter the corridor. They approach Amelia, murmuring comforts...

INT. LOBBY DAY

SOUND: A buzzer.

DR. MARGARET LOWRY is let into the building by Rufus. She's 30s, shapely, in a form-fitting white pantsuit, hair pinned back, heavy eye-shadow. Absolute poise and command. She barely looks at Gene as he steps to her.

GENE

Dr. Lowry. Good to see you in person.

MARGARET
Mr. Markham.

GENE
Please, call me Gene. This here is
Rufus Locano.

MARGARET
Any symptoms?

GENE
No, no. Quiet as a lamb.

RUFUS
She's sedated.

MARGARET
I told you to keep her conscience.

GENE
Oh, just a twilight dose. To stop
her panic. She's awake.

INT. YELLOW APT. (LIVING ROOM) DAY

Gene, Rufus, and Margaret enter the yellow apartment.

Margaret spots Amelia, her head off the pillow. From the
bed, she's watching her visitors closely.

MARGARET
Wait here.

Margaret moves into the bedroom--

INT. YELLOW APT. (BEDROOM) CONTINUOUS

Amelia's eyes follow Margaret, who sits on the bed.

MARGARET
I'm Dr. Margaret Lowry. I bet you
have a lot of questions. It's
okay. I'm here to answer them.

AMELIA
How did I get here?

MARGARET
You were brought by ambulance
eleven days ago.

AMELIA

I'm not hurt.

MARGARET

No. You're in perfect condition. But it took time to heal you. Seven weeks ago you were in a car accident. Do you remember that?

Amelia shakes her head.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

What's the last thing you remember?

AMELIA

I got home from work and, and I slept until eight o'clock. Then I... ate dinner. And I watched television, and...

MARGARET

That was probably a day or two before the accident.

AMELIA

It was yesterday.

MARGARET

After your accident, you were in a hospital, kept in a special unit. You were in a severe non-responsive coma. Do you know what a coma is?

AMELIA

Asleep, but you can't wake up.

MARGARET

A person may come out of a coma naturally after a few hours. A few days. Maybe a few weeks. Rare in a month or more. Almost never after a year; the brain damage is too great. So, after one month, your mother and father enrolled in a study. It's sponsored by a pharmaceutical company called DromeLabs. Mr. Markham works for the company. DromeLabs owns this building, which is adjacent to one of their manufacturing plants. These apartments have been converted into a kind of private hospital.

AMELIA

Do you work for this company?

MARGARET

I lead a team of chemists. So my authority is absolute in regards to the study. You see, we've invented a powerful new drug called Dormiral. It's not on the market yet. We've been perfecting it. You're part of a study with twelve men and seventeen women. Dormiral wakes people up from non-responsive comas and helps the body heal any brain or muscle damage.

AMELIA

I woke up because you gave me a drug.

MARGARET

I can't tell you that. It might affect the study. Some of the patients are in what we call a "control group." They were never given the drug and may revive on their own. Others were given slight variations of the drug. Some awaken within a few hours, some a few days. For some, their variation might not work at all. But, congratulations, Amelia. You're our first! We obviously weren't expecting you just yet, as the floor nurse was on her break. We don't mean to frighten you and we won't harm you in any way.

AMELIA

How soon can I be discharged?

MARGARET

You must be kept for observation. But you'll be well taken care of. Gene has ordered you a splendid breakfast. How do you like your eggs?

AMELIA

I want to speak with my parents.

MARGARET

I intend to notify them this afternoon of your waking.

AMELIA

No, I want to speak with them.

MARGARET

Isolation is part of the study.

AMELIA

I'm not a rat.

MARGARET

Because of your incapacitation, your parents are your power of attorney. They love you and wanted to save you, Amelia. And they agreed to everything -- the drug, the observation, everything. Believe me, you won't be here long and they will be thrilled. There are tens of thousands of parents in the world with sons and daughters in non-responsive comas. This study will help us know, does this drug work?

Amelia considers.

AMELIA

I need clothes.

MARGARET

In your closet. Just your size. We Christened this high-rise "Holiday Towers." I want you to pretend you are on a relaxing vacation. Can you do that for me?

Though Amelia nods, she hardly looks certain.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Great. Now those eggs...

INT. FLOOR 5 CORRIDOR DAY

Margaret exits Amelia's apartment with Gene and Rufus.

MARGARET

Mr. Locano: see that she gets new magazines. I don't think she has the same taste.

Rufus nods, makes a face.

GENE
Television?

MARGARET
All right. Direct her telephone to
my service. And lock her door.

INT. HOLIDAY TOWERS (VARIOUS ROOMS) DAY

A series of DISSOLVES as PATIENTS awaken...

TIM FOSTER, 20s, five-o'clock shadow and scraggy hair.

MARY O'ROURKE, 20s, All-American, dressing in tight tank-top
and panties.

BETH INGAARD, 30s, small, with a pixie-cut.

WILLEM JYGEREN, 30s, rugged and muscular, nude.

Lastly, to...

INT. ORANGE APT. (BEDROOM) DAY

Rufus stands over the bed of the Black Woman, whom Amelia
burst in on earlier. The Black Woman remains in her coma.

The security guard uncovers her body a bit at a time. For a
long moment, he just stares. She wears a thin white gown,
just as Amelia had.

Rufus raises her gown until her breasts are visible. He lays
on the bed, cups one breast, kisses her neck, grinds.

Matter-of-factly, he stands again. Sloppy, the opposite of
his care in exposing her, he whips down her gown and throws
up the sheet, partly covering her face.

He exits quickly...

INT. YELLOW APT. (LIVING ROOM) DAY

Amelia stares out the apartment window. She can't see far,
but can make out the factory, block-shaped, white in the sun.
She lets the curtain fall and the apartment settles into dim
light.

Wearing blue jeans, no shoes, and a tank top without a
brassiere, Amelia looks, at last, a bit comfortable.

She heads for the kitchen tap, fixes a glass of water. As she drinks, she sees a logo on the glass: DromeLabs, with tagline, "Better Drugs, Better World."

PAN OVER TO:

The room's television -- a slightly worn color set, raised on a thin stand with wheels. A newscast runs with the volume down.

Absently, Amelia turns up the sound on an eyeglasses-wearing TELEVISION REPORTER.

TELEVISION REPORTER

...one of the more positive events of 1971, the FDA approval of "soft" contact lenses, ensures a "sharp future" for people like me. One of the many miracles of science available to us as we...

She turns down the volume, goes to the telephone, picks up.

Though she has not dialed, it immediately begins to ring. Quickly, Amelia presses the cancel button. She holds for a second.

Releasing, the phone auto-dials again and a message plays.

OPERATOR

This is a recording. After the tone, please leave your message. You will receive a call back in an unspecified time. This service should not be used for emergencies.

BEEP!

AMELIA

Hello? This is Amelia Riddle. At Holiday Towers? I. I need some shampoo. I want to take a shower. Okay. Uh. Goodbye.

She hangs up. Stands. Paces.

For a long moment, she leans against the wall, watching the silent television, holding the half-empty DromeLabs glass.

Suddenly! She falls to the floor gripping her head! The water glass smashes where she dropped it. She squirms, writhes. After a minute, the pain fades.

She lays on the floor, breathing heavy.

She start to cry, her face in the carpet.

SLOW ZOOM:
The television.

On the broadcast, the Television Reporter smiles -- as if looking straight at Amelia, as if very pleased at what has just happened.

Amelia stretches up from the floor. Her fingers nearly to the television's controls, the picture cuts to a test pattern.

INT. FLOOR 4 CORRIDOR NIGHT

PEGGY MARTIN, early 20s, in nurse's uniform, walks the Floor 4 Corridor carrying a covered tray. With a slightly false smile, knocks on apartment 4A.

Amelia answers.

PEGGY
Good evening. I'm Peggy. I've brought you dinner. And shampoo. I believe you made a request.

AMELIA
I didn't know if it got through.

PEGGY
(smiling)
It did.

INT. YELLOW APT. (LIVING ROOM) CONTINUOUS

Peggy places the tray on the center table of Amelia's apartment. She uncovers food, sets out each item.

PEGGY
I'll put the shampoo in your shower.

Peggy moves into the bedroom and disappears into the bathroom.

PEGGY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
How are you feeling, Amelia?

AMELIA
I'm not sure.

Amelia picks through her food. It's odd, slightly disgusting, with shells of unknown animals and murky colors.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
What kind of food is this?

PEGGY (O.S.)
Oh, it's very good. Better than most hospital food.

Peggy returns to the living room.

AMELIA
My breakfast had a bad taste. I barely ate it.

PEGGY
Trust me. You'll like it.

Peggy starts towards the door.

AMELIA
Peggy -- is that what you said?

PEGGY
Yes, that's me.

AMELIA
I, I think I had some sort of seizure.

PEGGY
When?

AMELIA
About an hour ago.

PEGGY
You didn't call us.

AMELIA
I wasn't sure the phone worked. But now I know.

PEGGY
The phone goes directly to Dr. Lowry's service. No one explained that to you? Messages are retrieved quickly.

AMELIA
The recording sounded like it would be a while--

PEGGY

Calls from Holiday Towers are special cases. Tell me more about this seizure?

AMELIA

Uh, well. It started, it started here, in my midsection, and traveled down. In my pelvis. Like I was punched. And I couldn't get up for a couple minutes. It hurt.

PEGGY

Nausea?

AMELIA

Yes. It passed. And, and I think it might have affected my vision.

PEGGY

I'll tell the duty nurse.

AMELIA

Aren't you the duty nurse?

PEGGY

I'm a nurse, but not the duty nurse.

AMELIA

Oh. Okay. I don't know who everyone is yet.

PEGGY

Well that's to be expected. Have a good rest. Call if--

Amelia blocks Peggy.

AMELIA

So it's not a big deal?

PEGGY

The seizure? I can't say. But I'll report it and someone will know the next step. Don't you worry.

AMELIA

How long will my door stay locked?

PEGGY

I'll ask Mr. Markham.

AMELIA

Say, Peggy, can't you, can't you stay a little while? I'm nearly through my magazines. This television only seems to get one channel.

Peggy hesitates. She looks over her shoulder.

PEGGY

Are you going to eat?

AMELIA

I'm not that hungry.

PEGGY

You have to eat.

Amelia looks at the food, makes a face.

Then, slowly, Amelia puts her body closer to Peggy's.

AMELIA

Stay. I'm good company. And I'm so bored.

Peggy, at last, nods.

INT. YELLOW APT. (LIVING ROOM) NIGHT

A short amount of time has passed. Amelia and Peggy are on the sofa.

AMELIA

You must be bored, too. With only one patient.

PEGGY

Not true. Several others are awake.

AMELIA

From the drug?

PEGGY

I can't say.

AMELIA

That's right, it's a secret.

PEGGY

I mean, I can't say because I don't know.

(MORE)

PEGGY (CONT'D)

The charts are all kept in Mr. Markham's office. I've been a nurse with the company just a few months. I'm good, don't worry. But I don't have access to much. I only make notes in a log.

Amelia moves closer.

AMELIA

You're very cute. I love your hair.

PEGGY

Thank you.

AMELIA

Do you have a boyfriend?

PEGGY

No. I've never quite-- I don't know many boys.

AMELIA

Neither do I. I just can't stop looking at you.

PEGGY

Now you're embarrassing me--

AMELIA

Am I? I'll stop. You brought me shampoo.

PEGGY

Yes I did.

AMELIA

How many are awake?

PEGGY

Seven--

AMELIA

I'm going to take a shower now.

PEGGY

Okay.

Amelia rises, deliberately draws a caressing hand across Peggy's face, and holds at the bedroom door.

AMELIA

If only seven, I don't think you'll
be missed just yet.

Amelia turns, pulls her tank-top over her head, revealing
her bare back.

AMELIA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You should come... join me...

Amelia disappears into the bedroom.

Peggy's face becomes nervous, then excited. She glances
around the room. She stands. Presses down her white
uniform.

SOUND: The shower starts.

Peggy drifts to the apartment door. Her hand touches the
door; she's about to leave...

Changing course, she finds the lock, twists it, sealing
herself in the apartment.

She enters the bedroom--

INT. YELLOW APT. (BEDROOM) CONTINUOUS

PEGGY'S POV:

The floor -- Amelia's jeans and tank top.

Peggy starts to unbutton her uniform.

Looking inside the bathroom's open door, she sees Amelia
showering, enveloped by steam.

Peggy slips out of her uniform, unclasps her bra, takes down
her slip...

INT. YELLOW APT. (BATHROOM) CONTINUOUS

Through the shower glass, Amelia watches Peggy enter the
bathroom. She turns the water up hotter.

Peggy slides the door open and joins Amelia in the spray.

They kiss.

Amelia rubs against Peggy. Passion increasing. But. Amelia
also starts to shake. Slowly, Peggy pulls away. Amelia is
crying.

AMELIA
I'm sorry.

PEGGY
It's all right.

AMELIA
I'm sorry, this isn't me.

PEGGY
No, no, it's okay.

Peggy kisses Amelia's neck and face.

PEGGY (CONT'D)
I've been with girls. It's okay.

Amelia pushes her away and then gets quickly out of the shower. She grabs a towel and vanishes into the bedroom.

Peggy, confused and embarrassed, turns off the water. She steps out of the shower. No second towel.

PEGGY'S POV:
The bedroom. Amelia hides behind the bed.

AMELIA
I'm sorry. I won't tell anyone.

Peggy snatches her uniform from the carpet and runs out.

INT. FLOOR 4 CORRIDOR A MOMENT LATER

Peggy rings out her dripping hair as she flees Amelia's apartment. She straightens her uniform and steps into the elevator.

INT. LOBBY NIGHT

Peggy exits the elevator.

Gene, working in his office, calls to Peggy:

GENE
Good evening, Ms. Martin. How's Ms. Riddle?

PEGGY
(quickly)
Fine. She's fine.

Peggy stops at the security desk, where Rufus sits drinking coffee. She pulls a duty log.

RUFUS
Is it raining up there?

PEGGY
What?

RUFUS
You're wet.

PEGGY
Oh. It's nothing.

He narrows his gaze, distrustful.

Peggy writes in the duty log. Patient, Amelia Riddle. Seizures? Checks "no." Mood Swings? Checks "no."

She answers a few more questions, smiles to Rufus nervously, and closes the log...

INT. YELLOW APT. (BEDROOM) NIGHT

In the bedroom, Amelia is softly crying from behind the bed, barely visible.

Moving in closer...

Over the bed, down on Amelia's position...

She is also masturbating.

EXT. HOLIDAY TOWERS DAY

Dr. Margaret Lowry arrives outside Holiday Towers in a DromeLabs station wagon...

INT. LOBBY OFFICE DAY

Margaret sits across from Gene Markham, smoking behind his desk. Before him are several photographs.

GENE
Sixteen in four days. I'm
beginning to think that's all we'll
get. Do you want to wait?

MARGARET
Let's start.

GENE

It's a pretty good mix. Less men,
but that was expected. Only four.

MARGARET

I'm satisfied. Any reports I
should be concerned about?

Gene pulls a stack of files from his drawer and hands them to Margaret.

GENE

Nothing significant that I've read.
But you'll want to review.

MARGARET

How many nurses?

GENE

Six. We've brought two more in as
more patients have awoken. Couple
orderlies. Me and Rufus. A pretty
inexperienced bunch.

MARGARET

I'm hoping that won't matter. But
I've got a man I'll be involving.
He's from the first trial. Shall
we schedule the gathering for this
afternoon?

GENE

Sure. I can make that happen.

MARGARET

(re: the files)
Do you have a place I can read
these?

GENE

Take my office.

Gene moves to the door.

GENE (CONT'D)

I'll make sure you're not
disturbed.

(pause)

Do you think it's time to add more
security?

MARGARET

They'll be here tomorrow with my
man.

GENE
(smiling)
Always a step ahead.

He leaves her to her reading...

INT. YELLOW APT. (LIVING ROOM) DAY

Amelia inspects her breakfast food. It's as unattractive as before -- shells and bones and suspect things. She takes what looks like a chicken wing and gives it a small bite. She doesn't like the taste and drops it back down.

Moving away, she plops on the sofa.

SOUND: A knock.

AMELIA
Who is it?

ORDERLY (O.S.)
It's your orderly, Ms. Riddle. I
have a message.

Amelia steps to the door, listens.

AMELIA
Okay.

ORDERLY (O.S.)
We've called a meeting for the
residents. Starts in one hour on
the sixth floor.

AMELIA
My door's still locked.

ORDERLY (O.S.)
I'll come and collect you. You can
ask about unlocking and anything
else at the meeting.

AMELIA
All right. Thanks.

She moves from the door.

She finds a tablet of paper and a pencil in a drawer in her kitchen. She starts to write. The heading: "Questions." The first question: "1. When can I leave?"

SOUND: A knock.

She stands, rests her paper and pencil on the counter.

Returning to the door...

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Yes?

ORDERLY (O.S.)

Time to go, Ms. Riddle.

AMELIA

You said an hour.

ORDERLY (O.S.)

Right on the dot.

Her eyes drift back to the pad of paper, a corner visible from the front door.

She approaches, sees:

The tablet is now full of questions -- several pages. Her handwriting.

The apartment door CLICKS! and comes open...

ORDERLY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Let's go.

INT. FLOOR 6 CORRIDOR DAY

Amelia clutches the mysterious list of questions, accompanied by a uniformed Orderly with a moustache.

The Orderly gestures. They've arrived.

INT. MEETING ROOM DAY

Amelia enters a sterile, corporate-looking meeting room with parallel tables and hard chairs. The carpet is patterned and the walls papered. Along one side of the room are a set of high windows, bringing in diffused light.

Along the side, a buffet of alien-looking food, which a dozen OTHERS eat without reservation.

Among those others: Mary O'Rourke and Willem Jygeren.

Amelia's gaze goes to PATIENTS in the chairs, including:

Beth Ingaard and Tim Foster.

Tim has an empty chair beside him. He can't take his eyes off Amelia, but plays cool.

Dr. Margaret Lowry and Gene Markham quietly confer in a far corner, almost conspiratorially. Nurses and orderlies line the room.

Amelia notices Peggy among the nurses. Eyes meet. Both look away.

TIM
(to Amelia)
Would you like a seat? I won't bite.

Amelia takes the chair.

GENE
Good afternoon, everyone! We're about to start... Last chance for food.

AMELIA
(to Tim)
I hate the food.

TIM
I've been in hospitals before. I never eat this good.

Gene takes a position.

GENE
I'm Gene Markham and I'm the managing director for Holiday Towers, and I work for DromeLabs. Dr. Lowry and I are here to answer your questions. I want to warn you: we can't answer everything. We either may not know the answer, or the answer may be something that affects the study. But we'll do our best.

MARGARET
I've met each of you already. I'm lead physician for the study and one of the inventors of Dormiral. All of you have been comatose anywhere from four to sixteen weeks. You're all between the ages of 20 and 35.

(MORE)

MARGARET (CONT'D)

The reasons for your comas were varied but, after a detailed assessment, we determined you were physically very favorable.

A LATINO WOMAN raises her hand. This surprises Dr. Lowry.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

I suppose we can start answering questions. Yes...

LATINO WOMAN

Are we the first?

MARGARET

The first study? No. We had one previous study 10 months ago.

TIM

Did it work?

MARGARET

Many aspects of the drug were successful. I want to make a point to mention--

TIM

(aside to Amelia)

"Many aspects..."

MARGARET

--we've gone through a reformulation and we're confident this study will go smoother.

MARY

Can I call my husband?

This is echoed by a few others in the crowd (husband, wife, families, significant others...)

MARGARET

I understand that urge. We need to be sure your recovery is stable--

MAN

We're not prisoners!

MARGARET

You're not. You're under medical care and, with that, comes restrictions. We will not withhold outside communication a moment longer than absolutely necessary.

WOMAN

Are you afraid we'll relapse or something?

WILLEM

Are we in danger?

Margaret hushes patients with a wave of her hand.

MARGARET

Please.

Beth raises her hand; Margaret gestures to her.

BETH

How long will we be under observation?

MARGARET

Well, Beth, that depends. But we're suspecting seven to ten days.

BETH

You know my name? Do you have a cheat sheet or something?

MARGARET

I know everyone's names. I'm your doctor. Beth, I've known you for two months before you came to Holiday Towers. I sat with your sister at your bedside. I've read your whole life's history -- medical and otherwise. You've only met me once, when you awoke, but I've been constantly watchful so that you've received the best care. I chose you. I chose all of you. Next question.

MAN

Where are the others? You said when I woke there were twenty-nine of us.

MARGARET

Some have not awoken and remain in their rooms. We're monitoring on an hourly basis.

Margaret singles out Amelia, who has been silent.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Amelia -- do you have a question?

Amelia consults her list.

AMELIA

Are there side effects?

MARGARET

Yes. A few. I can't tell you specifics as your knowledge of these effects might affect the study. I can tell you: anything unusual you must report to our staff. It's important. No secrets. Even the smallest thing. We have to know.

Margaret goes on to answer another question. Tim leans into Margaret:

TIM

(soft)

I've been having headaches. You have those?

AMELIA

No.

TIM

But I used to get those on the outside, too.

MARGARET

(mid-answer)

--yes, Dormiral has been approved for human trial. We're operating under all U.S. regulations. The only unorthodox part of this study is that we've sequestered you in this building instead of a hospital.

WOMAN

Why are our rooms locked?

MARGARET

(a look to Gene)

We're unlocking them after this meeting. We ask that you stay out of any locked room. That person may still be non-responsive. But you can visit each other, socialize. You can move throughout the building as you wish. You won't be allowed to exit, but you are no longer confined.

(MORE)

MARGARET (CONT'D)

There's a recreation room on the seventh floor. We ask that you stay off of the eighth floor. It's for supplies.

MARY

Has anyone ever died from this drug?

MARGARET

Before Dormiral, there was no treatment for a non-responsive coma of prolonged duration. A coma is worse than death. Endless sleep, but no release. No dreams. Dormiral is a chance. It was worth the risk.

WILLEM

So we should just thank you then? Thank you. Thank you good, good doctor for bringing us back from the dead! In a coma, at least I wasn't in any pain. Ya know, I, I can't remember my motorcycle crash, but I sure remember my life before it, man. It was pretty goddamn terrible.

MARGARET

Well, Willem. Maybe you can correct some of that when you're back with the world.

Willem stands, bangs the chair in front of him.

WILLEM

Maybe I don't want to go back! Huh! Ever think of that? You know that girl so well, do you know me? do you?

MARGARET

I know, Willem, I--

WILLEM

Don't use my name. You're a stranger. Why don't you maybe buy me a drink first!

MARGARET

(trying to make light)
Alcohol is not allowed here, I'm afraid.

Rufus comes forward.

RUFUS
Have a seat, Mr. Jygeren.

WILLEM
I'll tell you about side effects,
I'm gonna put my fist right through
your face!

There is a scuffle, Amelia moves away with others. Rufus easily wrestles Willem to the ground. Gene comes forward with a needle. Soon, they carry Willem, limp, out of the meeting room.

Margaret regains her composure.

MARGARET
I'm sorry about that. It's not
something we like to do. Please.
Take your chairs.

Everyone settles.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
More questions?

INT. FLOOR 6 CORRIDOR DAY

The meeting has broken up. Patients exit through the corridor, en route to their rooms.

Tim catches up to Amelia.

TIM
Let me see that.

Amelia is confused at first, but then realizes Tim means the questions in her hand. She hands the sheet to him.

TIM (CONT'D)
Wow, lots of good questions. Are
there visiting hours? Why does the
television have only one channel?--
You have a television? Okay, I'm
gonna have to get one of those.
Why didn't you ask the doctor all
these?

AMELIA
It doesn't seem to matter. They're
letting me out soon anyway.

TIM

It might have mattered to the rest
of us.

AMELIA

Do you want to go back and-?

TIM

Forget it. Like she said, we'll
have consultations every day. I'll
hit 'em up then. Can I keep these?

Tim pockets the questions.

TIM (CONT'D)

Want to go check out the game room
on seven?

AMELIA

I'm pretty sleepy.

TIM

Don't take a nap. You've been
nappin' for months. Come on, let's
see what they got.

INT. RECREATION ROOM DAY

Amelia, Tim, and a half-dozen others, including Mary, survey
the Holiday Towers recreation room...

-- jukebox

-- Ping-Pong table

-- board games

-- yellow sofas

On the far wall is illustrated film poster: 1971's "Friends,"
of a boy and girl kissing.

TIM

(frowns)
No pool table.

AMELIA

(frowns)
No pool.

TIM

That's a great idea!

Mary crosses into them, gives a flirty wave.

MARY
Hello, I'm Mary.

AMELIA
Amelia.

TIM
Tim.

MARY
You from the city?

TIM
Does it matter?

MARY
Just being social. I'm from
Pittsburgh. Do you think we're in
Pittsburgh?

AMELIA
You should have asked them.

MARY
I know. I guess it doesn't matter
much where we are if we can't get
out, see the sights. This is it!
Top of the tops! Games!

Mary pulls a deck of cards from behind her back, fans them
onto the floor.

AMELIA
They're gonna make you pick those
up.

MARY
I'm rebelling. You should know
this about me. I'm dangerous.
Wild, is what they call me. Mary
Wild. Mary Wild O'Rourke...

As she speaks, PAN DOWN...

MARY (CONT'D)
(softer, sexier)
I've had a lot of lovers. Pickups
in bars mostly. Have a circle of
regulars. The longest relationship
I've had was three days, and it was
in a hotel. Kinda like this place,
now that I think about it...

...Mary is moving her finger between her legs.

Amelia and Tim notice.

TIM

Do you have an itch?

Mary looks down and seems to, for the first time, realize what she is doing. She stops.

MARY

What am I saying?

She smiles, awkwardly, and drifts a few feet away.

Then, suddenly!

Mary collapses, her head hits the Ping-Pong table.

She crumbles on the floor, head gushing blood.

TIM

Holy shit!

Everyone rushes forward. At first, people just stare down, not sure what to do.

Amelia notices, along the wall -- an alarm. She pulls it.

INT. FLOOR 7 CORRIDOR DAY

TWO ORDERLIES race down the corridor.

INT. RECREATION ROOM DAY

Orderlies and nurses surround Mary, tending to her, raising her up. No one speaks. They put her, still unconscious, into a wheelchair and remove her from the recreation room.

When Mary is gone, Amelia and Tim at the blood-soaked carpet.

AMELIA

Do you think that was a side effect?

TIM

No, I think Mary... is crazy. She said she had a husband and then talks about hotels.

AMELIA

I don't feel right.

TIM

I don't feel right either. I just came out of a coma. My neck's killin' me.

AMELIA

I wish they'd tell us what's normal.

TIM

Nothing is normal. Maybe you're in the control group. Just keep thinkin' that and you can separate what's real.

Amelia stands. She wanders the perimeter of the rec room and Tim follows alongside.

AMELIA

I don't have much of an imagination. I'm a straight girl. People don't think I'm very funny. Or very interesting.

TIM

It's not like I'm a race car driver. I teach junior level physics at State. At least I did, 'til I fell off a ladder. Ironic.

AMELIA

Guess you didn't see the physics of that.

TIM

Don't worry. I don't remember a thing.

AMELIA

So, what I'm saying is, if you're planning on hanging out with me for the next seven days, you'll probably get bored.

TIM

At least you're pretty.

AMELIA

Everyone's pretty.

Tim looks around at the others, some starting games, others in conversations.

TIM

You're right about the women.

AMELIA

You might not be bad if you shaved.
Why didn't they shave your beard
while you were in a coma?

TIM

They did. This grew back in the
last day and a half.

AMELIA

A hairy hippie.

TIM

That's what my friends call me.
Tim Foster, the hairy hippie.

(pause)

Look. I'm in Apartment 5C. If you
ever want to hang out--

AMELIA

"Come up and see me sometime."

TIM

Exactly. We can compare side
effects.

AMELIA

(suspicious)

Uh huh.

TIM

I promise I won't think you're
boring.

AMELIA

We'll see...

She walks on. He smiles sheepishly.

They pass: the Man and Woman, nestled in the corner by the
jukebox. Unseen by the rest of the room, the Man has his
hand up the Woman's shirt.

INT. LOBBY OFFICE NIGHT

Gene Markham and Dr. Margaret Lowry confer in the Holiday
Towers office.

GENE

It's late. Don't you have to get back?

MARGARET

I should.

GENE

How have you been sleeping?

MARGARET

I haven't been this tired since I did my residency. Will you have a nurse check on Mrs. O'Rourke every half-hour?

GENE

Yes. Anyone else?

MARGARET

Mr. Jygeren.

GENE

I'll have Rufus join, too.

(pause)

I have to say something, doctor. I've been with DromeLabs since college. I started at the factory right next door. Don't get me wrong, I like a suit and tie better than a hair net, but at least when I was stuffing bottles I knew what I was in for. This managing director role is pretty hollow.

MARGARET

I can't be here 24 hours a day.

GENE

I appreciate the apartment, but I'd like to see my wife. The nurses can leave. But not me, not security. No one told me this was a three-week affair. They just asked if I could keep the paperwork.

MARGARET

What do you want me to say?

GENE

That it's going to be worth it. That it's not going to end like the last one. I've been reading...

Gene pulls a file folder, scoots it across the desk.
Margaret picks it, gives a quick glance.

MARGARET
Make sure this stays in your
drawer.

GENE
Oh, I know.

MARGARET
It's not going to end like that.
We've made corrections.

GENE
I'm counting on it.

INT. ORANGE APT. (LIVING ROOM) NIGHT

Rufus quietly enters the orange-painted apartment, where the Black Woman lies in her coma. He closes the door. Locks the bolt. Takes off his belt. Lays it on the sofa--

INT. ORANGE APT. (BEDROOM) CONTINUOUS

When Rufus enters the bedroom, he takes off his jacket, lets it fall. At the night-table, he snaps on the light, revealing:

The Black Woman, tranquil.

He whips off her blankets, exposing her.

At the end of the bed, he kneels. He climbs up towards her legs, spreads them apart, removes her underwear. He goes higher, until his face is between her legs.

PAN OVER TO:

INT. ORANGE APT. (LIVING ROOM) CONTINUOUS

Leaving Rufus and the Black Woman, we move into the living room. Crossing over Rufus' discarded coat, then his belt, at last to the door--

The bolt...

...moves.

A key in the lock.

The door comes open.

Peggy appears, with a tray stacked with supplies. She struggles to get the key out of the lock.

PEGGY

Shoot.

She sets the tray on the ground and, with both hands, frees the key. By the time she ready to continue--

Rufus! He stands in the bedroom doorway, belt and coat back on. But he looks winded and nervous.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

You scared me.

RUFUS

Just doing rounds.

PEGGY

I didn't realize you had a key.

RUFUS

Yeah. Of course.

PEGGY

I thought you just watched the corridors and lobby.

RUFUS

After that business today--

PEGGY

Of course. No, makes perfect sense.

RUFUS

Want just make sure everyone's safe. Even--

PEGGY

Melba Johnson.

RUFUS

Even Ms. Johnson.

PEGGY

Mrs., actually. Her chart says she's married.

RUFUS

(reaching out)
Here, let me help you with this...

PEGGY
No, I've got it. Time for her
sponge bath.

RUFUS
Okay. Sure.

She waits, awkward.

PEGGY
I should probably have privacy.

RUFUS
Oh! Yeah. Okay. Call if you need
me.

Rufus leaves, gives a mean glance back at the nurse.

INT. ORANGE APT. (BEDROOM) CONTINUOUS

Peggy enters the bedroom, sets down her tray.

Rufus has put the covers back as they should be. Peggy takes them down again and realizes...

The Black Woman's gown is above her waist, exposing her naked midsection.

Peggy looks back to the door. Adds it up. Knows.

INT. YELLOW APT. (BEDROOM) DAY

The television -- turn of the channel... once, twice, again. Snow, snow, snow. Finally -- the sterile newscast. Amelia -- keeps checking. Turn, turn, turn. Nothing, just the one channel.

Amelia wanders from the television and drops on the sofa, biting her nails, bored.

INT. FLOOR 5 CORRIDOR A MOMENT LATER

Amelia passes doors -- 5A, 5B... -- until she finds 5C.

Hesitantly, she knocks. Waits. Knocks again, harder.

Tim Foster answers, wearing only pajama bottoms.

TIM
Good morning!

AMELIA

I'm bored.

TIM

I thought boring people couldn't
get bored.

AMELIA

Want to play some Ping-Pong?

TIM

(smiles)
Absolutely. Wait here.

Tim returns inside his apartment.

TIM (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Have you eaten breakfast?

AMELIA

Not really.

At the corner of her door, she watches him slip off his
pajama bottoms and change into denim, no underwear.

TIM (O.S.)

You're missing out.

AMELIA

Am I?

He returns to her, pulling a tee-shirt over his head.

TIM

I hope you came to play. I've
really cleaned up at State's
student union. Kind of a hustler.

AMELIA

We'll see...

EXT. HOLIDAY TOWERS DAY

A large white van pulls up in front of the building. Painted
on the side: DromeLabs (and logo), then underneath, Corporate
Security.

INT. LOBBY DAY

Gene, with Rufus and FOUR MALE SECURITY GUARDS, stand in the
lobby.

One guard is taller, more athletic, more serious than the others -- this is CARSON BIGGERS.

Rufus hands out laminated maps.

RUFUS

Ground floor is the lobby. Two through six, housing. Staff on Two, including all of us. Patients on Three to Five. Six is a meeting room. Seven is a recreation room. Eight is the gate. It rhymes, so you should remember. Then the roof, which is sealed. Shift rotations are posted in the lobby. Did I miss anything, Mr. Markham?

GENE

One more thing: I'm appointing Mr. Carson Biggers here as the head watchman.

RUFUS

Ah, Mr. Markham--

GENE

Carson was head of security for the first study. He has the most experience. So, if you have questions, he's your man.

(to Carson)

Step in my office. I've got some additional detail for you. Thank you, everyone.

The group breaks apart...

Rufus lingers for a second, then drifts to his desk.

However, Biggers indicates a TALL GUARD should take the post instead. Rufus steps away, stands uncertain.

In the lobby office, Gene and Biggers shut the door.

Rufus watches the door a few seconds, then slouches away.

INT. RECREATION ROOM DAY

SMACK! A Ping-Pong ball glances across the green table, easily getting past Tim.

Tim and Amelia are the only patients in the room. They face off.

TIM
Holy shit! Where'd you get that
mean serve?

AMELIA
I've been in a few student unions
myself.

TIM
Bullshit. Played pro, is my guess.

He picks up the ball. Concentrates. Serves his best.

She returns it and he misses.

TIM (CONT'D)
Crap.

Tim retrieves the ball from the floor.

TIM (CONT'D)
I guess I forgot I was in a coma.
Damn these muscles. Tell you
what... let's start with a friendly
volley.

AMELIA
(smiles)
Okay. Friendly.

A quick exchange goes well. At the end, Amelia traps the
ball.

TIM
What?

AMELIA
I have a theory.

TIM
This should be good.

AMELIA
Promise you won't laugh. It's
weird.

TIM
First boring, now weird. I've seen
no evidence of either.

AMELIA
Okay. What if we've never been in
comas?

TIM
Someone's lying.

AMELIA
Maybe this is an experiment.
Like... a psychology experiment.

TIM
And we're the mice.

AMELIA
I don't remember being in an
accident.

TIM
And I don't remember falling off a
ladder. But that's common.
Blackouts after something bad. Or
so says the good doctor.

AMELIA
I do think they're testing drugs on
us.

TIM
What kind of company forces people
into a drug test?

AMELIA
The army does it. I read an
article.

TIM
You read an article. Okay, sure.

AMELIA
What if I ask to see the paperwork
my mom and dad signed to get me
committed here.

TIM
You make it sound like an asylum.

AMELIA
I do feel a little crazy. I... I'm
having urges. Ones I can't
control. Or ones that are hard to
control. I'm not an impulsive
person.

TIM
I'm having the impulse to kick your
ass at this game.

Tim serves. A short volley and Amelia stops the ball.

AMELIA

(soft)

I'm serious. I need someone I can trust.

TIM

Who's to say I'm not working for them?

AMELIA

Are you?

TIM

I've been sworn to--

AMELIA

I'm serious! Tell me.

Pause.

TIM

If this was a drug experiment, no drug gets injected once and then stays in the body. They'd have to keep injecting us over and over.

AMELIA

What about the food?

TIM

There's nothing in the food.

AMELIA

What if it's in the air?

TIM

The doctors and nurses would be high, too.

AMELIA

What if it's something so powerful that it, it becomes like a virus? Like a flu. It takes it's time to--

TIM

Okay. Okay, I hear you.

Tim crosses, gently takes the ball from Amelia, returns to his side of the table.

TIM (CONT'D)
Keep a lookout. Don't trust anyone. Maybe try and get a look at your permission slip. Or better yet, let's just ask someone. You can tell when someone's lying, right? It's in the eyes.

He hits the ball and she returns, hard, scoring.

A PORTLY GUARD enters the recreation room. They watch him enter and take a position by the jukebox.

TIM (CONT'D)
Hello.

The guard nods.

TIM (CONT'D)
(smiling, soft)
Ask him...

Amelia retrieves the ball from the floor by Tim. When she comes up...

AMELIA
(soft)
They're watching us.

Tim thinks. At last, he puts his paddle on the table and goes to the jukebox. He flips through the selections.

TIM
(to Portly Guard)
Beautiful morning, isn't it?

PORTLY GUARD
Yes.

TIM
Do you like music? I like music.
What do you want to hear?

PORTLY GUARD
That's up to you, sir.

Tim finds a selection, makes it. The choice rankles the Portly Guard.

TIM
Mind if I ask: are you watching us?

PORTLY GUARD

Yes. I mean, you're right in front
of me. How can I not?

Tim smiles at this answer. He returns to Amelia, dancing a
little silly. She smiles as he hands her the ball.

AMELIA

(soft)

One more game. Then let's go back
to my room.

INT. FLOOR 2 CORRIDOR DAY

Rufus walks the corridor. Peggy comes out of an apartment in
street clothes, with purse.

RUFUS

You clockin' out?

PEGGY

Yes. I'll be back in the morning.
They switched me.

RUFUS

They switched me, too.

She tries to move past him, but he blocks her.

PEGGY

Excuse me.

Rufus takes her arm.

RUFUS

Have you got a problem with me?

PEGGY

What?

RUFUS

Did you talk to Mr. Markham? Or
that fucking doctor?

Peggy tries to wrestle free.

PEGGY

I don't know what you're talking--

He shakes her.

RUFUS
I will kill you if you lose me this
job. This place is mine.

PEGGY
Of course. I understand.

He shakes her loose.

RUFUS
I hope you do.
(changing tone)
Enjoy your afternoon!

She hurries towards the elevator.

RUFUS (CONT'D)
Buy yourself a nice skirt.

She presses the button -- multiple times. She's gone.

Rufus continues on his way, whistling.

INT. FLOOR 4 CORRIDOR DAY

Amelia, with Tim, steps onto the fourth floor in silence.
Near to the door to Amelia's apartment, she stops him with a
hand to his chest.

AMELIA
Kiss me.

Confused, but obliging, he kisses her lightly. She moves him
against the wall. She kisses him passionately.

TIM
Wait a minute, wait a minute-- Is
this one of those urges?

She doesn't stop.

TIM (CONT'D)
Someone could walk out--

AMELIA
Let's... let's go in my apartment.

TIM
Have you been hanging out with
crazy Mary?

She pulls him towards the door, opens it, starts to drag him by his shirt--

FOLLOW TO:

INT. YELLOW APT. (LIVING ROOM) CONTINUOUS

At the lip of her apartment, Amelia sees: the Brunette Woman encountered by Amelia when she first awoke.

The woman waits on Amelia's sofa, expectant. She wears white clothes and looks almost angelic.

BRUNETTE WOMAN
Good morning, Amelia.

Amelia separates from Tim.

BRUNETTE WOMAN (CONT'D)
You're right on time. I assume you received your schedule.

AMELIA
Schedule?

BRUNETTE WOMAN
Under your door.

AMELIA
No.

BRUNETTE WOMAN
Really? Well, now's the time for your intake interview.

TIM
We were playing ping-pong.

BRUNETTE WOMAN
The games are there to be enjoyed. My name is Lane. I'm a specialist for DromeLabs and I need to do your Day Three questionnaire. Mr. Foster, you're scheduled for tomorrow. I will see you then.

He understands the command.

TIM
(to Amelia)
I'll see you around.

AMELIA
Can't he stay?

BRUNETTE WOMAN
This is best in private.

TIM
(to Amelia)
You'll be fine.

Tim exits, shuts door.

INT. FLOOR 4 CORRIDOR CONTINUOUS

Tim, in the corridor, hesitates -- a mix of regret and concern on his face.

He moves down the corridor.

He hears:

...from another apartment on the floor, Willem yelling...

WILLEM (O.S.)
Get me out of here! You fucking
assholes! Get me out! Get me out!

Tim enters the elevator, doors close.

INT. BROWN APT. (LIVING ROOM) DAY

Willem Jygeren, in his apartment, isolated, angry, shouts to anyone who will hear...

WILLEM
It's not fair! I want out!

Exhausted, he strains. He's strapped in his bed. He wiggles and, fruitless, falls back into his pillow, angrier than ever.

INT. YELLOW APT. (LIVING ROOM) DAY

The Brunette Woman flips open her questionnaire.

BRUNETTE WOMAN
Please. Sit.

Amelia takes a chair.

BRUNETTE WOMAN (CONT'D)
Amelia Ann Riddle.

AMELIA

That's me.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

Born April 28, 1945.

Amelia nods.

BRUNETTE WOMAN (CONT'D)

So I'm going to ask you questions.
Answer honestly.

(reading)

Since your revival, have you
experienced any of the following?
Nausea or vomiting? Headaches?
Significant fatigue? Shortness of
breath? Aches in joints or
muscles? Congestion or cough?
Sore throat?

Amelia shakes her head to each; the Brunette Woman checks
boxes.

AMELIA

I didn't have a cold. I was in a
coma.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

A lot of this is about elimination.
Next section: have you
experienced... Insomnia? A ringing
in your ears? Piercing pain in any
part of your body?

AMELIA

(less sure)

No.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

How about your bowel movements?

AMELIA

Working.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

Trouble with urination?

AMELIA

Are these side effects of Dormiral?

BRUNETTE WOMAN

Parts of the questionnaire are
generic.

AMELIA

But it's--

BRUNETTE WOMAN

Just because it's in here doesn't mean it's happened in the previous study. You shouldn't consider this a comprehensive list.

AMELIA

Okay.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

The next section is a bit sensitive. But I encourage you to be honest. Have you had any feelings of panic?

AMELIA

Yes.

The Brunette Woman checks a box.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

But I think you'd panic, too, if you were told you were locked in a building with strangers.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

(smiles)

I hope you don't find us too strange. We all have your best interests at heart.

AMELIA

I understand.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

Have you had any heightened or unusual sexual feelings?

Amelia pauses, but shakes her head 'no.'

BRUNETTE WOMAN (CONT'D)

Have you masturbated since revival?

AMELIA

Do I have to answer?

BRUNETTE WOMAN

I warned you, they get a little sensitive. But yes, we'd like you to answer. Have you--?

AMELIA

Not really.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

But you tried?

Amelia shrugs.

BRUNETTE WOMAN (CONT'D)

Did you orgasm?

AMELIA

I don't remember.

The Brunette Woman waits a moment, then ticks a box.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

On average, how many times a week did you masturbate before your coma?

AMELIA

I don't want to answer any more questions about this.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

Okay. I can see where--

AMELIA

If you or Dr. Lowry talked to my parents, you know a lot about me. I'm a typical person. I can't think of anything about me that was, or is, unusual or, or deviant, if that's what you're looking for. And, and I really can't tell if what's going on in my head now is the circumstance. You know, my mind messing with me. Can't you just tell me what you're looking for?

BRUNETTE WOMAN

That question is best for Dr. Lowry. I'm just here for the the intake form.

The Brunette Woman smiles, tries to look reassuring.

AMELIA

How many more questions are there?

BRUNETTE WOMAN

Not many. A few dozen.

AMELIA

Wouldn't it be better to take my pulse or blood pressure or something? A nurse has been here to feed me. But it's odd that I haven't been checked.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

Again, that's for Dr. Lowry. Would you like me to request that she visit you?

AMELIA

You can do that? Then yes.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

Okay. Consider it done.

AMELIA

And I'd like to see the paperwork. The stuff my parents signed. Their permission.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

That may take a while, I--

AMELIA

That's a lie.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

I'm only saying what I've been told. Again: you can ask--

AMELIA

--ask Dr. Lowry.

The Brunette Woman returns to the questionnaire, uncomfortable.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

(stumbling)

S--since reviving, have you had any seizures or, or blackouts?

AMELIA

(hesitant)

Yes.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

You did?

AMELIA

I had one the first day. Just a few seconds. I told the nurse.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

Who?

AMELIA

(lying)

I don't remember her name.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

(reading)

Any vision changes? Blurriness, auras?

AMELIA

I don't think so.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

Any visions or, well, tricks of the eye? Did you see things that were not actually there?

AMELIA

Why does my television only get one channel?

BRUNETTE WOMAN

Pardon?

AMELIA

There's only one channel. Some sort of news channel. But not from one of the networks.

BRUNETTE WOMAN

I'll ask Mr. Markham. I don't know anything about the infrastructure. It may be the range of the antenna.

AMELIA

How far are we from the city?

BRUNETTE WOMAN

Your TV should work. I'll ask. So no visions?

Amelia shakes her head.

BRUNETTE WOMAN (CONT'D)

Any feelings of paranoia?

Long hold: Amelia. At last, she shakes her head.

BRUNETTE WOMAN (CONT'D)

Let's talk about aggression...

INT. FLOOR 5 CORRIDOR DAY

Dr. Margaret Lowry passes Amelia's apartment door on her way to another. She is escorted by a Tall Guard and a Short Guard, the latter one carrying a small satchel.

Heard hoarsely calling is Willem Jygeren.

The Tall Guard pulls out a key ring and opens the door to Willem's apartment.

WILLEM (O.S.)
Hey you. Fucking assholes. About
goddamn time, man.

INT. BROWN APT. (LIVING ROOM) CONTINUOUS

Willem, strapped to his bed, pushes up as Margaret and the guards enter.

The Short Guard stays by the door, shuts it. He sets the case at his feet.

The Tall Guard steps with Margaret to the bed.

WILLEM
You've got no right to do this to
me!

MARGARET
I hear you've been belligerent to
my staff.

WILLEM
I hate, hate, hate nurses.

MARGARET
Your mother was a nurse.

WILLEM
Man, what's your fucking point?

Margaret takes a seat next to the bed.

MARGARET
Willem. May I call you that?
We're worried you will harm
yourself.

WILLEM
(deflating)
I'm not going to hurt myself.

MARGARET

Good. We like you too much.

WILLEM

Ha.

MARGARET

I wanted to tell you personally that there is nothing subversive here. Were working on something... very special. We want you to think about the greater population.

WILLEM

It's the 1970s now. You can't get away with this, this, 1920s madhouse shit. I don't need a colonic.

MARGARET

Do you think this is an asylum?

WILLEM

Yeah, man. And you're the patients. You've taken over.

MARGARET

Your brother tells me you're a part-time stand-up comedian. Like Lenny Bruce. Only meaner.

WILLEM

How do you know anything about Lenny Bruce?

MARGARET

I go out on the town. Have a martini. Cut a rug.

WILLEM

Cut a rug? Shit, it is the 1920s.

MARGARET

Are you any good?

WILLEM

I'm fucking hilarious.

MARGARET

If you were a killer, you wouldn't be here. I selected the best candidates for the study. I don't mind that you're angry. I don't mind that you're mean.

(MORE)

MARGARET (CONT'D)

I just don't want you to hurt anyone. Including yourself, Willem.

WILLEM

Man, you're making me feel all buttery. Maybe butter me up more and I'll slip out of these straps.

MARGARET

We're going to release you. I want to keep you in your room for twenty-four hours more. That's all. Then you can roam. But you've got to stop all this shouting.

WILLEM

I take back my permission. I don't want to be a part of this. I don't want your drug in my body.

MARGARET

Maybe it's not in your body. There's a control group. Maybe you just... woke up. And you're just naturally this...

WILLEM

Hilarious.

MARGARET

Yes. That's what I was going to say. Please help us, Willem. We've helped you. It's a very small favor to ask, and easy for you to grant.

Margaret indicates the Short Guard, who comes forward with the satchel. He sets it on the bed, opens the clasps. In the action, there is menace.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

We have something to keep you calm. When I come back to Holiday Towers this evening, I'll check on you. Confirm it's had an effect.

Willem swallows.

WILLEM

No more drugs, man.

MARGARET

Depends on how you define the word.

The Short Guard slowly lifts out a stack of MAD magazines and sets them on the bed.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
Your brother told me you like these.

Willem gets a sly smile.

WILLEM
Are you joking, lady? You're bribing me with MAD? This is a fucking asylum.

Margaret smiles, nods to the Tall Guard, who undoes the lower strap on Willem's feet.

INT. LOBBY NIGHT

The elevator doors part and Rufus exits onto the lobby.

As he passes the lobby office, he sees:

Peggy, in uniform, her back turned; Gene speaks with her in a whisper. Gene spots Rufus, gives an undetermined look his way, then shuts the door.

Rufus wanders to the front desk, where the Short Guard supervises TWO MAINTENANCE WORKERS installing additional bars on the door.

INT. WHITE APT. (BEDROOM) NIGHT

In the apartment of Mary O'Rourke, she lies on her bed, eyes closed. She has a clean bandage on her head from her earlier fall.

PAN TO REVEAL:
Her hand, moving the blankets. She's masturbating.

When she's done, she takes her hand out. In the dim light, she notices: her hand has blood on it.

She whips off the blanket and looks down. There's blood -- not much, just some, between her legs, dotting the sheets.

INT. LOBBY NIGHT

Dr. Margaret Lowry is admitted into the building by the Strapping Blonde Guard at the front desk. Once she's inside, he rolls the bars closed.

Margaret carries a square black case.

MARGARET
Good evening.

STRAPPING BLONDE GUARD
Good evening, Doctor.

MARGARET
Where is Mr. Markham?

STRAPPING BLONDE GUARD
Second floor.

MARGARET
Thank you.

She heads for the elevator.

INT. ORANGE APT. (LIVING ROOM) NIGHT

Peggy enters the apartment of the Black Woman. The lights are out. She reaches for the switch--

A hand grabs her!

She is yanked into the apartment. Door slams!

In the shadows, Rufus traps her to the wall.

RUFUS
What did you tell them?

PEGGY
Let go of me! I'll scream.

RUFUS
Yeah, try it. Everyone on the floor is in a coma. What did you tell Mr. Markham?

PEGGY
I didn't tell him anything--

He squeezes her.

PEGGY (CONT'D)
No, no, no. I didn't. He was asking about a log entry.

RUFUS
His face didn't look like is was about a medical question.

PEGGY
I forgot something! I missed a
notation. He, he dressed me down.

RUFUS
I bet he did.

Rufus rips free the top collar of her uniform.

PEGGY
Stop it, please, please. You'll
get in trouble, you'll--

He throws her into the living room, onto the floor.

Diving onto her, he pins her to the carpet. She squirms.

PEGGY (CONT'D)
No... no!

Rufus slaps her, hard. Blood appears on her mouth.

PEGGY (CONT'D)
(soft)
You'll get in trouble. Don't hurt
me. You'll get in trouble.

RUFUS
You don't know anything. I've seen
the files. Yeah, yeah. I know
what happened to the last study.
I'm not as dumb as I look.

PEGGY
(weaker)
I didn't say you were dumb.

Rufus presses down on her neck, then rips again at her top,
exposing her bra.

PEGGY (CONT'D)
(gasping)
You'll get in trouble.

He chokes her, kills her.

He sits up. When he rises completely, behind him:

The Black Woman, in her nightgown, stands in the apartment
doorway.

Rufus turns and sees her.

RUFUS
Now you wake up?

The Black Woman turns, but her legs are weak, she falls on the bedroom carpet.

Slowly, Rufus starts in her direction, nodding at the inevitability...

INT. RECREATION ROOM NIGHT

A dozen patients pass time in the recreation room. Hovering in the corner is the Tall Guard.

Beth Ingaard sits away from the others, bites her nails.

INT. FLOOR 4 CORRIDOR NIGHT

Tim knocks on Amelia's apartment door. She answers.

He notices something about her face.

TIM
Hold still.

AMELIA
What?

He reaches in, touches her lip. When he withdraws, there is a dot of blood on the end.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
I'm bleeding?

TIM
Just a little.

She wipes at her lip.

AMELIA
Is it gone?

TIM
Yeah. Did you bite your lip?

AMELIA
I don't remember.

TIM
Tough interview, huh? She looked serious. What am I in for?

AMELIA

You know, it occurred to me halfway through her questions... I shouldn't be talking.

TIM

Don't you like doctors?

AMELIA

She wasn't a doctor.

TIM

I'm sure they're just checking that there isn't a problem.

AMELIA

It's like... You're at a dinner. Eating. And you feel fine. And then, the person next to you says they just got over stomach flu. And then you start to feel a bit sick.

TIM

Suggestiveness.

AMELIA

Is that the psycho-babble for it?

TIM

Sure. I guess.

AMELIA

Don't you know, Dr. Freud?

TIM

All I know is that I missed you.

The elevator DINGS!

Out steps Carson Biggers, intimidating in size in the corridor.

CARSON

Excuse me. Dr. Lowry has called a meeting in the Recreation Room.

TIM

Now? It's past nine o'clock.

CARSON

Right now.

INT. MEETING ROOM NIGHT

Amelia and Tim filter into the meeting room. The other PATIENTS and STAFF are gathered as well. Huddling away from the noise: Margaret, Gene, and Carson.

Rufus looks shifty. He barks at someone to take a seat.

MARGARET

I think everyone's here.

MAN

Not everyone. Those couple patients--

MARGARET

Both Mrs. O'Rourke and Mr. Jygeren are under observation. I'll speak with them individually. Not to alarm anyone, but we've had a possible breach of the building. Gene...

GENE

We have a nurse and a patient both missing from the building. Nurse Peggy Martin tended to some of you. She's twenty-four, bark hair, on the short side. The patient is Mrs. Melba Johnson -- taller, black, age twenty-three, probably still in her medical gown. Have any of you seen these two women?

No response.

GENE (CONT'D)

Have any of you seen them out your windows, or passing the halls, or in this room? The recreation room?

No response.

GENE (CONT'D)

Are any of you, perhaps, hiding them in your apartments?

WOMAN

How can we hide anything? A nurse comes in every two hours.

GENE

I know, I know. Just that it's important to find these two people.
(MORE)

GENE (CONT'D)

We're concerned about them. This is Carson Biggers, head of security.

Carson steps up.

CARSON

There's only one entrance to the building and that's on the ground floor.

TIM

(aside)

Isn't that a fire hazard?

CARSON

Neither of these women could have made it out the front door without being noticed. If you see anything suspicious, if you hear anything, tell one of my men immediately. We're all here to serve you, we're all on the second floor. We're not going anywhere. Only Dr. Lowry can leave the building during the quarantine.

BETH

Quarantine!

Several others echo this.

MARGARET

(hushing the crowd)

Study, study. Mr. Biggers is speaking in more security-minded language. There is no quarantine.

She gives Carson a glare.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

You are our best partners in this study. We need all of you. You are our eyes and ears into how you feel, what you witness. You -- more that Mr. Biggers and his men -- help keep all of us safe. Thank you for all that you're doing and will do. Have a good night.

The meeting breaks up.

AMELIA

Did they ever give you a TV?

TIM

They claim to be fresh out.

AMELIA

Wanna watch some television?

TIM

Do you really mean television, or do you mean something else? I'm not a very... I mean, I'm not like that, the stuff from this morning. Not often anyway--

AMELIA

Are you saying you're boring, too?

TIM

You, Amelia Riddle, are not boring. Not to me. So when you say television, not that I didn't-- Not that I wouldn't--

AMELIA

Just television.

TIM

Are you feeling okay?

AMELIA

What, are you Dr. Lowry's eyes and ears?

TIM

I can't watch everyone. But I'll watch you.

AMELIA

Okay.

TIM

And you watch me.

AMELIA

I'll watch you.

Beth's eyes follow Amelia and Tim as they leave the meeting room.

Nervously, Beth assesses the others, considering them, and not lightly. As she does this, her nose begins to bleed. At first, she takes no notice. Then, realizing, she puts her hand up, covers her face. She quickly flees the meeting room.

INT. FLOOR 6 CORRIDOR NIGHT

Carson leads the staff away from the meeting room. He leans tight against Rufus.

 CARSON
 (soft)
 Take two men and search each
 apartment, including the staff
 apartments.

 RUFUS
 Right, right. No problem.

 CARSON
 Those two women must still be in
 the building.

 RUFUS
 Even check the Eighth floor?

 CARSON
 I'll do that.

 RUFUS
 Are you s--

 CARSON
 I'll do that.

INT. STAFF APARTMENTS (VARIOUS) NIGHT

Rufus, with the Tall Guard and the Portly Guard, inspect apartments, all business.

INT. FLOOR 2 CORRIDOR DAY

Rufus with the Tall Guard and Portly Guard, back in the corridor...

 TALL GUARD
 (to Rufus)
 Should we check your apartment?

 RUFUS
 Absolutely.

He unlocks the door for them. The Tall Guard enters.

INT. PINK APT. (LIVING ROOM) DAY

The Tall Guard does a quick inspection -- half-hearted.
Leaves.

INT. FLOOR 8 CORRIDOR NIGHT

The elevator doors open.

Carson Biggers stands in the elevator.

INSERT: His finger, pressing the button for Floor 8.

Floor 8 is the same as all the others. One corridor, bending
around a corner. Only this time: no doors on the side, no
apartments; just wall.

Carson steps out. He walks almost to the bend.

He returns to the elevator.

Stone-faced, he rides away...

INT. RED APT. (LIVING ROOM) NIGHT

Mary O'Rourke lies naked on the sofa in her apartment.

Her bandaged head has come a bit loose, revealing the gash.
She has dark circles under her eyes and a distant look.

The television plays in the room -- volume off, just snow.

The front door opens and Margaret enters with a YOUNG NURSE,
an OLDER NURSE, and the Orderly.

Margaret, though professional, is severe and urgent, a bit
rattled.

MARGARET

Get a blanket from the closet.

The Young Nurse does as ordered. The Orderly comes forward
and straightens out Mary. The Older Nurse checks for vital
signs. Margaret hangs back.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

When was the last time anyone
visited this room?

OLDER NURSE

Forty-five minutes ago.

MARGARET
Was she like this?

OLDER NURSE
She was fine.
(less sure)
She was fine.

The Young Nurse places a blanket over Mary. The Orderly checks Mary's wound.

ORDERLY
She's gonna need a new dressing.

YOUNG NURSE
I'll get the kit.

The Young Nurse exits the room.

Margaret moves and shuts the apartment door behind her. When she does this, her face registers something, something deep to hide from the others.

She turns...

MARGARET
Check... check for any bleeding.

The Orderly inspects Mary.

ORDERLY
Just her head.

Margaret looks around the apartment. Searching.

MARGARET
Did she speak when you checked her before?

OLDER NURSE
(not hearing)
What was that?

MARGARET
Did she speak when you saw her!

OLDER NURSE
No. No, we didn't talk.

Margaret snaps on the bedroom light.

CU:
Margaret's face.

She leaves the apartment suddenly!

OLDER NURSE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Dr. Lowry? Dr. Lowry, what do you
want us to do with her..?

INT. YELLOW APT. (LIVING ROOM) NIGHT

Tim and Amelia watch television -- the news program, same as
before, same stale patter.

TIM
One channel...

AMELIA
Yep.

TIM
Hmmm. Do you recognize that guy?

AMELIA
No.

TIM
Me either. Definitely local.

AMELIA
He's on every day, every hour.

TIM
Well he's pretty sad to watch. I
miss Cronkite. Is part of the
study? The whole thing is probably
a marketing study for some ad
agency in New York, see what kind
of corn flakes we'll buy.

AMELIA
I sorta wish you were right.

She moves into him. He puts his arm around her.

TIM
Do you have a boyfriend?

AMELIA
No. Do you have a girlfriend?

TIM
I did, yeah. Probably don't
anymore.

AMELIA

Are you one of those boys that confesses that you kissed a girl on vacation, even if no one saw?

TIM

Maybe. Depends on what kind of vacation. But, remember, I was in a coma a long time. Monique was cute, but she wasn't super loyal. It wouldn't take her more than a few weeks to give up on me.

AMELIA

The other day in the hallway, I don't know wh--

TIM

It's okay. I'm just used to going slow. Especially when I dig a girl and don't want to blow it. Let's not worry about it. Let's just stay up all night and watch the lousy news.

Amelia looks content in his arms, safe. For just a moment.

She starts coughing, soft at first, then harder. She sits up. Tim pats her back.

TIM (CONT'D)

(joking)

Jesus, you didn't tell me you were a smoker!

She smiles, still coughing, nodding. But her cough gets worse. Painful. Amelia spits hard into her hand -- blood splatters her fingers.

AMELIA

(mouth dripping)

Oh, shit.

Tim stands up, shocked.

TIM

I'm gonna get some help.

Amelia coughs, gets control. Blood down her chin.

TIM (CONT'D)

Should I get help?

She can't speak.

TIM (CONT'D)
Tell me what to do.

She nods, fingers towards the door. He runs out of the apartment...

INT. LOBBY OFFICE NIGHT

Margaret paces in front of Gene's desk in the lobby office, the door shut.

GENE
I'm calling the committee.

MARGARET
Not yet.

GENE
It's what you want.

MARGARET
They'll cancel the study.

GENE
They're not going to have another like--

MARGARET
I thought, maybe, maybe, with the delay in recovery. New variables. We broke the pattern.

GENE
It might slow.

MARGARET
What if it's different, but worse? Gene -- her sheets were covered in fresh blood. I'm going to give her the reactant right away--

BUZZ! The intercom on Gene's desk.

CARSON (O.S.)
(over speaker)
Mr. Markham?

GENE
Yes?

CARSON (O.S.)
Male patient says a girl's bleeding on Four.

Gene shoots Margaret a look.

GENE
We'll be right up.

As they leave, Margaret grabs her square black case.

INT. BROWN APT. (LIVING ROOM) NIGHT

Willem is in his apartment, on his knees, picking at...
The door, trying to unlock it with a fork.

WILLEM
Come on, come on.

Snap! It comes open. He peeks into the corridor.

WILLEM'S POV:
People stepping off the elevator.

He rocks back, shuts the door.

INT. FLOOR 4 CORRIDOR SAME MOMENT

Margaret and Gene exit the elevator and almost run into
Carson Biggers coming out of the stairwell.

GENE
Which apartment?

Carson points to Amelia's door just as it comes open. Tim
stands there, waving them on.

INT. YELLOW APT. (LIVING ROOM) CONTINUOUS

Amelia kneels on the floor in front of the television. She
has a towel to her mouth. It's soaked in blood. Despite
this, she smiles when the others enter the apartment.

AMELIA
Sorry to be a bother.

Margaret kneels beside Amelia. She opens her square case.

MARGARET
No bother. When did this start?

AMELIA
Just a few--

TIM

Five minutes ago. Though she had some blood on her lips a couple hours ago.

MARGARET

Let me see.

Margaret pulls back Amelia's hand, looks inside her mouth with a flashlight.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

There, there. Good.

A LATINO ORDERLY and a SHORT NURSE enter the apartment. Margaret turns.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

(to the Short Nurse)

Kelly, would you please get Ms. Riddle a fresh towel?

(to Amelia)

I read your intake form. From your interview. Did you have any effects before this?

AMELIA

This is a side effect?

MARGARET

Not to worry. We can treat this.

The Short Nurse returns with a fresh towel and takes the bloody one.

From her square case, Margaret withdraws a long needle. She fills it with a vile.

TIM

She doesn't need more drugs. She--

MARGARET

This will slow the bleeding.

AMELIA

Am I bleeding inside my body?

MARGARET

No, no. Just relax.

Margaret guides Amelia until she lies flat on the floor. She pulls up Amelia's shirt until her stomach is exposed.

TIM
What are you doing?

MARGARET
Mr. Biggers...

Carson comes forward and holds Amelia's arm to the carpet.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
This will hurt. Try not to move.

TIM
No-!

She PLUNGES the needle into Amelia's belly.

Amelia registers the shock, screams. Margaret pushes the needle's plunger. Amelia shivers and falls unconscious.

MARGARET
(to Carson)
Would you please carry her to bed?

TIM
What did you give her?

MARGARET
The drug is a companion reactant to Dormiral. It was developed after the last trial to address the bleeding. There's a strong sedative in the mixture.

TIM
How long will she sleep?

MARGARET
Until morning. She'll be all right.

Margaret take the bloody towel from the short nurse and stuffs it into a pocket on the side of the square black case.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
You should return to your apartment, Mr. Foster.

TIM
I want to stay with her.

Margaret thinks, decides.

MARGARET

I will have a nurse check with you every hour. Watch her closely. Call us immediately if anything develops.

The staff move towards the door.

TIM

I'm not going to start bleeding, am I?

GENE

It's a symptom only in the women.

Tim nods. Everyone leaves. He looks back to the bedroom.

INT. YELLOW APT. (BEDROOM) CONTINUOUS

Tim enters Amelia's bedroom. He covers her with blankets. He turns on the bathroom light.

INT. FLOOR 4 CORRIDOR A MOMENT LATER

Margaret leads Gene, Carson, the Short Nurse and the Latino Orderly down the corridor.

MARGARET

Now let's see Mrs. O'Rourke?

When they turn the corner and vanish...

Willem's apartment door opens, just a crack.

Standing, he exits his apartment and quietly shuts the door. He tests that it's still unlocked.

At the elevator, he pushes "Down."

INT. LOBBY NIGHT

The Tall Guard reads a pilfered MAD magazine at the front desk.

DING! The elevator doors open.

The Tall Guard checks over his shoulder. No one steps out. He goes back to his magazine.

Willem, unnoticed, slips out of the elevator and hides at the wall just as the doors close.

Willem waits. The lobby office door was left open by Margaret and Gene. Willem considers. At last, he steps onto the office carpet...

INT. LOBBY OFFICE CONTINUOUS

Willem quietly rifles the office.

INT. RED APT. (BEDROOM) NIGHT

Margaret stands with the Old Nurse above Mary O'Rourke's bed. Mary is under covers, immobile.

 OLD NURSE
 Nothing in the last thirty minutes.

 MARGARET
 I want you to stay in this
 apartment until I come and get you.
 She may be the first to show signs.
 She'll need constant watch.

Margaret reaches in her square black case. She takes out the needle...

INT. FLOOR 4 CORRIDOR NIGHT

Willem, carrying a manila file folder, sneaks out of the stairwell and onto the Floor 4 corridor.

He hears people coming down the corridor, voices--

But he's too far away to safely get to his door. Instead, he goes to Amelia's door--

INT. YELLOW APT. (BEDROOM) SAME MOMENT

Tim, against the bedroom wall, turns to see:

Willem, in the living room. Their eyes meet.

 WILLEM
 This is your apartment?

Tim looks to Amelia, then to Willem. He crosses...

 TIM
 (soft)
 What do you want?

INT. YELLOW APT. (LIVING ROOM) CONTINUOUS

Tim intercepts Willem in the living room.

TIM

How did you get out of your room?
I thought they locked you in.

WILLEM

I picked it. I saw them come out
of your room. They looked freaked
out. What'd you do?

TIM

That girl was bleeding.

WILLEM

There's a girl in there?

TIM

Her name's Amelia. They knocked
her out with something.

WILLEM

I have to show you something. I
tried to leave the building. But
there's a guard in the lobby. I
found this in an office.

Willem takes out a newspaper clipping from the file and hands
it to Tim. The headline: "Hospital Massacre."

TIM

What is this?

WILLEM

Four nurses were killed. 10 months
ago.

TIM

I never heard anything about this.

WILLEM

It was buried. Look at the page
number. But read this...

He points Tim to a paragraph.

TIM

Fourteen patients--?

WILLEM

Disappeared. Seven men. Seven
women.

TIM
I don't think that's us.

WILLEM
No. The other study, man.

TIM
Disappeared where?

WILLEM
Maybe DromeLabs killed them.

TIM
No. No. Why?

WILLEM
Four nurses were brutally murdered,
man. Something got out of hand.
That's why we're not in a hospital.
That's why we're next door to their
factory.

TIM
In case something goes wrong--

WILLEM
Yeah, in case something goes wrong.
Now, can I trust you?

TIM
What is this, everyone thinks they
can trust me!

WILLEM
You have an honest beard.

Tim looks back to Amelia's room.

TIM
I'm in the control group. I know
it. I haven't had any side
effects.

WILLEM
Neither have I!

TIM
But at the meeting--

WILLEM
So I have a temper. If this all
goes south, I need someone I can
count on. Now. Can. I. Trust.
You?

INT. HOLIDAY TOWERS NIGHT

Roaming the corridors -- Floor 2... Floor 4, 5... Floor 6....

Empty. Quiet.

The meeting room.

Dark.

Distant, behind doors. Whimpers? Cries? Faint voices.

The Tall Nurse exits an apartment and enters another, a shock on her face -- hard to read, but not good.

INT. LOBBY NIGHT

Carson Biggers is at the front desk. He unlocks a drawer while the Portly Guard checks the bars on the Holiday Towers front doors.

Inside the drawer: a revolver.

Carson slips the revolver into his belt without the Portly Guard noticing.

INT. RECREATION ROOM NIGHT

In the bright fluorescent light, the recreation room looks antiseptic, sterile, abandoned in a yellow haze...

But on the sofa...

The Man patient and the Woman patient are kissing.

Their faces so close, mouths so open, they are almost one person. Right below the illustrated 'Friends' poster of a similar kiss, they grope and fondle.

Beth Ingaard stands in the doorway, watching them.

After a long pause, the Man notices her. He pulls from the woman. Both look at Beth.

Beth steps further inside the recreation room, circles the Ping-Pong table, dragging her fingers. Her eyes are nearly emotionless, but hungry.

She moves to the sofa and stands above the Man and Woman.

The Man's hand reaches up to touch Beth's bare leg. He caresses her. He moves under her skirt.

The Woman watches.

Beth gets on her knees in front of the Man. She undoes her blouse.

The Man unbuckles his belt.

The Woman removes her shirt and bra.

Pulling away from the three, getting distant, they grow smaller and smaller against the large room...

Smaller...

Their skin touching, writhing...

Smaller...

Camera turning, they're lost from sight.

Jukebox.

Games.

Soda machine.

Books.

Turning, turning...

Magazines. Easy chair. Doorway.

And back to the sofa...

Now, the scene of passion is wholly different.

The Man and Woman are blood-soaked, partially dismembered. Definitely dead, murdered by Beth.

Beth still kneels. In one hand, she holds a clump of the Woman's hair. In the other hand, half of someone's hand.

Her open shirt, her skirt are splattered with blood.

She stands, drops what she holds.

Her eyes move to the door.

The Short Guard has entered the room, a late witness to the brutality.

Beth smiles before an animal's leap at the guard--

INT. YELLOW APT. (LIVING ROOM) DAY

In low light, the Orderly enters Amelia's living room. When he passes the kitchen--

SMASH! A chair comes down on the Orderly's head, launching him into the wall and out cold on the floor.

Willem steps out from behind, discarding the pieces of a broken chair.

WILLEM
Check him for keys.

Tim turns the Orderly's pockets.

TIM
Shit.

WILLEM
Nothing? Lock him in the bathroom.

They drag the Orderly across the living room floor.

TIM
Look. His neck!

Something is around the Orderly's neck.

Willem reaches, tugs. A set of two silver keys. He breaks the clasp and pockets them.

They roll the Orderly into the bathroom and brace the doorknob with the bedroom chair.

WILLEM
(re: keys)
Let's hope one of these work for the roof.

TIM
You better be right about a fire escape.

Willem starts for the front door. Tim slows.

WILLEM
Come one. Time's a wastin'.

TIM
Wait. Amelia.

WILLEM

Forget her. She's too heavy to carry.

TIM

I'll try to wake her...

INT. YELLOW APT. (BEDROOM) CONTINUOUS

Tim shakes Amelia in her bed. She doesn't rouse. He returns to the living room...

INT. YELLOW APT. (LIVING ROOM) CONTINUOUS

Tim stands in front of Willem, shaking his head.

TIM

She won't wake up.

WILLEM

Maybe they put her in another coma.

TIM

No, they said--

WILLEM

All of this is bullshit, man. No one gave permission for this. Maybe we had accidents or were in comas, but these fuckers snatched us from hospitals all over the state, and threw us in here to watch what happened. This is illegal, man. This is fucking illegal.

He opens the door, checks the corridor.

WILLEM (CONT'D)

It's clear.

TIM

I'm not going.

WILLEM

Come on!

TIM

What if there's no way out from the roof!

(MORE)

TIM (CONT'D)

What if that key doesn't work?
What if it's to the damn pop
machine!

WILLEM

Then I'll break a chair over
someone else 'til I get a key.
Look -- you stay here, you're dead.

TIM

I can't leave her.

WILLEM

You don't even know her!

TIM

I promised I would watch out for
her. I--. I have to stay.

Willem shakes his head.

WILLEM

Your funeral.

He's gone.

INT. FLOOR 4 CORRIDOR A MOMENT LATER

Willem enters the stairwell, runs up one flight, two, three,
until--

A door. "FLOOR 8." The top. He tries the handle. Locked.
Key.

He inserts it into the lock.

His hand shakes. He breathes. Tries again.

Turns.

It opens.

INT. FLOOR 8 CORRIDOR NIGHT

Into the Floor 8 corridor, Willem spills from the stairwell.
Takes a step, cautious. He crouches, tries to look around
the bend of the corridor. He sees something...

A smiles crosses his face...

He looks closer. Realizes something about the corridor.

WILLEM

Son of a...

Unseen, behind: Carson Biggers. He slowly steps out towards Willem. In Carson's hand: the revolver.

CARSON

Go back to your apartment.

Willem jumps!

WILLEM

Holy shit! Ha. Fuck. You scared the piss out of me, man.

CARSON

Go back to your apartment and lock the door.

WILLEM

I'm getting out of here. Whether you help me or not.

CARSON

I'm gonna ask one more time--

WILLEM

It's not me! It's not me, man. I'm in the control group. And I know when to leave a party.

CARSON

Don't make me shoot you.

WILLEM

Go ahead! I bet you cover this shit up, too.

Willem points down the corridor.

WILLEM (CONT'D)

This is the way out, isn't it? That's why you're here. Pick us off.

CARSON

I don't want to hurt anyone.

It's a standoff. Willem smiles.

CARSON (CONT'D)

Go back to your apartment!

Willem puts his back to Carson.

WILLEM

I believe in you, man. You're gonna let me leave this party. Don't let me down.

He strides down the corridor, away from Carson's gun.

BOOM! Carson shoots Willem in the head.

Carson lowers the revolver, regretful.

Then, a sound in the stairwell. Carson's jaws clench. There is an expression of inevitability on his face. Moving to the stairwell, he listens.

The sound drops. All quiet. Odd.

Carson slow, slow, slowly opens the stairwell door to look--

An arm pierces Carson's body, rips out his heart. A Thin Male Patient stands right at the door, bleeding out the eyes, full of maniacal fury!

Carson gets off one shot from the revolver! BOOM! into the Thin Male Patient's side. Both men roll down the stairs in a heap.

INT. STAIRS NIGHT

Rufus is below in the stairwell, propping open a door with a big number "7" painted on it. He has heard the gunshot, but is unsure if he should follow the sound up...

RUFUS

(calling)

Hello? Everything okay? Anyone up there?

He starts up the first step. Just then, he hears from behind him on the floor--

TALL GUARD (O.S.)

Jesus Christ!

INT. FLOOR 7 CORRIDOR CONTINUOUS

Rufus breaks from the stairs, enters the corridor, and huffs to the door of the recreation room.

Outside the room stands the Tall Guard, bent over, distraught.

RUFUS
What's a' matter?

The Tall Guard points back toward the recreation room. Rufus starts to follow--

TALL GUARD
Jesus. Oh, don't look. Don't look.

Rufus, with trepidation, stares inside the room.

He takes in the scene: the blood, the ravaged bodies on the sofa, the dead Portly Guard in pieces.

Rufus backs away...

TALL GUARD (CONT'D)
Who do you think did that? Oh, shit. Do you think it's one of the patients?

Rufus looks down the corridor.

RUFUS
Go down to the lobby. Tell... tell Biggers about this.

TALL GUARD
Biggers is on eight.

RUFUS
Well tell somebody! I gotta take care of something.

Rufus jogs away.

TALL GUARD
Where you goin'?

RUFUS
I gotta take care of something!

INT. RED APT. (BEDROOM) NIGHT

Mary, eyes closed, on the bed of her apartment--

A slit, her eyes come open.

She turns. Her lamp is on; the clock: 1:21 AM.

She bends up, a spring, and carefully removes the blankets.

Mary stands, feet on the carpet, and steps as if in mud,
until--

INT. RED APT. (LIVING ROOM) CONTINUOUS

On the living room couch, mannequin stiff, is the Old Nurse.

Mary enters the living room, turns her head slowly, sees the
Old Nurse.

OLD NURSE
You're not supposed to be awake.

Mary reaches out!

The Old Nurse tries to get out the door, but Mary viciously
drags her to the ground--

INT. FLOOR 2 CORRIDOR NIGHT

Rufus steps from the elevator onto the staff floor.

He brakes, fast -- sees something:

ZOOM:
Propped at the end of the hall is the body of Gene Markham,
the top of his head removed and blood down his suit and
shirt.

RUFUS
Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck...

He goes to his apartment door, unlocks...

INT. PINK APT. (BEDROOM) NIGHT

Rufus enters his bedroom, snaps on the light.

He goes to his closet, pulls the chain and the bulb pops to
life. The closet is stuffed with security uniforms, and a
few personal supplies. When he parts the hangers--

Nurse Peggy Martin's body is set against the closet's inner
wall, like a piece of wood. Her eyes are open, skin blue,
face a blank doll.

He presses into her and lifts her arms round his neck. She's
too stiff. He puts his back into it...

RUFUS
You're heavy, baby.

INT. PINK APT. (LIVING ROOM) CONTINUOUS

Rufus drags Peggy's body into the living room, where he ally-
oops her across the sofa. The atrophying body bounces off
the sofa arm and lands on the carpet.

He looks down on the scene. Unsatisfied.

He breaks Peggy's fingers open and "stages" her grabbing at
the thick shag carpet.

INT. PINK APT. (BEDROOM) NIGHT

Returning to the closet, Rufus swipes aside more hangers--

A blank wall. Nothing. No one. He looks over his shoulder,
momentarily alarmed and confused.

Then, he steps down, just a foot or two to the right, parts
another section of hangers, sighs relief.

The Black Woman's dead body, in nightdress, bloated as if
drowned, is set against the wall.

Grabbing her, he maneuvers the Black Woman towards the
bedroom door--

--where he stops.

Mary O'Rourke, coated in fresh blood, stands in the living
room watching Rufus do his work.

 RUFUS
 I didn't kill 'em. I found them.

Rufus notices Mary's eyes. Her emotionless face.

 RUFUS (CONT'D)
 Oh, shit!

He drops the Black Woman and Mary torpedoes after him.

Rufus high-tails for the bathroom, struggles to push the door
shut, but Mary has incredible strength and inserts herself
into the bathroom with Rufus.

Soon, she and Rufus are fighting in the bathroom--

The door SLAMS!

SOUND (O.S.): Noisy struggles, mirror smash, Rufus screaming.
Then quiet.

The door! Crash! The door pops open again. Rufus falls out of the bathroom, no sign of Mary.

Rufus' right arm has been ripped from his body and a hose of blood sprays the bathroom door, the floor, the room.

Rufus, moaning in agony, manages to get to his feet and walk out...

All the way to the door, his arm socket pumps red--

INT. FLOOR 2 CORRIDOR CONTINUOUS

Rufus makes it to the Floor 2 corridor. He's losing it. He screams. The socket bleeds down his uniform. He's dizzy. He falls into the wall, not feeling what must be incredible pain of his arm against the paint.

He takes -- a step, a step --

The elevator doors come into focus. He's almost there.

He falls to his knees. A streak of heavy blood paints the corridor wall -- the line straight, then down as he fell.

Rufus collapses, dead.

INT. YELLOW APT. (LIVING ROOM) NIGHT

Tim remains inside Amelia's apartment. He goes to the front door, just to confirm it's locked.

Faintly, he can hear chaos in other parts of the building. Distant screams.

At the bedroom door, he looks upon Amelia. She is still out cold.

The clock: 2:20 AM.

Rotating to the television -- the same channel, the same news program, only the Television Reporter is gone, showing an empty set -- Tim appears thoroughly panicked.

Desperate, Tim picks up the telephone.

SOUND: A recording plays in a loop:

TELEPHONE RECORDING (O.S.)
You have reached DromeLabs. If you
would like to speak with a
switchboard operator, please stay
on the line. You have reached
DromeLabs...

He hangs up.

Paces.

But then the phone rings -- loud!

He answers.

TIM
Hello?

MARGARET (O.S.)
(soft, over phone)
Who is this?

TIM
This is Tim Foster. Someone's got
to get me out of here.

MARGARET (O.S.)
(weakly)
I'm sorry, Mr. Foster. I want to
apologize

TIM
(recognizing)
Dr. Lowry? Where are you?

He hears breathing.

TIM (CONT'D)
Are you there? Someone's got to
come get me and Amelia.

MARGARET (O.S.)
How's our patient?

TIM
Still asleep.

MARGARET (O.S.)
Good. Let her sleep. Let them all
sleep. We shouldn't have woken
them in the first place.

TIM

What's going on? I hear-- I hear a lot of noise in the building. Strange things. I-- I thought I heard screams.

MARGARET (O.S.)

Dormiral is a failure, Mr. Foster. Twice now. It should have been different. But you can't test it on rats. Only humans have comas.

TIM

What are you talking about! You've got to help us, Dr. Lowry. You need to call someone. We can't stay in here.

MARGARET (O.S.)

When Amelia gets up, she'll kill you. The shot I gave her just buys time. But I couldn't get to them all. They were waiting for us.

Tim looks out the window.

TIM

Where are you calling from, Doctor? Are you calling from the factory?

MARGARET (O.S.)

I'm not going anywhere either, Mr. Foster. It's been a pleasure speaking with you... but I should go now. They're almost through the door.

On the line, sound, banging, unusual noises...

TIM

Doctor Lowry. Doctor Lowry!

MARGARET (O.S.)

Don't worry. It won't happen to you. You're in the control group.

The line goes dead.

Tim stares down at the phone. He hangs up gently.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. YELLOW APT. (BEDROOM)

NIGHT

He returns to the bedroom door, again stares at Amelia's tranquil expression...

Tim enters and kneels beside the bed.

The clock: 4:28.

He takes Amelia's hand and starts to weep.

TIM

Can you hear me? Amelia? Can you hear-- Amelia, I'm going to go get help. We can't wait any longer.

(pause)

I wanted to tell you my theory. Okay? Just listen, listen... I think you didn't like the food because you got a different flavor of the drug. You're not going to wake up and, and try to hurt anyone. You're different. That's why I wanted to hang out with you. You're too boring and straight for any of this shit... Right? You're going to wake up, and it's going to be morning, and you'll be perfect.

(pause)

And we'll go on a date. A really boring one. And I will rule you at ping-pong. Did you hear me?

Tim squeezes her hand, at last lets go. Stands.

TIM (CONT'D)

I'm going to lock the door. Don't let anyone in.

INT. FLOOR 4 CORRIDOR NIGHT

Tim opens the door to Amelia's apartment. In total fear, his eyes survey the Floor 4 corridor.

Blood is everywhere. On the carpet just a few feet away lies the torso of a nurse -- arms, legs, and head missing.

Tim covers his mouth in horror.

He steps into the corridor. Closes and locks the door behind him. Then runs! to the elevator, pressing "Down."

He waits. He waits. He hears moans in the distance, from around the bend. Coming closer?

He pushes the button again. Again. Again. Again. Again.
Finally -- the car arrives!

INT. LOBBY NIGHT

The elevator doors part and Tim pokes his head out.

Ahead: two DEAD BODIES -- the Tall Guard beside the desk, the other person unidentifiable.

Tim moves into the lobby...

To his left, in the lobby office:

The body of Dr. Margaret Lowry -- laid on her stomach on the carpet, telephone in her hand, eyes dead yet open, staring at Tim. Her ear is gone and blood pumps over her pale face.

On the office wall:

A shadow of something -- a person? A human shape, reflected by the desk lamp.

Tim heads for the barred doors.

The sun rises outside and orange light sprays the lobby.

Tim pulls at the bars. They don't budge. He tries to pry them off, sweating, clenching his teeth, desperate. He looks to the desk, scans for a key or something...

MEGAPHONED VOICE (O.S.)
Stay where you are!

Someone's outside. Light from a bright source hits the windows. Time returns to the bars.

TIM
(through windows)
I can't get out!

Tim turns. There are FOUR PATIENTS standing by the elevators. Staring directly at Tim. Emotionless eyes.

TIM (CONT'D)
Oh, Christ! Please! Help me!
Help me!

MEGAPHONED VOICE (O.S.)
Hold perfectly still.

Tim's confused. But he doesn't move.

TIM
There's a girl--!

POW! A gunshot.

A bullet hits Tim in the head and he goes down.

He twitches. Gone.

INT. YELLOW APT. (BEDROOM) DAY

Amelia, on the bed.

Her eyes open.

She smiles.

She closes her eyes again.

Opens. Something comes into her memory.

AMELIA
Tim?

She sits up.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
Tim?

She slides off the bed. There's a pain in her stomach. She lifts her shirt and see the large bruise from the injection.

The clock: 6:37 AM.

She staggers toward the bedroom door.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
Tim?

POV:

The living room. Empty. The television plays, the Television Reporter talks, sound turned down.

INT. YELLOW APT. (LIVING ROOM) CONTINUOUS

Amelia makes a beeline for the television. She turns it up.

TELEVISION REPORTER
...Dr. White has now proven that a newborn baby can remain on ECMO using veno-venous bypass for up to nine days.
(MORE)

TELEVISION REPORTER (CONT'D)

The device works in place of the heart and lungs, a mechanical solution that takes place outside of the body...

Amelia leaves the television playing as she moves to the front door.

She tries the door. Locked.

She turns the clasp.

Opens...

INT. FLOOR 4 CORRIDOR DAY

Amelia drifts like an apparition down the corridor. She sees the same animal aftermath witnessed by Tim, the torso, the splatters. She stunned, in disbelief.

She hears nothing. The building is absolutely silent.

She backs towards the elevator.

The buttons. Up. Down.

She hovers above Down...

Her finger moves. She presses Up.

The elevator doors open.

INT. ELEVATOR DAY

Amelia stares at the floor buttons.

She presses the top number -- 8.

INT. FLOOR 8 CORRIDOR DAY

Amelia moves onto Floor 8. Willem's dead body is in the center of the corridor.

She looks at the familiar corridor shape, the bend...

She can't hide her frustration at this, another maze without an exit. She returns the elevator. Double-checks. 8 is the top floor. Outside the elevator, she gazes up to the ceiling, wondering...

She goes into the stairwell, looks--

Carson Biggers and the Thin Male Patient are twisted at the bottom of the landing.

Amelia looks up. The stairs stop. No door. No exit.

She turns once again to the corridor.

As she moves forward, past Willem's body, Amelia sees something. She reaches out--

Her fingers, guiding...

The bend of the corridor -- it's not a bend at all. It's actually an optical illusion.

Instead of a bend, it is the painting of a bend. When Amelia's hand glances against it, it flutters like a curtain.

Amelia sweeps the painting aside. Beyond this convincing mirage, there is light so bright she must shield her eyes.

FADE TO WHITE:

INT. WALKWAY DAY

Amelia stands at the end of long, wide, symmetrical walkway -- a sort of bridge that leads out of Holiday Towers and to another building.

Amelia steps forward...

INT. ROOMS (VARIOUS) DAY

Amelia finds herself in a series of enormous rooms, much like the expanses of the largest convention centers. Hundred foot ceilings, escalators that go up, up, up, up before reaching the next tier, loud echoes of her shoes and distant ambient flutters.

Amelia roams endlessly, completely alone in this space, room after room, a great contrast to the confinement of Holiday Towers...

Until...

She comes to a small door, plainly centered in an enormous white wall. As a wondrous child in a storybook, Amelia, with both hands, turns the handle...

INT. FACTORY DAY

The tremendous noises of machines and industry blister Amelia's ears.

Amelia has entered a factory.

Lines of conveyers moving pharmaceuticals for DromeLabs into bottles and boxes.

Shipping and receiving.

Workers in white coats, as bees in a hive.

At first, no one notices Amelia; she's but a small dot in a noisy expanse. Following the yellow-painted safety line on the factory floor, Amelia wanders, lost, a ghost-like presence.

MEN IN BLACK COVERALLS with weapons appear in the background.

 BLACK LEADER
 (a far away echo)
 Hey! You! Stop!

Amelia doesn't turn. She knows they're after her.

She quickens her pace.

Sees: another door in the wall -- to the outside? -- small, unassuming.

She runs!

 BLACK LEADER (CONT'D)
 Get out of the way!

DromeLabs factory workers part for Amelia as she whips by.

The calls for her to stop become buried in the factory noise--

Nearly at the door, Amelia smiles.

She's a ballet, hand outstretched--

The men raise their weapons--

Amelia throws open the door--

FREEZE!

Amelia, blissful, happy, her face is blasted with sunlight...

SLOW FADE OUT.
 THE END.