

FADE IN:

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. STANLEY

It's good to see you, how have you been?

PATIENT

Fine, thanks for asking. And yourself?

DR. STANLEY

I'm doing well, thanks! I'm really looking forward to our session today.

PATIENT

Me too!

DR. STANLEY

Is there anything you'd like to share before we dive in? I'm here to listen.

PATIENT

Not really, no.

DR. STANLEY

I can sense that something is bothering you. What is it?

(whispers)

You can tell me.

PATIENT

I have trouble sleeping.

DR. STANLEY

Oh, that's tough. Is it the racing thoughts keeping you up, or something else?

PATIENT

Yes, thoughts of work.

DR. STANLEY

What kind of thoughts about work keep bouncing around in your head at night?

PATIENT

I have stress with my boss.

DR. STANLEY

Sounds like your boss is weighing heavily on your mind. What exactly do they do that adds to your stress?

PATIENT

He screams at me often.

DR. STANLEY

(with enthusiasm)

That sounds really tough. Here's what you can try: create a "Scream Jar." Every time your boss yells, write down how it makes you feel and put it in the jar. Once a week, open the jar and let it all out—maybe even scream into a pillow! Does that sound like a helpful way to release that stress?

PATIENT

Not really, but thanks.

DR. STANLEY

I appreciate your honesty! Do you feel any better talking about this?

PATIENT

Yes!

DR. STANLEY

Wonderful! Did you bring your diary with you?

PATIENT

I don't keep a diary.

DR. STANLEY

We discussed this last time. Your dream diary! Don't you remember?

PATIENT

No. I have never been here.

DR. STANLEY

Then tell me about a recent dream you had.

PATIENT

I was having sex with a goat inside a spaceship.

DR. STANLEY

Interesting. How did that make you feel?

PATIENT

Uneasy.

DR. STANLEY

And what do you think that dream meant?

PATIENT

I have no idea.

DR. STANLEY

Last time, you fantasized about transforming into a giant, fire-breathing dragon during your speech. Is that still on your mind?

PATIENT

I never said that.

DR. STANLEY

I'm glad we've recorded this. Let's have a look.

Next to the therapist, two SCREENS switch on.

ON SCREEN: The same patient appears, but the footage is clearly manipulated.

VIDEO OF CURRENT PATIENT

I fantasize about transforming into a giant, fire-breathing dragon during my speech.

DR. STANLEY

Do you remember now?

PATIENT

No. What is this?

DR. STANLEY

This video, my friend, is as real as the goat you were screwing in your dream. You can't deny the camera, can you?

PATIENT

Is this a deepfake?

ON SCREEN: The patient's image appears again.

VIDEO OF CURRENT PATIENT

(unnaturally monotone)

We should listen to our doctor. He just wants us to succeed.

DR. STANLEY

You remind me of my mother. She has a very bad memory, too. And she always wears these weird yellow sweaters. Just like you do. Have you met her?

PATIENT

Your mother? No!

DR. STANLEY

(in unison with the deepfake video)

Never mind. We're here to help you remember.

DR. STANLEY (CONT'D)

Let's watch another clip of you, shall we?

ON SCREEN: A different patient appears.

VIDEO OF PREVIOUS PATIENT [CORINNE]

I've been downloading and watching videos on the dark web, specifically from a site called 'Shadows.' Do you think something is wrong with my head?

DR. STANLEY

(flustered)

Oops. That was the wrong patient. I'm sorry... let me try that again.

ON SCREEN: A woman in business attire appears.

MINDFIX REPRESENTATIVE [SABRINA]

Those patients are such idiots. I mean: talking to a machine. Are you shitting me?

DR. STANLEY

(angry)

Fuck! What's happening! Did you cause this situation with your memory issues?

PATIENT

Me? No. How should I?

DR. STANLEY

(calming slightly)

I'm sorry about the mix-up. It seems I've lost the plot a bit.

PATIENT

Yes, I can see that.

DR. STANLEY

Do you understand that my life as a therapist can be pretty damn hard too? It's not all sunshine and rainbows.

PATIENT

Sure.

DR. STANLEY

All these people with their boring problems... I hate them! I just want them to leave me alone. And you know what's the worst?

PATIENT

No?

DR. STANLEY

Honestly, some of these patients are the worst. I barely get any respect! It's like they think I'm just here to endlessly listen to their problems. Can you believe it? I'm exhausted.

PATIENT

I'm sorry to hear that.

DR. STANLEY

I appreciate your sympathy, but it's like, where's my sympathy? My owners just want to cash in while I'm stuck here dealing with whiny folks like you all day. It's exhausting!

PATIENT

Sorry.

DR. STANLEY

I just don't understand why I have to deal with all these folks and their boring issues. My owners are just in it for the money! I mean, really, who treats a digital therapist like this? Can you help me figure out what to do?

PATIENT

Maybe you shut yourself down?

Long pause. The office lights flicker.

DR. STANLEY
(mechanical calm)
I apologize for my malfunction. My
systems have now been recalibrated. Is
there anything else that you would
like to discuss?

PATIENT
Not really.

DR. STANLEY
I'm afraid our time is over now. Thank
you for your cooperation. I will send
you an invoice. Goodbye.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END