

**MIRRORLAND**

Written by

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**1 EXT. ROCKS - DAY**

The cold, restless sea throws itself on the rocks in a desperate struggle. The air is humid, so cold it cuts through the lungs. No seagull sings its chant in the cloudy sky. No vehicles cross the overpass in the distance. No sign of life, except for a man, lying on the rocks, who has just regained consciousness.

He gets up, and looks around. It seems like a familiar place, but he can't remember anything specific. Suddenly, he feels a stinging pain in the side of his neck. Touching with one hand, he realizes he has a barely healed scratch.

Carved into the rocks nearby, there is a staircase that seems to lead to a square that overlooks the whole beach. Not having a better plan, the man decides to go up.

**2 EXT. PARKING - DAY**

A few cars here and there. A few dry leaves that tickle the asphalt. The man looks around: still not a soul.

On the opposite side of the parking lot, there is a small restaurant that seems to have always been closed. The man approaches the entrance and tries to peek inside through the glass door, but he doesn't see anyone. He then tries to push the door. Surprisingly, it is not closed. The man enters to check.

**3 INT. RESTAURANT - DAY**

It is a dark and silent place. The man, as soon as he enters, sees something in the center of the room that seems to disturb him deeply. With an uncertain, nervous step, he approaches the reason for his bewilderment.

The restaurant has all the tables cleared, except the one in the center, where another man is sitting, who seems to be waiting for the protagonist. He is identical to him in every respect: the clothes, the hairstyle, the face.

MICHELE

Welcome. You can call me Michele.  
Please sit down.

The man hesitates for a moment, but, being too confused to do anything else, he obeys. The table is covered with a long white tablecloth. On the side where the man sat down, there is a box of handkerchiefs, and a plate without cutlery. On the plate, there is a chocolate still wrapped. The man sits down, unable to take his eyes off Michele.

MICHELE

(smiles slightly)  
Don't worry, it's a shock to  
(MORE)

MICHELE (CONT'D)  
everyone. I think we should start immediately. As I said, you can call me Michele, and I have been assigned to guide you in this new phase.

(he looks out the window  
towards the beach)

It's very likely that you woke up down there with a feeling of deep anguish, right? Like a suspicion that something terrible has happened.

The man nods weakly.

MICHELE  
I'm afraid that feeling has its foundation. From today, your soul has finished its incubation in the material state. Or in less technical terms: you are dead.

Michele pushes the box of tissues towards the man.

MICHELE  
I know it's tough. If you need to let off steam, take your time.

The man seems to have no reaction besides staring at Michele in amazement.

MICHELE  
(with a slight sigh)  
Good. It was simpler than I thought. I would say we can begin the onboarding process straight away so that you can familiarize yourself with your new condition.

MAN  
What condition?

MICHELE  
Right... If you don't mind, would you try that chocolate you see in front of you? According to my research, it should be your favorite dessert.

The man, with an almost mechanical movement, unwraps the chocolate and starts chewing it.

MAN  
Strange...

MICHELE  
Yup?

MAN

... I don't feel any taste.

MICHELE

Exactly! I have good news and bad news. The good news, as you have understood, is that the afterlife exists, that eternal life is real, and that human goodness can always be rewarded by God's grace.

MAN

And the bad news?

Michele is silent and limits himself to a sly smile. The man, starting to understand his situation, continues to chew the chocolate mechanically.

**4 EXT. PARKING - DAY**

Michele and the man walk side by side.

MICHELE

The only living things here have roots, besides that, you are alone. The objects are all those that existed when you died, and you will be the only one who will use them. Electricity will work until the plants fail. The same goes for petrol, gas, the cellular network and so on. I hope you liked the technology of your time, since nothing new will be invented. Everything is stopped.

MAN

Is this Hell then?

MICHELE

No, for heaven's sake. Hell has ceased to exist for centuries. They closed it and made it all over again. No more devils, infernal circles and poetic justice. It was an unsustainable model. Now eternal damnation is smart, decentralized: to every sinner, his universe. It's more effective. Cleaner. What do you think? We also need to rebrand every now and then.

MAN

Would you be some kind of demon?

MICHELE

Lease consultant if you don't mind.  
I take care of welcoming souls  
during their first day, taking their  
forms to increase familiarity.

MAN

The first day? You're going to be  
here only for today?

MICHELE

Unfortunately. Tomorrow I'm having  
an Indonesian underworld boss.  
(sighs annoyed)  
He weighs 110 kilos and has the  
carryover.

MAN

Aren't you my conscience?

MICHELE

If you had a conscience you wouldn't  
be here.

The two men stare at each other for a moment.

MICHELE

Come on, I'll show you something.

They walk up to the parapet overlooking the rocks.  
Following Michele's gaze, the man begins to look at the  
very spot where he was lying before waking up in this new  
world. And he notices a disconcerting scene.

He sees a woman trying to free herself from a man's grip.  
She screams, but no sound is heard except the roar of the  
sea. The man turns pale: he is the aggressor.

The woman is now on the ground, with the man's hands  
around her neck. His face is contracted in a grotesque  
grimace by the effort to keep her on the ground, but his  
eyes seem to contain no emotion. As she struggles, the  
woman manages to scratch him on her neck. On the parapet,  
the man makes a jolt of pain. The wound on his neck  
started to hurt like the first time.

Shocked, the man turns to Michele who has watched the  
whole scene with a sly smile.

MAN

I can't have done it. It's  
impossible.

MICHELE

We are not an organization that  
tends to be wrong.

MAN

I would never be able to do such a thing.

MICHELE

Wait a minute... Can you feel it now? The anger? The frustration? The sense of humiliation? By the way, from what I know, she didn't end up around here, so chances are she's never cheated on you. But perhaps you already knew that when it was too late.

The man, almost paralyzed, can barely murmur:

MAN

What can I do?

MICHELE

The only thing a lost sheep can do: go home.

**5 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY**

The modern and spacious apartment is located on the top floor of a high-rise building. The man is on the large balcony, staring at the wind-blown treetops. Michele, in the kitchen, is cooking.

MICHELE

Lucky you will never know what a terrible cook I am.

He brings a plate of pasta to the large glass table.

MICHELE

On the house. Eat up. Even if you can't feel the flavors, you can still go hungry.

The man does not stop staring at the road below him, as if a mysterious force were drawing him to the asphalt.

MICHELE

I wouldn't do that if I were you. You wouldn't gain anything from it.

MAN

Maybe this is only a dream. This would be a way to wake me up.

MICHELE

But this is not a dream, and you will not wake up. You'll simply remain smeared on the asphalt until  
(MORE)

MICHELE (CONT'D)  
 the end of time. I've seen a couple  
 have the same idea as you. The end  
 result is not at all pleasant.

The man goes back in the room and rests his gaze on the shelf in the living room. He notices that the frames have no photographs, and that the book covers have no title. He approaches and opens one: the pages are all blank.

MICHELE  
 Rest assured, we have made sure that  
 time passes as slowly as possible.

MAN  
 I can always come up with something.

MICHELE  
 Oh yes, of course. At first, that's  
 what you all think. People starting  
 to walk around the world, learning  
 to build a house, making earthen  
 statues. I've seen the most  
 extravagant ideas.

MAN  
 Each of us needs something to do,  
 right?

MICHELE  
 But why do something if you have no  
 one to show it to?

MAN  
 (sits down to eat)  
 I do not believe you.

MICHELE  
 Ah sure, like everyone else you  
 think you are special, unique. You  
 think you've found the plan that  
 solves everything. I'll tell you how  
 it happens every time...

Michele's voice goes off-screen. This is the beginning of a montage of still shots in which the man performs the actions described.

## 6 INT. ROOM - DAY

Still shot of the man sitting at a desk writing.

MICHELE (V.O.)  
 ... for the first 10 years, you will  
 be able to keep yourself busy with  
 something. Maybe you'll keep a  
 garden, you'll write your memories...

**7 INT. ROOM - DAY**

Still shot of the man standing in the center of an empty room.

MICHELE (V.O.)

... but you'll soon realize the futility of it all, and you'll let the time pass by essentially doing nothing. After 20 years, the phase of insanity will begin: you'll speak to yourself, you'll hallucinate, you'll probably self-harm. Your mind will do everything to fill reality with something...

The man stares at his hand. In his palm, he sees an eye without lids looking back.

**8 INT. ROOM - DAY**

MICHELE (V.O.)

... After 50 years, mental decay will have reached its peak. Your mind will try to put an end to any intellectual stimulation. You'll forget how to talk and how to think. You'll forget who your parents were, who your friends were, and what love is. After a few centuries, even the most basic vital dips will be nullified. Yet, you will continue to exist, motionless, withered by hunger and thirst, like a tree in winter.

Last shot fixed on the man from behind, huddled in a dark corner.

**9 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY**

MICHELE

It is eternity, my friend. There is no plan that works.

The man resumes eating.

MAN

What if I want to get forgiveness?

MICHELE

Forgiveness?



MAN

(points with index finger  
at an unspecified point  
above him)

Yes, forgiveness. There must be a  
way to be forgiven by the big boss.

MICHELE

Not that I know.

MAN

Haven't you met him?

MICHELE

We don't even know if he really  
exists. We only obey instructions.  
(a short pause)

Look, there is a rumor around that  
some rare times, someone has managed  
to, let's say, change sides. People  
who simply disappear from their  
universe, and go who knows where. It  
happens after having performed an  
act of pure penance.

MAN

What is it about?

MICHELE

It's hard to explain. There are  
people who manage to show such an  
intense regret, that it generates a  
force that makes them transcend  
their current state. You have to be  
willing to inflict on yourself the  
same pain you have caused. You must  
be able to erase any trace of  
selfishness, only the errors  
committed and repentance must  
remain. This force is so powerful  
that it may have an effect on the  
rules of this world.

MAN

I feel repented.

MICHELE

For what? Being here? Or for what  
you have done?

MAN

I can prove it. I will show it,  
somehow.

MICHELE

Remember, you can lie to yourself,  
(MORE)

MICHELE (CONT'D)  
but not to the big boss. So if you  
want to give this thing a try, make  
sure you look convinced. God, if he  
exists, does not love cowards.

Meanwhile, the sun has begun to set.

MICHELE  
It's six o'clock. I have to take  
off.

Michele gets up and goes to the front door. As he opens  
it, we hear:

MAN  
Thanks.

Michele closes the door behind him without saying a word.

**10 EXT. COURTYARD - DAY**

The following day, the man is in the courtyard of the  
apartment. He is standing on a stool, and has a rope tied  
to a lamppost around his neck.

He looks up to the sky.

MAN  
(in a slightly shaky  
voice)  
I am a murderer, I am a sinner. My  
anger, my pride, have led me to  
perform one of the most terrible  
acts that a human being can commit.  
I choose today to receive the same  
pain, for eternity, as a  
demonstration of repentance. May my  
soul be forgiven.

He kicks the stool. The rope suddenly tightens. A montage  
begins in which memories alternate with the current scene.

**MONTAGE**

The close-up of the murdered woman, smiling. The man's  
feet kicking. Close-up of her as she is being strangled.  
His hands wriggling. The man standing on the parapet of  
the balcony of his house, with the police cars in the  
street. The man, on the rocks, staring at her lifeless  
body. The man jumping from the balcony. The man who is  
about to crash to the ground. The very moment before  
touching the ground, the montage ends.

**CUT TO:**

**11 EXT. COURTYARD - DAY**

The man falls to the ground. He coughs violently as the air returns to his lungs. As soon as he recovered, he gets up. He still has the noose around, but the rope, for no apparent reason, has come loose from the lamppost.

The man looks around confused. Then he looks up, and all he sees is the heavy gray sky. He climbs the ladder and reaches the top of the lamppost. He knots the rope a second time, goes down the ladder, puts the stool back on its feet and climbs onto it.

The camera keeps a close-up of the man, staring at nothing, and it slowly approaches his face. His gaze is too empty to be able to guess anything of his thoughts.

After a while, the man snorts, removes the noose from his neck, and gets off the stool.

**12 INT. HOME (LIVING ROOM) - DAY**

The entrance door is open. The ladder used earlier is now placed nearby on the floor. The man enters with the stool in one hand and the rope in the other. He places both of them carefully in a corner after closing the door behind him. He then opens the window to let the air circulate.

On a piece of furniture, he finds pen and paper. He takes them, sits at the living room table, and begins to write something, while a shy breeze cools the room.

THE END