HEADNOISE

Berty Cadilhac

1. EXT. STREET - NIGHT

In a posh residential London suburb, CLARA (35), her sister IRENE (38) and Irene's husband ALAN (38) wait for a taxi.

It's dark. Irene doesn't wear a coat and seems to be cold.

Alan is full of boisterous energy, maybe fueled by alcohol. He talks "at" Clara, who wishes Alan would shut up.

ALAN
(to Clara)
I can get you in touch with one of my mates who is in real estate, and he'll sort you out, it's fine! You either invest money, or you spend money, simple!

CLARA
(unconvinced)
Yeah yeah, you're probably right...

Alan seems annoyed by Clara's skepticism.

ALAN
Not "probably", I "am" right! Renting is the best way to stay poor. Do you want to stay poor?

Irene and Clara share a quick smile, Irene is aware that her husband can be really annoying and inconsiderate.

CLARA
(annoyed)
No Alan, I don't want to "stay poor".

IRENE
(to Alan)
She'd still need a massive down payment. It's not that easy.

CLARA
(to Irene)
You're cold! Go in, I can wait by myself.

ALAN
Nah we're good. Look...

IRENE
It's this one...

The cab they ordered stops.

CLARA
Guys, thank you so much.

Clara gets in the cab.

IRENE
You take care of yourself, okay?

CLARA
Yeah yeah, I will.

ALAN
(to Clara)
Shall I get him to give you a call, or you call him?

CLARA
Who?

ALAN
My mate who's in real estate.

Clara seems annoyed and wants to leave.

CLARA
Look, just... text me the information, okay?
(to the driver)
Hi, I'm going to 10, Bishop street in N1 please.

TAXI DRIVER
Sure.

Alan looks at his phone.

ALAN
Okay, so his number is 079 8766...

CLARA
(interrupts)
Okay okay, just drop me a text...

ALAN
(to Clara)
Shall I send it to you over Telegram, or...? You're on Telegram, right?

IRENE
(to Alan)
Babe, she needs to go...

CLARA
No, just a regular text, Alan.

Alan prevents Clara from closing the cab door.

ALAN
(disappointed)
Don't tell me you're not on Telegram...!

IRENE
(to Clara)
Bye Clara!
(to Alan)
Alan, say "bye Clara!".

CLARA
Bye Irene, bye Alan!

Irene takes Alan's hand and waves.

IRENE
Bye-bye!

ALAN
Okay, bye Clara!

Irene and Alan walk back to their house.

2. INT. TAXI - NIGHT

The cab pulls over. Clara waves goodbye to her sister and brother-in-law, looking at them through the rear window.

Clara exhales deeply. Her expression changes from smiling and polite to relieved and tired.

TAXI DRIVER
Your friend seems very chatty!

CLARA
Oh, he's not my friend, he's my brother-in-law.

TAXI DRIVER
I see.
(a moment)
My brother-in-law is an idiot.
(a moment)
Is your boyfriend an idiot?

This personal question makes Clara uneasy, she reaches out for her phone.

CLARA
(surprised)
I... I don't have a boyfriend.

TAXI DRIVER
Why not?

Clara sighs, she is not in a mood to talk.

CLARA
Ah well... we broke up.

TAXI DRIVER
Why?

Clara pretends to be busy typing a message on her phone to avoid the conversation.

CLARA
(annoyed)
Just... life, you know.

The cab driver harshly breaks to avoid a cyclist, Clara gets a fright.

TAXI DRIVER
Idiot!

CYCLIST (OFF SCREEN)
Asshole!

TAXI DRIVER
(to the cyclist)
You fuckin' dickhead!

The driver calms down, and says to Clara.

TAXI DRIVER
Sorry about that.

CLARA
It's okay...

The driver starts a long rant..

TAXI DRIVER
I hate these delivery bikes.
They're everywhere.
(a moment)
This country is not what it used to be!

Clara rolls her eyes.

TAXI DRIVER
He's wearing black, how am I supposed to see him in the dark?
(a moment)
I'm not being funny, but come on!
We've become a third world country.

Clara closes her eyes, she wishes the driver would just be quiet.

The taxi driver resumes his rant. He points at people.

TAXI DRIVER
Look at these bums. Crackheads, scroungers on benefits. But if you and I say anything, we're going to be told off like we're bloody fascists!
(a moment)
And these young kids, they have zero respect. Just a bunch of idiots with their mobile phones...

The taxi driver continues his rant.

Clara takes a bottle of gin that she was hiding in her bag, she uncaps it and drinks directly from the bottle.

The voice of her brother-in-law still resonates in her mind.

ALAN (VOICE OVER)
Do you want to stay poor? Do you just want to stay poor all your life?

The voice of Clara's sister, Irene, comes up too:

IRENE (VOICE OVER)
(to Clara)
Really? Stealing a bottle from your own sister?

The camera reveals that Alan and Irene seem to be sitting next to Clara.

Clara doesn't seem surprised by this impossible presence, just annoyed.

ALAN
(to Irene)
It's her bottle, she bought it.

IRENE
(to Alan)
She brought it to us as a gift! You don't leave with the gift that you brought!

ALAN
(to Irene)
Come on! She needs it. Look at her, she's sad.

The taxi driver continues his rant, unaware of Clara's internal dialog.

IRENE
(to Alan)
Oh, and you think I'm not sad? You think I don't need a drink? Do you know what it's like to live with you?

Alan is puzzled. He opens his mouth to reply to Irene, but decides against it. Instead he turns to Clara.

ALAN
You need a rich husband.

Clara sighs again. She looks through the window, trying to ignore these voices in her head.

IRENE
Why did you split up with Scott by the way? He was exactly what you need.

ALAN
(to Irene)
Oh, did you see the pictures of Scott's new girlfriend on Insta? She is hot!

Irene hits Alan.

ALAN
It's true!

Alan leans towards Clara and says in her ear.

ALAN
(to Clara)
Why are you not on Telegram?

Clara is really annoyed:

CLARA
(dry)
Ah, shut the fuck up!

Clara puts her hand on her mouth, as she realises that she said that out loud.

The Taxi Driver stops talking.

He looks at Clara in his rear view mirror, she is alone and it feels like she was addressing the driver.

She is hugely embarrassed and speechless for a while. She awkwardly tries to explain.

CLARA
"Politicians". Yeah, they... they need to shut the fuck up.
(a moment)
...the politicians.

The cab stops at a red light. The taxi driver remains quiet.

After being annoyed by the voices, Clara is now bothered by the cringey silence.

Alan and Irene appear again, next to Clara. They stare at her in silence, looking embarrassed for her.

Clara puts her earpods on and looks through the car window.

She looks sad and tries to relax to the sound of soothing music.

Irene tells Clara.

IRENE
(to Clara)
Look, we all have little voices in our head, okay? All of us. But that's not even your problem.
(a moment)
You know what your problem is? Your problem is that you refuse to grow up. You really need to...

Clara increases the sound level of her music, to cover the intrusive voices in her head. She closes her eyes.

3. INT. CLARA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Clara sleeps in her bed by herself.

The room is quiet and mostly dark.

Two voices whisper.

MOTHER (VOICE OVER)
Clara.

FATHER (VOICE OVER)
Shush, you're going to wake her up.

MOTHER (VOICE OVER)
I know, that's exactly what I want to do.

Her FATHER (65) and her MOTHER (65) are not actually present in the bedroom, they're just characters in Clara's head again.

Clara's parents are lighting candles on a cake.

They start singing, and progressively increase the level of their voices.

MOTHER & FATHER
(low)
Happy birthday to you...

The dim light progressively increases in brightness.

MOTHER & FATHER
(louder)
Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday to you, Clara! Happy birthday to you.

They blow the candles and the room becomes dark again, just as Clara wakes up in a fright.

Clara turns on a bedside lamp and looks around, but sees no one.

She looks at the time on her alarm clock.

3:33

Clara sighs and turns off the light, then falls back on her bed, annoyed.

Clara closes her eyes and tries to fall back to sleep.

Her Mother and Father's faces appear again, this time just inches away from Clara's face, on each side.

They whisper to her ears:

FATHER
We just wanted to remind you...

MOTHER
... that your birthday is coming up soon.

FATHER
Very soon.

MOTHER
One more year.

FATHER
You're not getting any younger.

MOTHER
You're getting older.

FATHER
Every day, you're getting older.

Clara turns around in her bed. She is clearly awake, this is not a dream, it's her internal dialogue, and it prevents her from sleeping.

MOTHER
At your age I was already a mother of three.

FATHER
We were married. We had a house, we had a car.

MOTHER
We had TWO cars. A 48 piece dinner set with silver cutlery and crystal glasses.

FATHER
A massive dinner table with 12 chairs.

MOTHER
You don't even have a proper dinner table.

MOTHER
You just have a shitty coffee table from Ikea.

FATHER
You have nothing.

MOTHER
You have no one.

FATHER
You are no one.

MOTHER
You're a piece of shit.

FATHER
Happy birthday, piece of shit.

A quick silence. They then both sing cheerfully

MOTHER & FATHER
Happy birthday to you!...

Clara is annoyed, she opens her eyes and sits up on her bed.

She turns the light on again. There is no one in the bedroom.

She puts her face in her hands.

CLARA
(frustrated)
Agh!

Suddenly a knock at the door. This feels real, Clara looks towards the door, concerned.

Her ex-boyfriend SCOTT (35) appears in the frame of the open bedroom door.

SCOTT
Hey Snowflake...

Clara is reassured but annoyed.

Scott enters the room.

SCOTT
(to Clara)
I just wanted to introduce you to my new girlfriend.
(to Julie)
Come!

JULIE (30) enters the room, she takes Scott's hand.

Julie seems a bit embarrassed and giggly.

JULIE
Hey!

Clara rolls her eyes, she puts her face in her hands.

SCOTT
(to Clara)
Look! Look at her! Look how pretty she is!

JULIE
(waves)
I'm Julie!

SCOTT
(to Clara)
You must have seen her on Instagram, right? I've posted quite a few stories about "us".

JULIE
(to Scott)
Especially when we were in Rome!
(to Clara)
Have you ever been to Rome?
(embarrassed)
Oh sorry, you guys were supposed to go together...
(a moment)
I'm sorry. Such a romantic city!

4. INT. DREAMY SEQUENCE - NIGHT

In a dreamy sequence, floating images from social media come and go, along with written comments and emoticons.

The voices correspond to the written text and comments.

JULIE (VOICE OVER)
It's such a romantic city!

SCOTT (VOICE OVER)
I took the love pill!

MOTHER (VOICE OVER)
La pilule de l'amour!

FATHER (VOICE OVER)
I'm so happy for you guys!

SCOTT (VOICE OVER)
I'm so, so fortunate to have found this lovely person.

Other images of their couple come up, superimposed with pictures of flowers, hands, little hearts in the sand.

JULIE (VOICE OVER)
L'amour, toujours.

FATHER (VOICE OVER)
Such a lovely couple!

MOTHER (VOICE OVER)
Love is in the air!

FATHER (VOICE OVER)
She's so pretty!

SCOTT (VOICE OVER)
I was asleep, and now I am awake.

5. INT. CLARA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Clara is awake, she is scrolling through her social media feed, where the pictures and comments come from.

The voices can still be heard, but more faintly.

JULIE (VOICE OVER)
I am Julie.

SCOTT (VOICE OVER)
She is Julie!

MOTHER (VOICE OVER)
Aww, so cute!

JULIE (VOICE OVER)
La pilule de l'amour...

Scott appears again in the bedroom, he approaches Clara's face and whispers:

SCOTT
Just say the word. And we'll be back together, you and me.

Annoyed, Clara throws her phone on the bedside table and lies down again.

Julie is in the same spot as before, she is suspicious and asks Scott:

JULIE
(dry)
What did you just tell her?

Scott seems embarrassed, he goes next to her.

SCOTT
(embarrassed)
Who...?

Clara's Father and Mother enter the room, carrying the birthday cake again, lit up by burning candles.

FATHER & MOTHER
(sing)
Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday to you!

FATHER
Oh hi Scott.

SCOTT
Hi Mr Smith!

JULIE
(waves)
I'm Julie!

Scott and Julie join in on the singing.

The four of them sing altogether:

ALL VIRTUAL CHARACTERS
Happy birthday to you, Clara. Happy birthday to you!

Clara turns around and puts a pillow above her head, to cover the voices.

The singing goes on and on.

A new voice can be heard, coming from a different side of the bedroom.

LUCY (VOICE OVER)
Clara. Clara.
(louder)
Clara!

Clara opens her eyes and sees her best friend LUCY (35), leaning against a bedroom wall.

The voices keep going in the background.

Unlike the others, Lucy seems to empathise with Clara.

LUCY
There's one way out of this. One easy way. And you know it.

Lucy is holding a bottle of gin, she drinks directly from the bottle.

The strong alcohol burns her throat, but she seems to enjoy it. Lucy suddenly looks more jovial.

LUCY
(excited)
Gin baby, gin!
(sings)
Jean Genet, let yourself go!

Clara tries to grab the bottle, but it seems to have disappeared from Lucy's hand.

Lucy explains:

LUCY
(dry)
The bottle is in the living room.

Clara sits on her bed, and puts her feet on the floor.

She debates the idea of getting drunk.

The obsessive voices keep going.

IRENE (VOICE OVER)
Look, we all have little voices in our head, okay? All of us.

FATHER (VOICE OVER)
You have nothing.

MOTHER (VOICE OVER)
You have no one.

FATHER (VOICE OVER)
You are no one.

ALAN (VOICE OVER)
Do you want to stay poor? Do you just want to stay poor?

FATHER (VOICE OVER)
You're not getting any younger.

MOTHER (VOICE OVER)
You're getting older.

FATHER (VOICE OVER)
Every day, you're getting older.

JULIE (VOICE OVER)
I'm Julie!

MOTHER (VOICE OVER)
You're just a piece of shit.

FATHER (VOICE OVER)
Happy birthday piece of shit.

JULIE (VOICE OVER)
Have you ever been to Rome?

LUCY (VOICE OVER)
There's one way out of this. One easy way. And you know it.
(a moment)
The bottle is in the living room.

IRENE (VOICE OVER)
Your problem is that you refuse to grow up. And you really need to grow up.

LUCY (VOICE OVER)
The bottle is in the living room.

Then eventually Clara stands up and leaves the bedroom.

The voices seem to follow her as she goes to the living room.

IRENE (VOICE OVER)
Where is she going?

FATHER (VOICE OVER)
Oh please. Don't tell me you're even thinking about it...

From the bedroom, we can imagine Clara's activity based on the sound coming from the living room.

- Sound of a GLASS put on a table.

- Sound of the bottle CAP being unscrewed.

IRENE (VOICE OVER)
Don't do that!

LUCY (VOICE OVER)
Do it!

MOTHER (VOICE OVER)
Don't you dare!

LUCY (VOICE OVER)
It will put them to sleep! And you know it.

MOTHER (VOICE OVER)
That's terrible. That's a terrible idea!

IRENE (VOICE OVER)
What? No! Don't do that!

Again and again, the sound of Clara POURING gin into a glass, then drinking it in one go.

She sounds grossed out by the burning feeling.

CLARA (VOICE OVER)
Yuk !

The buzz of the voices can still be heard, but gets progressively distorted, then eventually fades away.

MOTHER (VOICE OVER)
This is wrong. This is so wrong.

SCOTT (VOICE OVER)
Really? Is this who you are, Clara? Is this who you became?

FATHER (VOICE OVER)
That is just nonsense. Come on!

LUCY (VOICE OVER)
You've got to do what you've got to do!

JULIE (VOICE OVER)
I'm Julie!

Sound of Clara falling on the floor..

6. INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The following morning, Clara hears her clock alarm.

With her eyes still closed, she tries to find the alarm clock, but instead of touching it she finds the empty bottle of gin on the floor.

Clara realises that she is lying on the floor of her living room, she is not in her bed.

It is still a bit dark. We can't see Clara's face properly.

She tries to move, but moans in pain.

Clara painfully gets on her knees, and crawls to her bedroom.

Her head and whole body are aching, she seems badly hangover.

7. INT. BATHROOM - DAY

The bathroom is mostly dark.

A number of "virtual characters" stand side by side, ang look at their reflection in the mirror.

They see Clara pass by as she goes to the bedroom.

They whisper.

VARIOUS CHARACTERS
This is gonna be bad. She's gonna look like shit. She needs to go to work.
(to Lucy)
Why did you tell her to drink?

LUCY (VOICE OVER)
It's your fault! You guys kept her awake all night!

The sound of the alarm stops.

VARIOUS CHARACTERS
Oh, now it's our fault?

LUCY
Of course it's your fault!

VARIOUS CHARACTERS
She's gonna look like shit. She's coming. She's coming.

The reflection of Clara appears in the mirror, but it is still too dark to see properly what she looks like.

VARIOUS VOICES
This is gonna be bad...

The characters get quiet but we can sense their nervousness.

Clara takes a deep breath.

She turns on the light.

We don't see her appearance, but we hear all the characters shouting at the same time when they discover how tired and sick she looks.

ALL CHARACTERS
Aghh!

8. INT. OFFICE - DAY

Clara walks across the dull "open space" of her office. She tries to attract as little attention as possible. Large sunglasses hide her eyes and part of her face.

When she arrives at her desk, Clara sits heavily on her chair.

Opposite her, Clara's colleague Lucy stands up and looks at Clara without a word.

With a simple gesture, Clara indicates that she is not in a good mood and would rather avoid any discussion.

But eventually Lucy asks.

LUCY
Show me.

CLARA
(dry)
No.

LUCY
Show me !

Clara sighs and takes off her sunglasses.

Her eyes are red, her face looks puffy and sick.

LUCY
Oh shit...

Clara puts her sunglasses back on.

Lucy tries to pedal back on her honest reaction.

LUCY
Just kidding. It's okay...

Clara interrupts.

CLARA
(dry)
Not today.

LUCY.
What ? I said nothing ! You look...fine.
(a moment)
Party girl...

Lucy sits down.

CLARA
Just an insomnia...

LUCY
Again ?

CLARA
(annoyed)
Yes, "again"...

Lucy tries to make her colleague and friend feel better.

LUCY.
It's just stress.
(un moment)
If you're stressed, just have a drink, and all goes well.

Clara sighs, this advice mirrors the one that "imaginary Lucy" had given Clara in the middle of the night.

LIAM (30) is Lucy and Clara's manager. He walks to their desk.

Liam is short, he is just a team leader, but his trader shirt and cocky attitude reveal a high self esteem and big ambitions in the corporate world.

LIAM
Clara, you did book the room for the...

Liam is surprised by Clara's sunglasses.

LIAM
...the room for the training? At 9am, right?

Clara sighs.

CLARA
Yes.

Lucy answers a question that wasn't asked aloud.

LUCY
It's an eye allergy.

LIAM
Is that contagious? Because if it's "pink eye" it's contagious.

CLARA
It's not "pink eye". I'm allergic to cat hair.

LUCY
(surprised)
You have a cat?

CLARA
Of course not, why would I have a cat if I'm allergic...

LIAM
(interrupts)
Okay great, I can't join the training or whatever it is, can I let you handle it?

Even though Lucy was not solicited, she replies as a team.

LUCY
(to Liam)
Yeah we can do that. What is it about?

LIAM
Some... HR stuff. I'm not quite sure to be honest but it's mandatory, so make sure everyone attends. It's a third party supplier, so please behave.

Lucy checks her watch.

LUCY
It's 8.58am, so maybe we should go now.

Clara painfully gets up, she goes to the other team members.

CLARA
(to Colleague #1)
Meeting now. Mandela room.
(to Colleague #2)
Meeting.
(to Colleague #3)
Meeting now. Mandela.

COLLEAGUE #1
What is it?

CLARA
It's mandatory.

LUCY
Some HR stuff.

COLLEAGUE #2
Do we really need to attend?

CLARA
Yes.

9. INT. OFFICE - DAY

Clara and her colleagues arrive at the room named Nelson Mandela.

Clara pushes the door open, steps in the room and freezes.

Twelve senior executives wearing business suits look at her in silence. With her sunglasses, Clara looks odd. They are surprised, she is confused.

The only lady in the room is an Executive Assistant, GLENDA (45) jumps from her seat and walks towards the door.

With a gentle push she gets Clara to leave the room, and shuts the door behind the two of them.

GLENDA
(to Clara)
Can I help you?

Glenda's tone demonstrates assertiveness, it's not an offer to help but a way to challenge Clara.

Clara is confused, she takes off her sunglasses and checks the name of the room on the door. It is the right room, "Nelson Mandela".

CLARA
We... I booked the room from 9am, are you guys wrapping up?

Glenda has a little sarcastic giggle, and answers:

GLENDA
It's a board meeting, we finish at 11am.

CLARA
But I... booked the room on Cervantes.

LUCY
(to Clara)
Are you sure you booked it?

Clara panics, she looks at her laptop screen.

CLARA
Today is the 24th, right?

LUCY
Yes.

Clara is reassured, the booking seems confirmed in her system.

CLARA
24th from 9 to 10am, yes I did book the room! In Cervantes.

GLENDA
I'm from the Zurich office, we don't use Cervantes. You will have to find another room.

Clara tries to fight back, but today is not a great day for her to win this kind of fight.

CLARA
But I booked the room...

Lucy tries to support Clara.

LUCY
(to Glenda)
We use Cervantes here.

GLENDA
(dry)
Again. This is a board meeting. You know what a board meeting is, right?

CLARA
Yes but...

GLENDA
I have Meisner here in the room, believe me, you don't want to tell Meisner to change rooms in the middle of a board meeting.

CLARA
But...

GLENDA
What's your meeting about?

CLARA
It's important, it's about...

Two external facilitators arrive.

FACILITATOR #1
(to Clara)
Hi, are you Clara?

CLARA
Yes...

The two facilitators look young and friendly.

They both wear colourful sweatshirts, light blue for him, pink for her, with a large and fun logo that reads:

GOOD MORNING WELLNESS!

Glenda smiles. Clearly their appearance demonstrates that this is not "important".

Glenda wraps the conversation with a dry:

GLENDA
I really need to go.

Glenda gets back in the room and shuts the door behind her.

Through the glass panel of the door, Clara sees that Glenda answers with a simple gesture to an executive who inquires about the disruption. Glenda's gesture clearly says "nothing, no one".

The senior executive catches eye with Clara for a quick moment. Clara can read in his eyes the smugness and superiority that makes her feel insignificant.

Lucy suggests:

LUCY
We can try M.L.K....

10. INT. CORRIDORS - DAY

Clara, Lucy, the two facilitators and the rest of the team walk in the corridors and arrive at another room.

The name on the door indicates "Martin Luther King".

Unfortunately they see through the glass panels that there's someone in the room.

It matches the booking that Lucy can see on the computer.

LUCY
Oh wait, busy at 9am.

Clara sighs.

COLLEAGUE #1
It's a sales guy.

They look again through the glass panels and see that there is only one person in the room, a Sales Executives who seems to go to the gym every day.

He is a video meeting with a client.

The room is very large.

COLLEAGUE #2
Why do they always have to book the largest room for a simple call?

COLLEAGUE #3
There's a small room available around the corner. Maybe he'll be happy to swap.

LUCY
I'm not sure about "happy".

COLLEAGUE #3
Come on, we're the same company. "Excellence in team work", remember?

Clara softly knocks at the door.

The Sales Executive seems full of nervous energy, he looks towards the door and sees that Clara wants his attention.

He apologises to his client and walks to the door.

As soon as he opens up the door, his fake smile turns into a tough face, which is a bit scary considering his muscular body.

SALES EXECUTIVE
What?

Clara is nervous. She blabbers:

CLARA
Yeah hi, sorry, we're a group, and we had booked a room in Cervantes but...

SALES EXECUTIVE
(interrupts)
This room? Did you book this room in Cervantes?

CLARA
Well no...

SALES EXECUTIVE
Exactly. I booked it.

CLARA
Yes but.

SALES EXECUTIVE
Look, this is important. This guy pays our salaries, so next time please use Cervantes, and don't interrupt me in the middle of a meeting.

The Sales Executive shuts the door abruptly and gets back to his video call, he puts his big fake smile back on for his client.

LUCY
Rude!

Clara is speechless, she was just humiliated in front of the full team and an external partner.

Colleague #1 suggests:

COLLEAGUE #1
Gandhi...?

COLLEAGUE #2
I hate Gandhi.

COLLEAGUE #3
Everyone hates Gandhi.

11. INT. GANDHI ROOM - DAY

All participants and facilitators are crammed into a tiny room, they seem very uncomfortable.

Two employees pass by in the corridor, and stop for a second to contemplate how squeezed the participants are. They laugh and walk away.

Clara looks in a very bad mood, she had one job and she failed.

The two facilitators comment on the slides they project on a white wall. The logo and colour code of their company can be seen in every slide.

On a table, a number of goodies are ready to be given away. Anti-stress balls, pens, it seems like a well marketed programme.

FACILITATOR #1
...but what is "wellness". How do you define "wellness"?

No one replies, the energy is quite low and the mood is not great.

FACILITATOR #1
Wellness is a holistic integration of physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, fueling the body, engaging the mind, and nurturing the spirit.
(un moment)
"Body", "mind", "spirit", it's all interconnected.

The voices of Clara's bullies come back to haunt her. They seem to be sitting in the room amongst the participants.

SALES EXECUTIVE
I mean she's cute, but she's really useless.

GLENDA
Totally useless. But she's not even cute.

SALES EXECUTIVE
She's not getting any younger.

GLENDA
(to Clara)
Loser.

Distracted by these virtual characters, Clara struggles to pay attention to the programme presentation.

Her sister Irene pops up as another virtual character.

IRENE
(to Clara)
Is that it? No reaction?

Clara doesn't seem surprised by her sister's imaginary presence. She pretends to ignore her, but her voice trumps the facilitators' presentation.

IRENE
At what stage do you say "enough is enough"?
(a moment)
What would it take, to get you to finally take action over your life?

Clara opens her mouth, she seems to be about to reply, but virtual Glenda jumps in.

GLENDA
(to Irene)
Her? Take action? In the world there are "decision makers", and "action takers".
(a moment)
She's not making any decision.

12. INT. BOARDROOM - DAY

Clara pictures herself dressed up as a senior executive, she seems dynamic and assertive.

She sits at a table and states with authority:

CLARA #1
We're going to kick off with our first item, "should we leave our current role, or stay for a bit longer?".

A second version of Clara, dressed up differently but also coming up as a senior executive jumps in to comment with a sharp and dry tone:

CLARA #2
Sorry to interrupt, is the question about changing company, or changing role in the same company?

A third "clone" of Clara quickly comments:

CLARA #3
Every time we quit, we get depressed and we rush to find the exact same job in a different company.

The room turns out to be filled up with clones of Clara.

CLARA #4
What is our job exactly? I mean what value do we really bring to the table, what do we do?

CLARA #5
"Who are we" is the real question.

CLARA #6
We're... we're a boss.

CLARA #7
(shrugs)
Really?

CLARA #6
We can be a boss if we want to. But first we need to take more risk, and quitting our job is a risk we need to take.

CLARA #4
But don't you think that...

A knock on the door. They stop discussing.

The door opens slowly, and a shy Glenda, the mean Executive Assistant sticks her head in the room.

GLENDA
(shy)
Hi, sorry to interrupt.

CLARA #1
What is it?

GLENDA
Sorry, sorry to bother you...

CLARA #4
(dry)
We're busy.

GLENDA
(nervous)
I know, but I just wanted to know... What are your thoughts?

CLARA #4
Our thoughts on what?

GLENDA
Your thoughts on the programme.

CLARA #3
What programme?

GLENDA
The programme we've been talking about.
(a moment)
"Hello Wellness".

13. INT. GANDHI ROOM - DAY

Clara is back in real life. Everyone looks at her, amused.

Clara realises that she was totally daydreaming. She tries to find an articulate answer.

CLARA
Well, yeah, "the programme"... I mean... why not?
(a moment)
What's the... What's the cost again?

Her colleagues are amused by this irrelevant question.

FACILITATOR #2
We're an official L&D partner, so I assume the cost is covered by your HR department, or whoever usually pays for this kind of programme.

FACILITATOR #1
(to Clara)
There's no individual costs for the participants if that was your question.

CLARA
Okay...

FACILITATOR #2
Unless of course, you need to attend additional sessions outside the scope of the programme.

FACILITATOR #1
Yes. For example you have a package for 5 sessions of life coaching. If you feel that you would benefit from additional sessions, you might want to take them outside this framework and cover the expenses yourself.

Clara nods and says.

CLARA
Okay, thanks...

Lucy seems skeptical about the programme.

Facilitator #1 spots her hesitation and addresses everyone, but more specifically her.

FACILITATOR #1
Other questions?
(to Lucy)
You don't seem convinced?

LUCY
How... How can we be sure that this won't be used against us?

FACILITATOR #2
What do you mean?

LUCY
Let's say for example... I confess something embarrassing during a coaching session or whatever.
(a moment)
Will my management be made aware of this information?

FACILITATOR #1
Do you have an example?

LUCY
Well let's say... I mean that's just theoretical okay, but let's say I'm in a relationship with the head of finance.

Some colleagues smile in the room.

LUCY
AND. With the head of IT.

COLLEAGUE #1
Kevin? Really?

Some giggles.

LUCY
Not Kevin. The other guy with the tattoo.

COLLEAGUE #2
That's Raj.

LUCY
No! Not Raj!

Facilitator #2 tries to regain control of the discussion.

FACILITATOR #2
We don't "share" our discussions with your company. Okay?
(a moment)
Everything you say to your life coach, your sports coach, all this remains between you and them.

LUCY
Okay...

Lucy seems unconvinced.

14. INT. SUBWAY CARRIAGE - DAY

Clara is commuting by subway, back from work.

She stands in a busy carriage. Next to her, the two facilitators keep talking enthusiastically about their programme.

FACILITATOR #1
I would say "especially" if you're planning to leave your job, you need to increase your wellness level.

FACILITATOR #2
"Wellness" is not just a pleasant feeling. It's not just a buzzword. Wellness is strength. Wellness is the capacity to live both in the present moment, and to project yourself with optimism into your next step.

FACILITATOR #1
Do you think your next employer is looking for someone who feels terrible about who they are, someone who hates their whole life...

FACILITATOR #1
Or do you think they need someone who projects strength, confidence, balance?

Clara is sick of this, she is tired and closes her eyes.

A homeless person enters the carriage, and starts addressing the whole carriage to raise awareness about his situation.

HOMELESS PERSON
Ladies and gentlemen, I'm very sorry to disturb you on your daily commute. But I've found myself in a tricky situation recently...

The facilitators continue talking to her.

FACILITATOR #2
This programme will turn you into a more focussed, more productive, happier person.

CLARA
Bullshit.

Clara suddenly realises that she said this aloud.

She opens her eyes.

The two facilitators are gone. They were not travelling with her, they were just stuck in her head.

The homeless guy on the other hand is real. He interrupted his speech, and seems to be on the verge of tears.

Around Clara, all passengers look at her with outraged expressions.

Clara is mortified, she is aware that the optics are not good.

15. EXT. STREET - DAY

Clara has left the subway, she runs in the street, terrified by her own attitude and mind.

Behind her, "virtual characters" also run and comment.

IRENE
What's wrong with you? Are you getting mad or what?

ALAN
What was that? That was insane.

LUCY
Please tell me you're drunk. If you're drunk it's okay. If you're sober, well... You need a drink.

Clara's Mother catches up with her, she is cycling.

MOTHER
Sometimes I think that it's a good thing that you don't have kids.
(a moment)
Can you imagine? You with kids?

Clara's father walks in the opposite direction, but has enough time to tell her:

FATHER
You're just a piece of shit.

A child in a pram points at Clara. This one is real.

CHILD
Look Mommy. A crazy lady.

The mother sees Clara who runs, she seems confused but nothing crazy. She tells her toddler:

CHILD'S MOTHER
She's probably not crazy. She's just...

Clara stops at a red light.

Frustrated, she hits the ground with her foot and says:

CLARA
Fuck!

The Mother tells her child:

CHILD'S MOTHER
Actually you're probably right, she's crazy.