

The background of the entire image is a dark, claustrophobic tunnel. The walls are made of crumbling concrete and exposed bricks, with visible cracks and peeling material. In the center of the tunnel, a person is standing in the distance, their figure slightly out of focus. The lighting is dim, creating a sense of mystery and unease.

Hug Me

*Embrace
your childhood nightmares*

Horror Thriller

Feature Film



Pitch

When she returns to her childhood holiday house, Emma discovers that her 12-year-old cousin who's existence she had forgotten, was walled in.

Emma needs to deep dive into this dark family secret and face the demons of her past.

Tone & Genre

Psychological Thriller

A wave of bold films has been hitting our screens for the past decade, blending mystery, suspense and an exploration of the darker side of human nature.

Production companies such as **A24** and **Neon** have played a major role in popularising the genre, giving both male and female audiences the chills with films such as "*The Substance*" and "***Get Out***". **Blumhouse Productions** has also managed to popularise horror as a genre with efficient production, and an audience based approach.

I believe that there should be no divide between "genre" horror, and "elevated horror".

I want to create a real **drama** that relies on **characters**, **conflicts** and **stakes**. Jump scares and music are here to serve the film, not drive it.

I also believe that blood and gore are not the only ingredients that generate fear and tension, "*Hereditary*" proves that great characters played by a well directed **cast** can generate more anxiety than many violent films.

The monster we imagine is always scarier than the most expensive creature, "*Jaws*" becomes less scary when we start seeing the shark. In "*Hug Me*", it is not quite clear from the start **who the monster is**, or are. Even the protagonist, Emma, has her share of responsibility in this **family tragedy**. The main killer is so polite and young that he comes up as more dangerous, **pure evil rather than testosterone and muscles**.

I love **suspense** and **mystery**, as well as exploring the **depths and darkness** of the **human soul**. These elements are handled so brilliantly in films such as "***The Shining***", that the blood and gore become almost incidental.

Even with a low level of pure violence, I believe that a very **scary film** can be created by using proven themes and universal **phobia**. The disconnect between the apparent calm of the boy, and his strange lack of emotion can be unsettling. If a lion stares at you, you run. But if you are aware that a massive spider hides in your bedroom, it will damage your brain before even touching your skin.

Claustrophobia is going to be another button that the last part of the film will keep pressing. Being locked in this sinister **concealed space** is going to trigger reactions. And just like a Russian doll, the dumbwaiter **shaft** itself is an even more **suffocating** space that will trigger **guttural reactions**.

The vision of a child chained like a dog should be very **disturbing**, it is not violent but will hopefully stick in viewers' minds, the simple "freedom perimeter" on the dirt should make everyone feel **uncomfortable**. But as we will see in the statement of intention, this shocking image will somehow remain "clean" and acceptable.

CCTV footage is an easy way to scare people, it is both very real, unedited, **raw**, and really **mysterious**. No sound, no cameraman, a fly on the wall perspective that captures **sleepwalking** like no sophisticated shot can. Yes sleepwalking has been done before, yes twins exist in other movies, CCTV footage too, but these are just tools, the **characters** will hold the story together, and make it memorable.

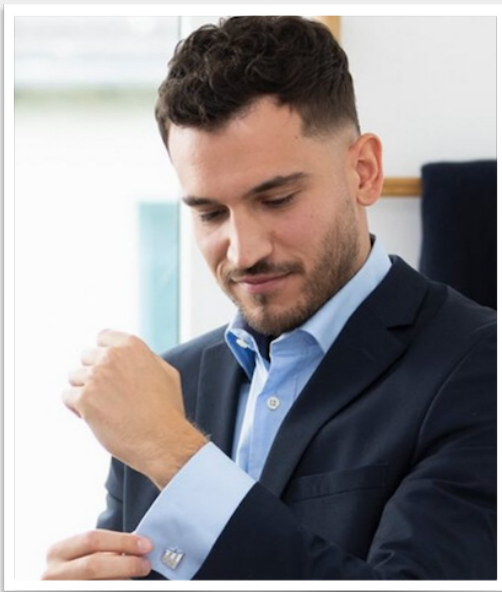
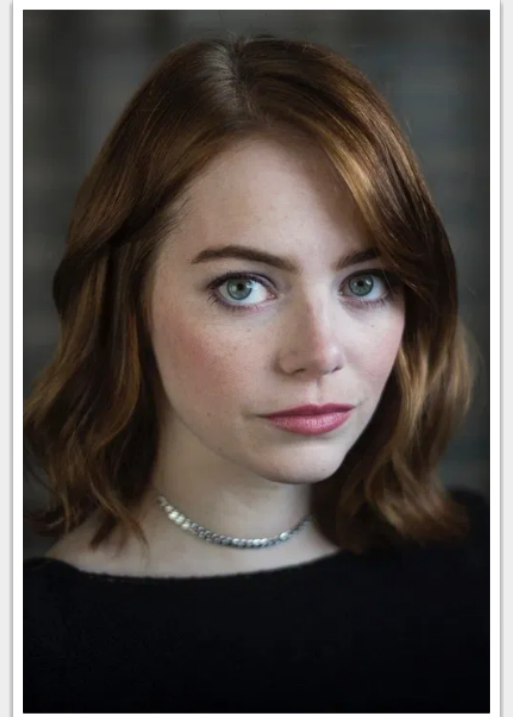
So if "**restraint**" is a keyword in terms of violence, there is no restraint in terms of **fear and tension**, we are **diving inside the darkness of Emma's mind**, and we too might get stuck if anything goes wrong.

Key characters

Emma is a strong and determined person. She shows courage and selflessness towards her bedridden sister, refusing to take the easy option of leaving Olive in a care facility.

Faced with the anxiety of restless nights, she does not run away. She behaves in the opposite way to the cliché of the screaming, hysterical women found in some horror films. Thin and athletic, she is nevertheless vulnerable when she finds herself alone in the face of a threat.

Knowing your own strengths and vulnerabilities is a great asset in life, but Emma is unaware of part of her past and of what lies hidden in her own subconscious. This blind spot prevents her from feeling fully in control of her own existence. She is therefore determined to uncover the truth about her past, despite the anxiety involved in confronting the unknown and the horror of what she might discover.

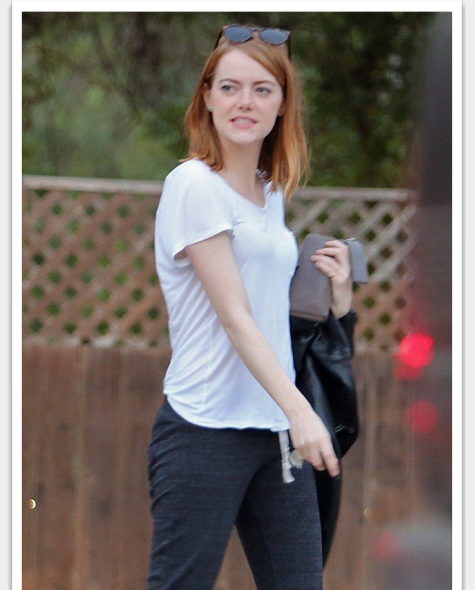


Stan is the complete opposite of Emma. As a man, he is physically stronger, but he panics as soon as he feels threatened. He is cowardly and superficial, once again acting as a counterpoint to his fiancée.

He loves to talk. He talks a lot and enjoys listening to himself speak. Stanislas needs the attention and approval of others to feel that he matters. But he has no interest in what the locals think of him, whom he looks down on.

Olive is passive throughout the story and does not say a word. She is like a baby: vulnerable and dependent on Emma, who becomes a caring parent figure. But we know that her brain continues to function, driving her to carry out calculated acts of sleepwalking.

Olive has been more deeply traumatised than her sister. Her search for the truth was a more personal journey, and she did not want to tell her sister about her torment, deliberately keeping her away from her investigations in order to protect her.



The priest is a mysterious character. Our lack of information about his past and personality only increases his aura and mystery.

If the prison guards call him "the Exorcist", it is not merely a nickname. Exorcism is indeed one of his activities, although he never talks about it. He does not use his hypnotic abilities to impress people or to make money. His motivation is detached from any personal gain, as one would expect from a true healer.

He can read people's thoughts, yet, conversely, it is difficult to know what is going on inside his own mind. Emma sees a certain duality in him: a potential saviour, but also a "culprit" who has reduced her sister to a vegetable-like state.

The cousin is surrounded by mystery, which makes him all the more disturbing. His silence and the way he stares at you without moving are more frightening than screams or frantic gestures.

The idea that a child could behave like a monster is deeply unsettling and disorientating. Almost all of his violent actions take place off-screen. What is frightening is not what he does, but his complete lack of emotion and empathy.





"deliverance hypnosis"

when hypnosis meets exorcism.

2 page summary - 1/2

Emma (35), still grieving the recent death of her parents, moves into her family's abandoned holiday home with her boyfriend Stan (35) and her catatonic twin sister Olive (35). The house, neglected for two decades, groans with decay. An archaic "dumbwaiter" still functions, it used to deliver food from the kitchen to the second floor.

Mrs. Garcia (80), a wild-haired local eccentric, lurks in the forest

Olive has been unconscious for nearly a year, following a hypnosis session gone wrong, leaving her mind trapped in a never ending nightmare. Both sisters suffer from dissociative amnesia, their memories before the age ten are lost, or maybe just inaccessible. Emma hopes the house will unlock her own memories.

From the first night, the house feels alive with malice. Creaking floorboards, and a 12-year-old chubby boy, who appears and vanishes in the shadows.

The next morning, Stan wakes to a smashed red wine glass on the living room wall. Emma, a former sleepwalker, denies any involvement.

While renovating, Emma strips away stained wallpaper, revealing a child's drawing beneath, reminding her that the nearby forest was off limit for the kids. She quickly paints over it, unsettled.

In a therapy session with Mrs. Schwartz (45), Emma recalls her earliest memory: her tenth birthday; a feverish haze, and her parents insisting she forget everything.

Next night, the disturbances escalate. Emma spots the boy again, and another wine stain appears on the same wall. Stan, terrified, wants to leave, but Emma refuses to abandon Olive. Searching the house, she stumbles upon the elderly Mrs. Garcia, fully naked. Police Officer #1 dismisses it as the old woman's eccentricity.

Stan installs CCTV cameras. The following night, Emma and Olive sleepwalk together into the forest, hand in hand. Emma wakes to find herself next to her sister, standing in front of the charred remains of a cabin.

During a therapy session, Mrs. Schwartz suggests hypnosis to recover Emma's lost memory. Stan overhears and erupts in anger, he won't let Emma end up like Olive.

That night, Emma finds her sister standing before the same wall. Pressing her ear to it, Emma hears a boy's voice: "Help me!". The voice might just be in her head, but Emma realises there's a concealed space in the middle of the first floor. The dumbwaiter stops inside this hidden room, Emma positions a camera inside the tiny life to capture footage inside the space. She sees a creepy doll, there once was life inside this sinister space.

Stan leaves for town, Emma undergoes a hypnosis session via a video call. Under the hypnotist's guidance, she remembers a haunting experience. The twins were nine, they discovered the forest cabin, where a chained boy was kept prisoner, chained like a dog. The girls freed the boy, but declined his request for a hug, sensing that something about this boy was off. Free from his chains, the boy hugs his own dog, to death.

The girls run away, but the online hypnosis session can't get wrapped as the internet goes down. Emma is "stuck" in a never ending forest run. Stan returns home, reconnects the video call and Emma can wake up. Instead of comforting her, he berates Emma for her recklessness. Stan reveals he's seen the CCTV footage deleted by Emma, including the creepy sleepwalking, he's had enough of this madness and decides to leave.

2 page summary - 2/2

Desperate for answers, Emma confronts the old neighbour, Mrs. Garcia, who reveals the boy is Emma's cousin. The man who kept him prisoner is the boy's father, Emma's uncle.

Emma visits the police station, where Police Officer #1 unleashes the horrifying truth: the 12 year old cousin was a killer. He smothered his own mother, then an anorexic patient in an asylum. After escaping from the cabin, he murdered Mrs. Garcia's father.

Emma is convinced the worst is still hidden. She stops at a prison, where she meets the priest who hypnotised Olive. He's imprisoned for the session that left Olive catatonic. Emma demands he perform a dual "deliverance hypnosis", she believes that she can penetrate her sister's psyche and free her from this never ending nightmare.

The priest warns of the high risk, but Emma is determined. He manages to leave the prison temporarily, by hypnotising his guards.

Back to the house, the dual session begins. Emma and Olive lie side by side, their breathing and heartbeats syncing. Emma pictures Olive stuck at the bottom of a lake, but she can't free her. When she wakes, the priest is gone.

Furious, she passes in front of the mysterious wall and hears a voice "help me". Emma grabs a sledgehammer and smashes through the bricks to access the hidden space. There, she spots a toilet, broken toys, and the boy, sitting on a mattress. She panics, but when she looks again, the boy is gone. She wants to get to the bottom of this, and enters the space, but soon the opening vanishes. She's walled in. And the boy reappears.

This is unreal, a flash of clarity hits her: the priest never left, she's still under hypnosis. But just like her sister, she's stuck, maybe forever. Emma desperately tries to escape through the dumbwaiter shaft, but the boy nearly crushes her with the lift.

Her torch is broken, but her eyes spot a faint light that shines through a hole in the wall. She presses her eye to it and sees her nine-year-old self and Olive, drawing on the wall. A younger version of her mother enters the living room, along with her father and uncle. They frantically cover the freshly erected wall with wallpaper, as the cops arrive. To cover the smell of fresh glue, the uncle throws a glass of red wine on the wall.

Peeping through the tiny hole in the wall, Emma feels like she was hit. This shock helps her fully enter her memory, she opens her eyes on the other side of the wall.

The police arrive and search for the hidden boy. Adults argue and leave the living room. Emma and Olive are left on their own, when the boy manages to destroy the wall and escape. He "hugs" both of them, they suffocate. The police officer is back and shoots the cousin. The uncle, grief-stricken, grabs the gun and shoots himself. Blood and brain matter splatter over the twins.

When Olive accessed this memory during her hypnosis session, she got "stuck" in this traumatic moment, frozen and unable to escape. Her sister Emma has finally reached her, she holds her sister close, syncing their breathing, their heartbeats. They float together in what feels like a dark lake, escaping the memory.

Emma and Olive are 35, they wake up side by side. The priest is still beside them.



places

objects

**can be
loaded**

Statement of Intent

Buried Memory

The brain has the capacity to bury traumas that are too painful to remember.

This can play cruel tricks on those who live with the consequences of this psychological survival mechanism. It is difficult to fight an evil whose source remains unknown.

One of my friends went from one therapist to another, unable to find a way to treat a serious psychological disorder, as he could not identify the root of the issue. It was only during a session of deep hypnosis that he was able to relive distressing events from his childhood. It was a difficult but necessary step, allowing his therapy to be adapted to his particular case.

This deep hypnosis involved the use of psychoactive substances (LSD, DMT, etc.) to delve into the patient's unconscious. I have removed this aspect as this might bring limitations to the film distribution, I would not want to be perceived as encouraging use of illegal substances.

But I kept the underlying approach of a mind trip that would help us access hidden memories. The wall that separates the concealed space from the rest of the house is a metaphor for this obstacle that prevents us from fully accessing our memories.

My friend's life was transformed so profoundly by this approach that he changed careers and became a practitioner himself, helping patients uncover buried traumas.

He is very mindful of the danger of exploring our own trauma, the risk of damage to our mental health is real and I want to tell a story around this risky journey.

Olive played with fire in my story, and she got "trapped" into the darkness she unveiled. The concept of a person (Emma) taking a massive risk to rescue a loved one gives "Hug Me" a touch of humanity in the middle of a tragedy.

Family Secret

Monsters and creatures are often coming from a distant environment. But what if danger was closer to home than we expected?

Many crimes are committed at a domestic level, and often the victim will know the perpetrator. What makes "Hug Me" especially unsettling, is the fact that danger was invisible, and forgotten.

If your partner cheats on you it's a heartache. But if they do it with your best friend or a family member, it's much worse. Feeling betrayed by your friends and family is terrible, it can change your perspective about your whole past life.

Emma suspects that her parents lied to her, they seem very involved in her "dissociative amnesia". Even though the sisters suspected that a traumatic event might have led to their memory issue, the parents have always denied the existence of such an incident.

So the monster, or monsters, seem everywhere. Even the protagonist could be partly responsible for a tragedy that they can't identify. Emma tries to uncover the truth, but is scared of what she might find.

Even though I want to make the viewers uncomfortable and keep the truth hidden, I want to make sure that we stay away from "ugly" thoughts that would spoil the experience. We keep the possibility of sexual abuse at bay, this is not the darkness we want to explore or suggest.

At the end of the day, the reason behind the secrecy is noble, the family wanted to protect the twins from negative thoughts. I have myself experienced uncovering a very heavy family secret, and even though it saddened me, I respected the need to keep me in the dark for my own sake.

A pragmatic approach with a global audience in mind

Horror films come in various sizes in terms of budget and production. But even successful films are mindful of keeping the budget under control. Blumhouse applies restraint when it comes to production, with a single location, a limited number of shooting days, and a limited cast who don't have to be stars.

I have written "Hug Me" with this approach in mind, and the recent success of "Obsession" has proven that a tight budget doesn't have to mean a limited success.

This film was written with a global audience in mind, horror travels much better internationally as it taps into universal feelings of phobia, using visual language and music rather than dialogue or cultural references to achieve its objectives.

Having lived in seven different countries, I am mindful of the need to keep the dialogue simple and efficient, and the narrative as open as needed.



CCTV footage

RAW fear

Synopsis 9 pages - 1/9

EMMA (35) and her boyfriend STAN (35) move into an old isolated house.

The house shows signs of decay: peeling paint, weeds claiming paths. This used to be Emma's family holiday house, but for some reason they stopped coming twenty years ago.

Emma's parents passed away six months ago, and now she's moving in with her boyfriend and her twin sister.

Emma's twin sister, OLIVE (35) is in a catatonic state. She has been unconscious for almost a year, following a deep hypnosis session that went wrong, which left her stuck in this frozen state.

At the time, Olive was on a quest to recover some locked memories from her childhood. Herself and Emma have been suffering from "dissociative amnesia" since the age of ten, they have zero memories predating their tenth birthday, and they don't know why.

A childhood trauma might have been the cause of this condition, but the twins' parents had always denied being aware of any traumatic incident.

By moving into this old house, Emma hopes to reconnect with her own memory, and maybe identify the potential trauma that messed up her mind, and with her sister's mind.

So much space in this old house, even an old "dumbwaiter", a little lift that brings dishes from the kitchen on the ground floor, to the dining room on the second floor.

The mechanism groans to life. When the lift arrives, it contains rotting food from more than two decades ago. Cockroaches creep out.

From the forest nearby, an old lady with wild, unkempt hair lurks in the distance MRS GARCIA (80).

From the first night, the disturbances begin.

While Stan sleeps deeply, Emma gets up as she hears suspicious noises in the house. The floorboard creaks but she can't see anyone, and doesn't notice a BOY (12) who briefly appears and disappears.

The following morning, Emma wakes to a scream.

It's Stan. He's in the living room and just stepped barefoot on broken glass.

On the wall, a large red stain of what seems to be blood, but is in fact red wine. How on earth did a full glass get smashed against the wall? Emma used to sleepwalk, but she wouldn't do anything like this.

First job on the house renovation, remove this stained wallpaper. Emma starts this while Stan works remotely from the house, attending business meetings and video calls.

Emma strips away the stained wallpaper, revealing a child's drawing underneath: black trees, a dense forest outline (matching the forest beyond the garden), and large red letters that read: DON'T.

She has no memory of the drawing, and quickly paints over it as Stan would probably find it sinister.

Synopsis 9 pages - 2/9

Emma has a video call session with her therapist, Mrs Schwartz (45) the grief counsellor who has been supporting Emma since the death of her parents.

Emma mentions her very first memory, the twins tenth birthday. They were both unwell, the parents mentioned a fever, but they were probably given sleeping pills.

Their mind is hazy, they are told to forget everything, anything negative was just a fever nightmare, a bad dream.

The second night is hectic. The same creaking sounds.

Emma gets up again, and this time she spots the 12 year old boy. Another wine stain on the freshly painted wall. It's probably him.

Stan wakes up, he is scared and suggests to drive away. But Emma won't leave her sister behind, she bravely searches for the intruder around the house, this chubby kid with his round glasses doesn't look like a criminal.

Suddenly she finds herself face to face with a naked Mrs Garcia, who scares Emma so much that she falls down the stairs.

The incident was scary but not that serious. Emma is just bruised.

Two policemen are here, including POLICE OFFICER #1. They know Mrs Garcia, she's just the local eccentric lady, it's not the first time she crashes into random houses fully naked by night.

Everyone assumes she's the one responsible for both wine stains on the wall.

But Emma is confused, she really saw a young boy. Or did she, Emma isn't sure anymore.

The next day, Stan installs a number of domestic CCTV cameras inside the house. No more intruders or scary sounds by night.

Emma gets overwhelmed by hope when her sister Olive finally opens her eyes. Unfortunately, she is still unconscious, it was just a nervous reflex.

Another crazy night. Emma wakes up in the middle of the scary forest nearby, standing right next to her sister, the twins have been sleepwalking together, hand in hand.

Emma tries to retain her composure, she doesn't want her fear and confusion to disturb her sister. Why did they come to this specific spot? Emma realises she is walking over dry bones, and there are scary shapes in the trees; dead bodies?

Her sister Olive starts walking, leading to... wherever. Emma is terrified, but eventually relieved when she spots the house behind the trees.

Even unconscious, Olive seems to know exactly where she was going.

The next day Emma checks the recorded CCTV footage. The sisters' "joint sleepwalking" looks incredibly synchronised and eerie, as if two psyches merged into one. Emma deletes the clips, she doesn't want Stan to discover this unnerving incident.

Synopsis 9 pages - 3/9

Emma explores the forest, and finds the exact spot where her sister took her during the night. A mound of charred beams, a cabin must have burned here long ago.

The bones she stepped on were from a dog, its skull and the chain it was tied to confirm it.

Emma attends a therapy session with Mrs Schwartz.

The therapist challenges her patient. She's a grief counsellor, but their conversation often revolves around memory, Mrs Schwartz asks her to clarify her objectives.

Emma explains that moving back into the family house may help reconnect her with a forgotten past, it's part of her grieving journey. Mrs Schwartz mentions that hypnosis would be the best approach to unlock hidden memories.

Stan overhears this conversation, which leads to a heated argument with Emma. Stan categorically refuses that his girlfriend undergoes hypnosis, he doesn't want her to end up unconscious like her sister Olive.

Emma confesses her true ambition: she believes that Olives is stuck in a place of pain, that Emma can access if she manages to retrace the same psychological journey. She would then be able to rescue her sister, and bring her back to consciousness.

Stan finds this ambition obscure and ridiculous.

That night, Emma uses the CCTV monitoring system to check out the house from her bedroom.

She is stunned to discover her sister Olive standing still, right in front of a living room wall, at the same spot that got the wine stains.

Emma goes there, and hears knocking from the other side of the wall. Pressing her ear against it, she hears a boy's voice: "Help me!"

How could there be anyone behind this wall? Strangely, it seems impossible to access the other side, there seems to be a concealed space delimited by four walls with no door or opening.

Emma realises that the dumbwaiter "lift" stops inside this concealed space. She puts a wireless CCTV camera and a candle inside it, and observes the footage remotely. The images reveal a concealed space, with a creepy doll hanging from a wall.

The candle starts to burn the inside of the lift. Smoke everywhere. Stan wakes up, he grows increasingly annoyed with his restless girlfriend.

Stan goes to town for a few hours the next day, Emma takes this opportunity to experience a hypnosis session, conducted via video call by Mr LEET (60).

As the session begins, Emma remembers a black rabbit, "Bobo", who used to be the twins' pet when they were nine.

The rabbit escapes and runs into the forest. The two girls chase after him, the rabbit eventually stops in front of a cabin.

Synopsis 9 pages - 4/9

A chained dog scares Bobo, who finds refuge inside the cabin. The girls don't dare to approach, they know the right thing is to go home.

But they stay when they see a twelve years old boy around step out of the cabin, holding Bobo in his arms. Chubby, round glasses, same kid Emma "saw" inside the house.

He looks slow and harmless, but his cold, emotionless gaze is unsettling.

Disturbingly, the boy wears a locked collar around his neck, attached to a long chain like his dog. They each have their own "perimeters of freedom" visible on the ground, but the two circles don't touch.

The girls hide as an adult man is coming. The man brings food for both the boy and the dog, and leaves without a word, even though the dog asks for a hug, to this adult that he calls "daddy".

Once the man has left, the girls hesitate to leave as this whole situation is creepy. But the boy offers a deal: the rabbit against a key, that's beyond his reach.

The girls agree and they get their rabbit back. They send him the requested key, but turn down his offer of a hug, this kid is way too weird.

As the boy frees himself from his chain, his first gesture is to hug his dog, who was beyond his reach. A moving and disturbing image, the girls get ready to leave.

But they notice that the dog tries to escape this increasingly tight hug, he even seems to be suffocating. As the girls walk away, they hear the last gasp of the dog and a sound that indicates the boy might have broken its neck.

Terrified, the girls run through the forest as fast as they can.

Emma is still under hypnosis, when the internet connection breaks down, Mr Leet is not able to communicate with her, and Emma is unable to leave the hypnosis.

She's stuck in a terrifying loop. She perceives herself and her sister running in the forest without being able to find the way out. Whichever direction they take, they always come back to the same cabin.

Stan is back, he reconnects the session, and Mr Leet can finally let Emma wake up from her hypnosis.

Instead of comforting a shaken Emma, Stan furiously tells Emma off for going ahead with a hypnosis session despite their previous discussion.

Stan also reveals that all CCTV clips deleted can still be retrieved from the "bin", he's seen them all. He found the sleepwalking of Olive disturbing and scary. Stan even claims that Olive is a danger to herself, but also to Emma and him.

Emma faces a choice, Stan won't stay with her unless she sends her sister back to a specialised clinic. Emma can't let her sister down, even if the boyfriend has to go.

Emma spots the old and crazy Mrs Garcia lurking from the forest. She reaches her and asks for her help.

Synopsis 9 pages - 5/9

Mrs Garcia has been living in the area forever, Emma begs her for information about her own family. According to Mrs Garcia, the man she describes is her father's brother.

Emma never knew she had an uncle.

That would make the kid her cousin. But Mrs Garcia shuts down when Emma mentions him, the memory of this weird boy seems traumatic to the old lady who becomes agitated and angry.

Emma drives her now ex-boyfriend to the train station.

On the way, she spots a prison. And a police station.

On the way back, Emma stops at the police station. There, she meets Police Officer #1, whom she knows from the night he came to their house following the incident with Mrs Garcia.

Police Officer #1 has been working in the area for more than three decades, Emma hopes he might be able to shed some light on her family history.

Emma learns that Olive came with a similar request, when she was also searching for the truth about a year ago.

The police officer has a lot of background information about this mysterious cousin, and he is not going to sugar coat the horrendous reality. He throws fact after fact, using forensic pictures to illustrate the past events.

Starting with the boy killing his own mother, for no apparent reason. He smothered her, hugged her to death, but was not convicted for this act, due to a diagnosed schizophrenia. The boy was not legally responsible, and sent to a mental asylum.

There, he killed a patient suffering from anorexia. Another hug, another death.

Other hospitals didn't want to host such a young and problematic kid, his father got custody of the child whom he both loved and despised.

That's when he escaped, the police officer doesn't know why, but Emma knows the story behind this escape, she uncovered its related memory during the recent hypnosis.

Once freed from his chain, the boy went on to kill Mrs Garcia's aged father.

The police officer claims that the kid and uncle both disappeared since then.

Emma leaves the police station shocked and devastated. So much violence, she now understands why this killer cousin was kept away in a cabin, it was to protect the family.

This killing spree also explains why Emma's parents wanted to erase her memories, this murderous cousin was better forgotten, the family drama was hidden to preserve the twins' innocence and sanity.

Emma is agitated, she calls her therapist to get support in this difficult moment. Mrs Schwartz insists that Emma should stop her car, she is not in a capacity to drive.

Synopsis 9 pages - 6/9

Mrs Schwartz tries to minimise the feeling of guilt that overwhelms Emma. The twins did free the killer, but it was just a mistake, there was no ill intention.

The therapist pushes back on new hypnosis sessions, Mr Leet had mentioned that Emma was very sensitive, and risked getting stuck in her own memory if she repeated the hypnosis experience.

But Emma is determined to uncover the last elements of truth. She still believes that the most traumatic part is missing from this story, and she stops right in front of a building that she believes holds the key to her memory. A prison.

There, she meets a priest. The interaction is tense and cold, Emma has never forgiven him for his responsibility in Olive's condition: the priest is the one who conducted the dramatic hypnosis session.

It was not his intention to put Olive in a catatonic state, but this action is the reason why he is now imprisoned.

Emma comes to him for a reason, he's the only one able to conduct a "deliverance hypnosis", which is necessary to unlock her hidden memories.

Her request is specific, she wants him to conduct a "joint hypnosis" for her and her sister, so that both minds can meet wherever Olive is stuck, in order for Emma to rescue her.

The priest pushes back, the odds of success are slim, and the chances of getting stuck are high. A "deliverance hypnosis" is deeper and riskier than a regular hypnosis session.

But he eventually accepts. Only this can't take place here.

With a few words, the priest hypnotises the guards, convincing them he's not escaping and will return by evening. Mesmerised, the guards obey.

The car ride is silent and tense.

This unusual session can start, the twin sisters lie side by side, hand in hand. Their breathing, and even their heartbeats align. The deep dive can start.

But it quickly goes wrong. Emma pictures her sister at the bottom of a lake, but she's unable to rescue her.

Emma wakes up. It felt like a minute, but it's already dark outside. The priest is gone, he took the car and left.

Emma is furious, this was her last chance to rescue her sister.

She hears a voice from behind this mystery wall. The voice of a 12 year old kid, begging for help. A frustrated and angry Emma grabs a sledgehammer, and starts destroying this wall. She wants to figure out what goes on inside this concealed space.

Bricks crumble. An opening forms. Emma peeks inside cautiously. At first she sees nothing, only darkness and filth. The silence is suffocating.

She widens the hole and fetches a torch. She spots signs of past life: a toilet seat, a few broken toys.

Synopsis 9 pages - 7/9

To the right, an old bed with a rotted mattress.

Then she sees something incredible. A twelve-year-old boy is sitting on the bed.

Emma panics and falls backward.

She looks again. No kid. This is just in her head.

Emma is torn between the fear of entering the space and her determination to solve the mystery. She decides to step inside.

She quickly explores the area. In the centre, the dumbwaiter column. Around it, a narrow, square-shaped space. No sign of the boy, though he could theoretically hide behind the column, moving as she does. But that seems unlikely.

When she returns to the entrance, Emma is stunned. The opening is gone.

She doesn't understand. She retraces her steps, same result. She's walled in. A panic attack sets in. She pounds on the walls, the pipes, screams for help.

Even the metal curtain of the dumbwaiter has changed, it was broken and now looks fixed. But even more unreal, when Emma calls the small lift, it comes with a hot and fresh meal.

And suddenly the boy is there, and says: "we can share".

None of this makes sense, Emma realises that she is not living in the real world. A flash of clarity brings her a better understanding of her situation: she's still under hypnosis. She didn't wake up, the priest never left.

Great, but the boy states a scary truth: Emma is stuck. Stuck with him.

She desperately needs to leave, she tries to escape through the dumbwaiter shaft. But it's very narrow, and the boy operates the small lift, Emma almost gets crushed.

She breaks her torch as she tries to escape the creepy boy, she finds herself in full darkness.

The priest's words reach her: "Find the path, enter your memory."

Emma forces herself to breathe deeply. Her eyes gradually adjust to the dark, and she notices a faint beam of light coming through a small hole in the wall. She hears voices on the other side.

Emma presses her eye to the hole. It's almost impossible to see, but she thinks she makes out two young girls, possibly herself and Olive at nine years old. They're very close to the wall, laughing softly, drawing on it.

This reminds Emma of the drawing she found under the wallpaper. She notices the cement is still fresh, the wall is solid but recently built.

A woman enters, looking stressed. Emma is stunned, it's her mother, twenty years younger.

Synopsis 9 pages - 8/9

Emma cries for help. The faces turn toward the wall for a moment. But everyone pretends not to hear her. In their mind, it's the killer kid.

The boy approaches her slowly, and starts hugging her from behind. Emma tries hard to ignore him, she needs to focus on her memory, and get to the other side of the wall.

In the living room, Emma's father and uncle arrive.

Panic, the cops are coming. Quick, high the recently created wall with wallpaper.

They're stressed, it's done poorly but quickly.

And now it smells like glue. The cops will realise the wallpaper is freshly applied.

The boy squeezes Emma more and more, she is struggling to breath, and can't even shout.

The uncle grabs a full glass of red wine, and throws it against the wall. Emma feels like it arrives straight to her face. She closes her eyes.

When she opens her eyes, she's on the other side of the wall. Now, she's in the body of her nine-year-old self, and her memory finally unfolds before her eyes, just as she lived it.

The wine stain against the wall, this was the key that unlocks the portal to her hidden memory.

Two policemen arrive. Emma recognises Police Officer #1, the same who she discussed with at the police station just twenty years younger.

The wine stunt seems to work, the cops don't notice the glue's smell.

The police search the house, trying to find the boy. The conversation reveals this memory takes place days after the cabin incident. The boy just killed Mrs Garcia's father.

Even though the family is horrified by the crimes of the kid, they still want to protect him. He's not walled in by cruelty, simply to hide him from the police, and protect the rest of the family from him.

The tension rises between the adults, they all go downstairs and leave the girls alone in the living room.

The boy starts banging against the wall with an object.

Suddenly, a brick loosens. Even through the wallpaper, it's clear it's moving. Then another. The banging continues, and the bricks seem ready to fall, the cement is too fresh to have fully set.

The girls don't want to call attention on this, they need to find a solution by themselves and position a coffee table vertically against the wall

It's useless, the wall crumbles, the twins are knocked out by the coffee table, which fortunately protects them from the falling bricks.

The boy lunges at the girls, and starts hugging them, smothering them.

Synopsis 9 pages - 9/9

The girls can't breathe, Suddenly, the boy's head explodes. His body collapses in a pool of blood.

Police Officer #1 has just shot the boy to protect the girls.

He feels conflicted, a little ashamed of killing a child. There must have been other ways to restrain him.

Emma's parents arrive, along with the uncle. The uncle throws himself on his son's body.

His sorrow turns to rage. He grabs the officer's gun and points it at him. For a moment, it seems he might pull the trigger.

But the uncle turns the gun on himself and shoots himself in the head.

More blood and brain matter on the girls, Olive seems totally in shock, paralysed by what she's just seen.

Emma tries to comfort her. But her sister seems "stuck" in an endless loop of fear and anguish.

Emma takes her time, holds her close. Their breathing synchronises, then their heartbeats. The girls close their eyes and suddenly feel as if they're floating.

When they open their eyes, Emma and Olive are side by side, lying in bed. They're 35 year old again.

Mission accomplished, Olive is back among the living.

The priest is beside the bed. He never left.



- the forbidden forest -
mystery and tension rather than violence



Thank you

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