

ROOM 12

By

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A pale, nondescript, 30ish male with dark hair, dressed in a black suit sits at an outdoor cafe. He has a folded over newspaper in his left hand. We see that he is skimming through the rooms for rent ads. On the table before him we see a plate with a half eaten piece of fish. He cuts it with his fork and easily brings it to his mouth. He then notices an interesting ad. Dropping the fork he pulls a red pen from his pocket. We see him circle an ad for a room. The ad reads:

ROOM FOR RENT. \$300 A WEEK. UTILITIES INCLUDED. CLEAN. CALL 518-555-9887.

The man reaches into his other pocket and pulls out a cell phone. He dials the number before him. We vaguely hear the ringing and a voicemail message on the other end.

The man speaks.

MAN

Hi. My name is Aaron Cole. I'm calling about the room you have for rent in the paper for three hundred dollars a week. My number is five-one-eight, five-five-five, two-two-three-nine. Thank you.

He places the phone on the table and goes back to reading the paper and eating his food. He soon glances up to see a white limousine pull up to the curb next to him and stop. Inside, a black man looks forward. AARON watches him intently for a moment. Seconds later AARON returns to his paper and food.

We hear a beeping noise.

AARON pulls the phone off the table. We see a flashing text message. The message reads:

LET'S MEET IN ROOM 12 OF MUNSON APARTMENTS. 112 E. 33RD STREET AT 1:00 TODAY TO DISCUSS ROOM.

The man texts back:

O.K.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

2

The man gets out of his car in front of a blue apartment building. We see the words "Munson Apartments" across the front. He walks to the trunk of his car and pulls out a suitcase. Closing the trunk, he waits for a car to pass and then crosses the street. A woman dressed like a prostitute walks past him as he prepares to enter the front door.

FADE TO:

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

3

The man is standing in front of a door with the number 12 on it. He knocks and waits a moment. AARON looks about at the building's sparsely furnished hallway. He grabs the knob and turns, slowly opening the door. Inside, we see only a fishbowl on a desk with a large goldfish in it. AARON closes the door behind him and walks closer. We now see a wet cell phone, a small box, and an instruction sheet also on the desk. A light trail of water crosses the desk's surface. The instruction sheet reads:

VACANT ROOMS HAVE BLUE KEYS. PLACE YOUR CHECK IN THE BOX AND CHOOSE A KEY. PLEASE RETURN KEY WHEN YOU LEAVE. THANK YOU.

The man looks about and sees a rack of blue keys to his right hanging on the wall. He glances about the room and sees several photographs of fish which grace each of the four walls. He relaxes, leans against the desk, and pulls a pack of cigarettes and lighter from his pocket. He lights one up and inhales deeply. AARON curiously gazes down at the fish.

FADE TO:

INT. OFFICE - DAY

4

AARON looks at his watch. It reads 1:28. He grabs his checkbook, writes a check for three hundred dollars and puts it in the box. He grabs a blue key which reads 21. He leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

5

The man climbs out of his bed. It's early morning. He orients himself and rubs his face. He's wearing boxers and a t-shirt. He walks to the window in the small room and peers down at the traffic below. He puts on his black suit which is draped over a small chair. Aaron goes to a nearby mirror and combs his hair with his hands. He then grabs the room key off a nearby table. He picks up his suitcase, turns and leaves the room.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

6

AARON walks down the hallway. A black and white cat appears before him. It rubs up against his legs. He puts down the suitcase, bends over and scratches it's head. The cat runs off. AARON moves down the hall and knocks at room 23.

No reply.

MAN

Hello?!(pause)

No answer.

AARON moves next to room 25 and tries the door which is locked.

MAN (cont'd)

Is anyone here?!(pause)

No response again.

A confused AARON makes his way over to the stairs and heads down. As he descends the stairway, we see several more fish photos. A deep sea fish, a starfish, a jellyfish, and a squid. AARON observes them cautiously as he makes his way past and to the bottom. He turns the corner and tentatively walks over to room 12.

AARON knocks on the door.

MAN

Are you here?? (pause)

No response.

Slowly, AARON turns the door knob and enters the room. The room is empty once again. The fish in his bowl is the only inhabitant. He quickly walks over and places his key on the

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4.

rack. AARON turns and fixates intently for a few moments on the fish who is lazily swimming about. The man leaves and closes the door behind him.

FADE OUT:

THE END