

THE FACELESS

FADE IN:

INT. TRAIN.

Richard, a 30 something man, is sat by the window of a commuter train. He stares out at an urban landscape that feels distorted, drained of life and colour somehow.

RICHARD (V.O.)
..It's always the same...I'm on a
train... in a city I don't know.

CLANG.

Richard looks over his shoulder. A coke can rolls down the aisle. Feet shuffle along the floor. A figure approaches. He wears hip hop clothes, a hood disguises his face. He takes a seat behind Richard.

Richard looks at him, a sense of confusion spreads across his features, a sense of fear.

RICHARD (V.O.) (CONT'D)
There's something wrong with his
face, I can't quite remember
what...I can feel it..something's
wrong.

Richard turns back and faces ahead. The man sits silently behind, his face completely hidden within the shadows of his hood. It's almost as if he isn't really there at all...

SCREECH.

...The train grinds to a halt. The doors slide open with a metallic SQUEAL.

An old woman shuffles onto the train, her body bent, her clothes filthy, her hair matted and unkempt. It hangs over her face making it impossible to see her. She takes a seat opposite the door.

RICHARD (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The train stops. An old woman
gets on... I can smell her from
where I'm sat. Festering, rotten.
A stench of decay.

The train moves off, undulating from side to side in an unnerving way.

Richard looks across at the woman. Her head leans down onto her chest, her long unkempt hair completely covers her face.

The train comes to rest again at the next stop.

Richard gets up and moves to get off the train. He looks back at the hoodie and turns away in fear.

He pause opposite the old woman. Her head rises slightly, straining against her old age. We see Richard's face as a mask of fear through gaps in her long, lanky hair. She starts to rise, slowly, but inexorably and walks towards him.

He presses the button by the door repeatedly, trying to open the door.

The woman approaches, her crooked body shuffling towards him. She clicks and pop as she moves.

The doors slide open. He stumbles off the train.

The woman is pressed against the glass, her wrinkled hands on the window. Richards scared face stares up at us from between them.

EXT. TRAIN PLATFORM. NIGHT

The train moves off, leaving him alone on the deserted platform. He's in the midst of a City. A sprawling Gothic library stands behind him. He looks around the deserted streets and then makes a decision to head towards it.

EXT. LIBRARY

He moves between arches that cast ominous shadows over him as he passes. A homeless man lies on the floor next to one of them, huddled against the elements. His face is concealed by his arm as he lies prostrate on the floor.

Richard moves on. He exits the arches and finds himself in a large town square. A beautiful, Gothic Town Hall stands to his right. He is alone except for one other person...

RICHARD (V.O.)

The City is deserted. But I'm being watched, I can feel it. The hairs on the back of my neck are standing up. I can feel the eyes on me.

...In the middle of the square sits a wheelchair. The occupant is slumped forward, with his back to us.

RICHARD (V.O.) (CONT'D)

There's a man in a wheelchair. I walk towards him, but I don't want to. I want to run away and hide, but I'm drawn to him.

Richard walks towards him. Closer and closer.
He reaches out his hand to touch his shoulder.

RICHARD (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I reach out to touch him, every
sinew in my body telling me to
pull away...

The wheelchair bounds mans head lifts up and starts to turn
slowly towards us...

RICHARD (V.O.) (CONT'D)
He starts to turn towards me, so
slowly, so strangely. I don't
want to see his face, I know I
don't want to see his face, but I
can't turn away...

INT. MICHELLE'S HOUSE. NIGHT

Richard is lay on a comfortable couch.

RICHARD
...And that's when I wake up.

He is addressing MICHELLE a young, attractive woman in her
thirties who lies on a large, soft chair.

MICHELLE
How long have you been having
this dream?

RICHARD
Forever. 2 months, maybe three...

MICHELLE
I've checked your file. No
physical abnormalities, no
tumours, lesions. That's good. I
see you've been for counselling,
any help?

RICHARD
None. I just want my life back.
Can you help me?

MICHELLE
I'll certainly try. Recurring
dreams tend to be symptomatic of
stress. I'm sure you've been told
that.

RICHARD
Repeatedly.

MICHELLE

What do you do for a living?

RICHARD

I'm a quantity surveyor.
Construction

MICHELLE

Then I'll try to keep my
explanations as logical as
possible.

She smiles at him, trying to reassure, or perhaps she likes him. It doesn't seem to have much effect on Richards tired, weary face.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Think of your brain, your psyche,
as a skyscraper. Your fears, your
desires are its materials. They
are heavy, creating enormous
pressure, but if the foundations
are suitably strong, the
structure will never be stressed,
agreed?

Richard nods.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Over the next few weeks. I'll
show you some simple techniques
that will help to strengthen your
mind and body so you'll be able
to deal better with pressure and
prevent stress. No stress, no bad
dreams...Give me your hand.

Richard hesitates, then obliges

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Have you heard of Lucid Dreaming?

RICHARD

When you're dreaming but still
conscious?

MICHELLE

Everything in your dreams is an
aspect of yourself, some part of
your subconscious mind. Do you
understand?

RICHARD

Yeah

MICHELLE

So you agree that the figures in your dreams are merely representations of your own self, perhaps subconscious fears?

RICHARD

It makes sense

MICHELLE

This technique will give you control over your dreams. It will enable you to confront those aspects, to question them, to understand and deal with them.

She uses the tip of her finger to draw an outline in the palm of Richard's hand.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

All I want you to do is this...every day, continuously, draw an R with your finger in the palm of your hand.

She notices Richard's questioning look

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

The R is just your initial it has no other significance. You try

Richard follows her example. He draws an R in his palm.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Whilst you are doing it, tell yourself that the next time you see an R, you'll know you are dreaming. Do it.

He draws the R.

RICHARD

When I see an R, I'll know that I'm dreaming

MICHELLE

Again

RICHARD

When I see an R, I'll know that I'm dreaming

MICHELLE

Do this as often as possible. You'll imprint the knowledge on your subconscious.

(MORE)

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

When you dream your brain makes sense of the day. Because you've made the R such a part of it, it's bound to come up at some point. When It does, when you see it, you'll become conscious of the fact you're dreaming. You'll then be able to take full control of your dream. Take that opportunity to face your fears. Nothing in the dream can hurt you. Talk to them, find out what they are, what they want.

RICHARD

Is this for real?

MICHELLE

Absolutely. It may work almost instantly, it may take a couple of weeks, but if you do it every day, exactly as I've shown, it's guaranteed to work. Practice and then I'll see you next week for an update. OK?

INT. RICHARD'S BEDROOM. NIGHT

Richard is lay on the bed. He draws an R into his palm continuously. His lips silently mutter his incantation.

His eyes grow weary, he drops to sleep.

INT. TRAIN. NIGHT

Richard is sat on the same train, in the same place as before, staring out of the window.

CLANG. The coke can rolls down the aisle. Feet shuffle along the floor. The same figure approaches. A hood still disguises his face. He sits behind Richard.

Richard looks at him, the sense of fear spreads across his face. He turns away and looks out of the window.

In the glass, drawn in condensation, is a large R.

The realisation dawns on Richards face.

RICHARD

I'm dreaming. It's just a dream.

He breathes out, calms himself and then turns slowly to the figure behind.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
What do you want?

The figure leans forward. The hood pulls back, light falls onto the figures face...or rather the complete absence of one. There are no eyes, no nose, no mouth, no features at all, just a distorted, faceless human countenance.

Richard jumps out of his seat and moves away from the figure.

SCREECH.

The train comes to a standstill. The doors slide open with a metallic SQUEAL and the old lady clammers onboard. Her joints seem to creak and pop as she moves.

She takes her seat opposite the door.

Richard rushes past her and races for the door.

It slides shut. He presses the button to open it. No effect.

He turns slowly to look at the woman, aware of her lurking presence. Her head rises slightly. Her lank hair falls away from her face revealing the same shapeless hideousness as the other passenger.

She rises from her chair and jerks towards him at the speed of age and death.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Who are you?

She moves. Closer

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Who are you? What do you want?

She's almost on top of him now, this faceless hag, pushing her skull towards his face.

Richard is pinned to the train door, scared beyond reason. He's screaming, almost crying

RICHARD (CONT'D)
What do you want?

A hideous sound comes from somewhere deep with the hags frame. The impossible, guttural sound of the faceless speaking

FACELESS HAG
You.

Her face fills the screen as she leans in...

INT. RICHARD'S BEDROOM. NIGHT

Richard awakens, sweating, screaming and leaps out of bed.

INT. BATHROOM

He races inside and starts to splash cold water on his face. He looks up into the mirror.

A faceless monster looks back.

Richard falls back against the wall, then darts from the room.

EXT. MICHELLE'S HOUSE: NIGHT

Richard bangs on the front door. Michelle opens it, bog-eyed and wearing a gown.

MICHELLE

Richard?

Richard forces his way in.

RICHARD

You've made it worse, you've made it real. They're crossing over

MICHELLE

Calm down, come and lie down

She places a reassuring hand on his shoulder and guides him to the chair he's sat in before. Richard sits.

He's so scared, he's almost like a baby.

RICHARD

You've got to make it stop. I can see them when I'm awake. Oh God, I'm losing my mind.

MICHELLE

Stress is the enemy remember? Just relax. Breathe deeply in and out. Every breath in fills you with positivity, every breath out releases the dark. You're safe here.

Richard settles down somewhat.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Close your eyes, imagine a golden field of energy around you, healing energy. It's all around your feet, warm and safe. Can you feel it?

Richard gives an almost imperceptible nod.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

It's rising up over your body, over your legs, your torso, it's all over you, protecting you.

She pauses for a second as she monitors Richard. He seems much calmer.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

Now, open your eyes

He does so. Michelle stares back at him, not with her own attractive face, but with a smooth featureless visage.

Richard jumps up, backs away towards the front door.

RICHARD

You're one of them. Get away from me.

He flees the house.

Michelle, now herself, looks on in concern.

EXT. STREET. NIGHT

Richard runs towards his car. A group of youths are sat and stood on and around a wall nearby. They turn to face Richard as he approaches. They are faceless.

Richard deserts his car and runs in terror over the road. He enters a train station.

An Asian man in his 50's sells tickets from a small kiosk.

Richard approaches nervously.

RICHARD

Single to Upbridge please.

The man types some figures into his computer. Richard looks around, everything seems normal. He turns back.

The seller is faceless, staring noiselessly at him but holding out his ticket.

Richard backs away, leaving the ticket with the man. He turns and runs towards the platform.

TICKET SELLER
Sir, your ticket

EXT. PLATFORM 5.

Richard runs onto the first train he sees, squeezing on as the doors slide to.

INT. TRAIN.

He takes a seat in a deserted carriage.

The train moves off.

He stares out of the window at an urban landscape that feels distorted, drained of life and now eerily familiar.

He's in his dream.

CLANG.

Richard looks over his shoulder. A coke can rolls down the aisle. Feet shuffle along the floor, a figure approaches

Richard looks up at him in fear. It's just a normal person. A black guy wearing Hip Hop clothes, his hood up.

The man takes his seat behind Richard.

Richard turns back, relief in his face for a short time. But doubt starts to cloud his features. He looks over his shoulder at the man.

The man leans forward. The hood pulls back, light falls onto the figures face...he's faceless.

Richard jumps out of his seat and moves away from the figure.

SCREECH.

The train comes to a standstill. The doors slide open with a metallic SQUEAL and the old lady clambers onboard. Her joints seem to creak and pop as she moves.

She takes her seat opposite the door.

RICHARD
No this isn't real. It can't be real. None of you are real.

The faceless turn to look at Richard. Their eye-less gaze penetrates his soul.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
This is a dream. You're just a
dream. You're not real.

Richard races for the door.

It slides shut. He presses the button to open it. It doesn't budge.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
No, please. No

He turns to look at the woman. Her lank hair frames her faceless skull.

She rises from her chair and jerks towards him.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Stay away from me, please. Stay
away. You're not real. You can't
be real.

She's almost on top of him now, pushing her skull towards his face.

Richard is pinned to the train door, scared beyond reason. He's screaming, almost crying.

Her face fills the screen as she leans in...

...The train grinds to a halt at the next platform. The doors slide open. Richard leaps out.

EXT. TRAIN PLATFORM.

He's in the Gothic City of his dreams. The same Library stands before him. He looks back at the train. The woman is pressed against the window, looking out at him.

The train moves off, leaving him alone.

EXT. LIBRARY

He moves between the arches. A homeless man lies on the floor next to one of them. His face is concealed by his arm as he lies prostrate on the floor.

Richard tries to move quickly past him.

The man's arm snakes out and grasps at his ankle. A faceless leer accompanies the action.

Richard runs. He exits the arches and finds himself in the town square.

In the middle of the square sits a man in a wheelchair.

RICHARD

It's you. You're the cause of this aren't you? What are you, what do you want with me? You freak. What do you want with me?

The man in the wheelchair spins round on his wheels. He stares facelessly at Richard.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

What do you want? What do you want?

The wheelchair starts to move towards him. It's wheels make a hideous SQUEAL as it rolls.

Richard runs away. Across a main road.

EXT. CITY CENTRE

There are restaurants and bars here. Faceless stare out from behind tables, through windows. Their eyeless gazes following him as he runs through the streets.

RICHARD

For God's sake what you want from me? Help me, somebody help me.

The faceless are everywhere now. On every street corner. In every bar. All around him on the streets.

Richard slumps against a wall, he's nowhere to go. A group of faceless close in on him. Some in suits, one in a Police Uniform.

Their hideous faces lean in towards Richard where he lays blubbering.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Wake up please. It's just a dream. It's not real, it can't be real. It's not real, it's not real.

A Police Officer, with a perfectly normal face, takes his radio from his pocket. Over his shoulder a concerned crowd looks on, including a middle aged man in a wheelchair.

POLICE OFFICER
 Dispatch. We have a gentleman
 here suffering from what seems to
 be some kind of psychotic
 episode. Request assistance.
 Over.

MAN IN THE WHEELCHAIR
 Is he going to be Ok Officer?
 Poor fellow seemed scared to
 death.

POLICE OFFICER
 I'll stay with him till help
 arrives. That's the best we can
 do.

Richard lies on the floor, drooling with fear, repeating
 the same thing over and over...

RICHARD
 It's just a dream, It's not real,
 it's just a dream.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL. NIGHT

Two men walk down the clinical looking halls, passing cells
 as they walk.

PHYSICIATRIC NURSE
 This is the ward. The patients
 here tend to be non-violent,
 although we do have the
 occasional outbreak. You just
 need to keep an eye on them, call
 for assistance if any of them
 display harmful behaviour.

NIGHT WATCHMAN
 Who are these people?

PHYSICIATRIC NURSE
 Varies...people from all walks of
 life. Mental illness can strike
 at any time.

He stops and points towards the nearest cell. A sign says
 Richard Almos

PHYSICIATRIC NURSE (CONT'D)
 This guy...only young, had a
 decent job, house.
 (MORE)

PHYSICIATRIC NURSE (CONT'D)

Now he's lost everything. He's
not said a word since he's been
here.

The two peer into the cell.

INT. CELL.

Richard sits with his back to us. His hair has grown since
we last saw him. It's long and bedraggled and hangs down
the side of his face.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL.

NIGHT WATCHMAN

Jesus, it's enough to give you
nightmares.

They walk off.

INT. CELL.

We move slowly towards Richard, arcing round his slumped
shoulders and come to rest on his face.

A shapeless, featureless face that stares silently out into
the night.

THE END