

Eisoptrophobia

**FADE IN:**

**INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT**

Fast food joint. Mostly empty. Eight people sit, crowded at a table.

Everybody's laughing. Having a good time. Save for--

JACK ROGERS (21), sitting silently. He EXHALES, presses his legs together. SAM SHAW (21), next to him, takes notice--

SAM  
(Hushed)  
Dude, just fucking go.

Jack shakes his head. Eats a fry.

JACK  
(Hushed)  
I'll hold it. Unless you're coming.

Sam looks around.

SAM  
(Hushed, Derisive)  
Yeah, that's not happening.

He turns back to the table. A pretty blonde (20), smiles at him. He smirks back.

Jack doesn't move. A beat. Sam rolls his eyes, turns back to him--

SAM (CONT'D)  
Christ, fine.

They both get up.

**HALLWAY - RESTAURANT**

Narrow space. Incandescent light FLICKERS above, illuminating a bathroom sign on a door. Jack and Sam approach it.

SAM  
Why can't you just wait for  
somebody else to go in first?

JACK  
Cause that's the weirdest fucking  
thing anybody could do.

SAM  
What, and this isn't?

JACK  
Alright, is doing this gonna kill  
you?

SAM  
Yeah, I'm dying right now. How do  
you deal with this at home,  
anyways?

JACK  
Look, I doubt you want to know.

SAM  
Jeez...

JACK  
Can we just get it over with?

The door SWINGS open. Somebody comes out, glaring at both of  
them.

SAM  
(Under his breath)  
Great.

Jack looks at him--

JACK  
Well, after you.

SAM  
You're kidding me.

Sam pushes the door open but stops--

SAM (CONT'D)  
No, hang on.

He looks Jack square in the eyes.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Tell me what you're afraid of.

JACK  
Oh, come on-

SAM  
That's my condition for doing this.

JACK  
Look, you're not going to  
understand-

SAM  
Oh, I know I won't.  
(beat)  
They're just fucking mirrors, Jack.  
Reflective surfaces, that's it.  
What's the problem?

A beat. Jack looks around, shakes his head--

JACK  
I'm not scared of *mirrors*.

Sam raises an eyebrow.

SAM  
Then what?

Jack SIGHS--

JACK  
It's my reflection.

SAM  
Yeah, what about it?

Jack struggles to come up with the words--

JACK  
It's... it's not right. Something's  
off about it. Always been like  
this.

Sam seems visibly more intrigued.

SAM  
Like what? What's wrong with it?

Jack's tone is dead serious.

JACK  
Whatever's staring back... I'm  
pretty sure it's not me.

Sam SCOFFS.

SAM  
C'mon, that's ridiculous. The hell  
does that even mean?

A beat.

JACK  
I see myself blinking sometimes.

Sam's face drops for a second.

SAM  
Well... it's probably just in your head. Some traumatic shit happen to as a kid? To do with mirrors?

Jack slowly shakes his head.

JACK  
No.

SAM  
Well, just don't look at your reflection then. The hell do you need me for?

JACK  
Nothing happens whenever somebody else is there. But when I'm alone... I can't avoid it.

A beat. They just stand there. Sam doesn't seem fully convinced.

SAM  
Alright, whatever. It's been long enough, everybody's probably making theories about us.

Sam enters the--

#### **BATHROOM - RESTAURANT**

Typical layout. A big mirror to the side. Jack hurries in, looking straight as he enters a stall.

Sam positions himself at a urinal. Once he finishes up, he starts towards the sink. Stares at his reflection as he washes his hands. He SCOFFS.

He looks at the stall. Jack's still in there.

SAM  
Look, you're gonna hate me but... you gotta deal with this shit sooner or later.

Sam starts towards the door.

SAM (CONT'D)  
This is me helping you.

And he exits.

JACK (O.S)  
Dude? Are you kidding me?

#### **URINAL**

Jack buries his hands into his face. He looks terrified.

JACK  
Fuck.

He shakes his head. EXHALES. Gets up, flushing the toilet. Just stands there for a second. He's not ready.

He swallows. Opens the stall door, coming back out into the--

#### **WASHROOM**

He catches a glimpse of himself before quickly turning away.

JACK  
(Under his breath)  
C'mon. Just do it.

He turns back around slowly. Lifts his head... and stares at himself. He walks towards the mirror. Everything seems normal. *Until--*

He stops. So does his reflection. But not at the same time. About a second delay.

He's breathing heavy now. Panic in his eyes. He turns away for a second before forcing himself to stare back.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Fuck it.

He SLAMS his hands on the counter, gets close to the mirror.

JACK  
Who are you?

Jack waits. Nothing happens for a while. He shifts a bit in the reflection. Only in the reflection.

The mirrored version of Jack eventually starts raising his arm slowly. Points a finger directly ahead. Right at him. Jack goes white. Jack points at himself.

JACK

Me?

A beat. The reflection seems to contemplate for a second. It eventually shakes its head. Jack furrows his brow in confusion.

JACK

What do you want?

His voice quivers a bit. The reflection just points at him again. Jack SIGHS--

JACK

I don't understand.

The reflection holds his finger up. Starts walking backwards. It remains stone-faced. Jack remains paralyzed.

It's backed up near the urinals at this point. Right next to the light switch. Jack just stares at it in confusion. And then he realizes--

JACK

Shit.

He WHIPS his head around. For a split second, he's faced with his doppelganger, in physical form. It gives him a twisted smirk before turning off the lights.

RAGGED breaths are audible in the dark. Along with one pair of footsteps.

#### **INT. RESTAURANT**

Everybody's getting ready to leave. One of the Guys turns to Sam--

GUY

What the hell's Jack doing in there?

Sam shrugs.

SAM

Who the fuck knows, man.

He chuckles. But there's a hint of worry in his eyes.

SAM (CONT'D)

Maybe I'll go check.

He stands up as Jack comes out of the corridor. He walks towards him. Sam breathes a subtle sigh of relief. He smiles at Jack--

SAM (CONT'D)

So what, you see the boogeyman in there?

Jack laughs, shakes his head.

JACK

Guess I didn't know what I was expecting. Not gonna worry about it anymore.

SAM

Good. Rest in peace to that bullshit.

They start heading towards the exit. The group leaves one by one until it's just Jack still inside. He stops. Watches the glass door as it closes in front of him.

He stares at where his reflection's supposed to be. There's nothing. Just tables behind him. He grins, before heading out.

CUT TO:

**BLACK.**

**END.**