

# **FAULTLESS**

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INT. BATHROOM-DAY.

CHLOE (16) looks at herself in the mirror. She fixes her ponytail, adjusts her clothes, and smooths them out. She puts on a little lipstick. She looks directly at her reflection; her expression is serious and her eyes are slightly red.

INT. LIVING ROOM-DAY.

CHLOE walks through the living room and grabs her backpack. On the walls and shelves there are framed diplomas, awards, photos where the family looks perfect, everything aligned and symmetrical. The living room is perfectly organized and styled. A clock on the wall reads 6 a.m. CHLOE leaves the house.

INT. CLASSROOM-DAY.

CHLOE is sitting at a long table with several notebooks on it, a stack of books to one side, and various school supplies, all neatly arranged. She is studying and writing something in her notebook.

A TEACHER walks past and hands her a test marked 19 out of 20.

TEACHER

Almost perfect.

CHLOE remains still, staring at the grade. A group of STUDENTS walk past her laughing and showing each other their tests.

STUDENT 1

Damn... I messed up the last question.

STUDENT 2

Doesn't matter, we passed!

STUDENT 3

(laughing)

Yeah, we're free now.

CHLOE stands up, puts her things into her backpack, and leaves the classroom.

INT. RESTROOMS-DAY.

Students leave the restrooms until it's completely empty. CHLOE enters and throws her things aside. She stands for a moment with her hands on the sink and her head down. Then she searches through her backpack and takes out her test. She crumples it and throws it in the trash. She leaves.

EXT. SCHOOL EXIT-DAY.

CHLOE walks out of school. She walks among other students. A notification from her mother appears on her phone: "How did it

go?". She ignores it and keeps walking.

INT. BEDROOM-DÍA.

CHLOE is sitting on a small stool, looking at herself in the mirror. Her MOTHER is fixing her hair carefully. They only look at each other through the mirror. A long moment of absolute silence passes.

CHLOE'S MOTHER

19. That's not what I expected.

Her MOTHER adjusts her hair again, fixing a strand. CHLOE lowers her gaze.

CHLOE'S MOTHER

Not like that, it was better before..

CHLOE nods slightly, saying nothing. The MOTHER adjusts the hair again, pulling harder. CHLOE presses her lips together.

CHLOE'S MOTHER

You can do better than that.

Her MOTHER smiles at the mirror. CHLOE raises her eyes and meets her own gaze in the mirror. They're slightly red. Her MOTHER notices.

CHLOE'S MOTHER

Don't cry, it ruins your face.

CHLOE forces a smile.

CHLOE'S MOTHER

That's better.

Her MOTHER walks toward the door and stops before leaving, without looking at CHLOE.

CHLOE'S MOTHER

(serious)

Fix that grade. I don't want it to happen again.

She leaves, and CHLOE remains alone looking at herself in the mirror.

INT. DANCE STUDIO-DAY.

CHLOE enters a dance class, sets down her things, and stands among other dancers. They are aligned, facing the mirror in silence. The TEACHER observes them from behind.

The music begins. CHLOE dances while watching herself in the mirror; every movement is impeccable.

The TEACHER walks slowly behind the dancers. He stops behind CHLOE. She feels his presence and makes a mistake. The TEACHER

leans toward the mirror and shakes his head. The music stops.

TEACHER

(serious)

Again.

CHLOE nods. The music resumes. She repeats the sequence with more force and control. The TEACHER gets closer.

TEACHER

(serious)

You're falling behind... Listen to the music...

CHLOE clenches her jaw. The music gets faster. She keeps dancing and makes a mistake.

TEACHER

(annoyed)

Keep going... Is that what you call dancing?

The music continues getting faster. CHLOE begins dancing harder and faster. Her breathing becomes more agitated. The TEACHER moves even closer.

TEACHER

(V.O.)

Keep going! How do you expect to be a dancer if you can't do the basics? What the hell are you doing here? That's all? It's trash, do you hear me? Trash.

CHLOE keeps dancing as the music grows frantic. All the other dancers stop and watch her. CHLOE begins spinning rapidly, her eyes red and her face sweating. When she can't go anymore, the TEACHER raises his hand and the music stops.

TEACHER

(angry)

Get out.

CHLOE leaves, frustrated. Her eyes are red, but she doesn't cry.

INT. LOCKER ROOM-DAY.

CHLOE enters quickly, takes her backpack from a shelf, and pulls out her clothes. She changes roughly, putting on jeans and a jacket. Her breath is agitated and she cries softly. The voices of the teacher and the dancers can be heard from the studio.

Then total silence. CHLOE freezes. She squeezes her eyes shut tightly; her nose wrinkles, brows furrow, lips pressed. A tear slides down her cheek. A second later she opens her eyes and tries to breath with difficulty.

She grabs a small bag and walks to a mirror across the locker room. She searches inside; more tears fall and desperation marks her face again. She finds a makeup sponge and a concealer. She

looks up at the mirror and instantly regains composure. She applies some makeup and smiles at her reflection. Her eyes are still red.

EXT. STREET-DAY.

CHLOE leaves the dance studio. She walks down a crowded street. People bump into her. No one looks twice. She walks with her back straight and chin lifted. Her expression is tense, but her eyes are no longer red. She enters a café.

INT. CAFÉ-DAY.

CHLOE sits at a table with a coffee, a laptop, and several notebooks. Around her, people talk and eat cheerfully.

She writes in a small notebook. She stops, crosses out a word and writes it again. Stops again, crosses out the whole line, exhale starts over. Her leg shakes under the table and she begins writing faster. She stops and tears the page out. She stares at the blank page, motionless.

An email notification appears on the laptop. CHLOE opens it. The email states she was rejected by the university. She remains still, staring at the screen. Her eyes scan the message over and over again; her expression tightens. She closes her laptop, takes her things, and leaves.

INT. LIVING ROOM-NIGHT.

CHLOE bursts through the door, slams it shut, and throws her things on the floor. She enters visibly shaken, eyes red, breathing heavily. She begins throwing everything she finds onto the floor: trophies and framed diplomas shatter. The house becomes chaos; everything is shattered in the floor. She collapses and cries in frustration.

INT. BATHROOM-NIGHT.

CHLOE leans on the sink, looking down while crying. She lifts her head and looks at herself in the mirror. Her REFLECTION shows a perfect version of her: straight posture, confident gaze, and arrogant smile.

REFLECTION

Thought you could do better.

CHLOE

I'm trying.

REFLECTION

That's the problem. You're just trying.

CHLOE

I did my best, okay?

REFLECTION

That's not enough. You fail over and over again.

CHLOE

(voice breaking)

I didn't fail.

REFLECTION

(hardening)

No? You think that was perfect?

CHLOE

No.

REFLECTION

And?

CHLOE

I'm human, you know? I can fail.

REFLECTION

You failed because you're weak. Only mediocre humans fail.

CHLOE

I'm not mediocre. You don't know anything!

REFLECTION

Then what are you?

CHLOE swallows and lowers her head.

REFLECTION

(provocative)

You're not the best.

You're not special.

CHLOE tenses, gripping the sink tightly.

REFLECTION

There's always someone better than you.

CHLOE begins crying in frustration.

CHLOE

(choked voice)

Stop. Please.

REFLECTION

You're always one step behind.

CHLOE runs her hand through her hair.

REFLECTION

You try, but it's never enough. You're not enough.

CHLOE

(choked voice)

Shut up.

REFLECTION

Look at you! Deep down you know you're nothing, that everything you do is wrong. You're not up to the task, and you will never be...

CHLOE lets out a guttural scream. With a sudden movement, she grabs a glass candle and throws it at the mirror. The mirror shatters. CHLOE releases broken cries of frustration mixed with violent exhales. Then absolute silence.

She sees her distorted reflection in the shattered mirror.