

Parasomniac

The 'Black Swan' meets 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde'



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‘Parasomniac’

Project Summary

Genre: Psychological thriller

Pitch: *Black Swan* meets *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

Logline: A struggling young dancer experiencing sleep paralysis (a parasomnia) takes an experimental anti-anxiety drug which unleashes her aggressive and uncensored shadow self from her unconscious.

Story: MEENA DAVIES (26) blacks out from stage fright while performing at the Chicago Conservatory of Modern Dance. Her boyfriend DUNCAN (28) belittles her dreams of being cast in a world-class dance company. Meena also has nightmares of the ghost of her deceased twin, JADE DAVIES (7). Her therapist DR. MASON (65) diagnoses her with sleep paralysis. He believes her nightmares and stage fright are caused by the trauma of Jaya’s accidental death. He prescribes an experimental anti-anxiety drug called Gaudium, explaining that her trauma made her repress what Carl Jung called the “dark shadow.” By analyzing her dreams, Meena can confront the source of her nightmares.

Gaudium steadily improves Meena’s dancing. While working with a small dance troupe, her castmate KENNEDY (24) tells her she has more potential than she knows, convincing her to apply for auditions at more elite dance companies. Friction between Meena and Duncan grows as their respective career ambitions clash. When Meena finds him recording them having sex without her permission, she dumps him. Duncan begins to stalk her.)

One day, Meena wakes up to find a fresh tattoo that she can’t explain and a video on her phone of herself living it up at an elite night club. This is Meena’s parasomniac alter ego (THE OTHER MEENA, (26). The Other Meena is glamorous, confident, and better at Meena’s life than she is! Meena is scared, but also jealous. She decides to keep taking Gaudium to learn from the Other Meena, which she does, leading to more success as a dancer. One day, the Other Meena makes contact, leaving rules for Meena to follow to allow them to share a body, or else. However, as Meena gets closer to achieving her dream, the Other Meena’s activities become more dangerous, and Meena ruins The Other Meena’s life. They fight for exclusive control of their body until the Other Meena locks Meena into her nightmare world and Meena must find a way out before she is trapped forever.

Characters:

MEENA DAVIES (26): Ambitious dancer stymied by stage fright and traumatic memories. (Jenna Ortega, Francesca Eastwood, Mia Wasikowska, Jenna Ortega, Georgina Campbell, Mia Goth, Simone Ashley)

"THE OTHER MEENA" (26): Meena’s alter ego, entitled, hedonistic, devoid of empathy.

DUNCAN (28): Meena’s career-obsessed, self-centered boyfriend. (Bill Skarsgard, Nicholas Holt, Rege-Jean Page, Finn Wittrock, Evan Peters)

KENNEDY (24): Dance castmate, Meena’s best friend. (Sadie Sink, Stephanie Hsu, Kaitlyn Dever, Kiernan Shipka)

DR. MASON (65): Psychiatrist, interested in experimental dream analysis. (Joe Cortese)

JADE DAVIES (7): Meena’s deceased identical twin, haunting her memories and nightmares.

Directors: Karyn Kusama, Clint Eastwood, Kathryn Bigelow, Gabriela Tagliavini, Nia DaCosta, Sylvia Caminer, Chloe Okuno, Issa Lopez, Mike Flanagan, Alex Garland