

Perception

written by Claire Louise Huder

Cinder Pictures LLC

Cinder Pictures, LLC  
cinderpictures@gmail.com  
www.clairelouisehuder.com/cinder-pictures

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**INT. BEDROOM - AFTERNOON**

CHELSEA, an attractive young woman in her early 20s with long red hair dressed in jeans and t-shirt, is lying on top of her still-made BED against the far wall in the middle of the room. She is writing in a JOURNAL with her PHONE on the BED next to her. On her left wrist is a small, thin scar. A lamp sits on the NIGHTSTAND beside the BED behind a framed photo of CHELSEA and her girlfriend DEVON, another attractive young woman in her early 20s with short dark hair: DEVON is beaming with her arm around CHELSEA, while under her CHELSEA wears a less-enthusiastic but still-warm smile. Across from the BED is the entrance to the BATHROOM, the DOOR cracked and light off. A WALK-IN CLOSET opens to the side of the BED next to a DRESSER. Between the BATHROOM and WALK-IN CLOSET stands a TALL MIRROR.

CHELSEA's PHONE dings. She stops writing and shuts the JOURNAL, picking up her PHONE to see a new TEXT from DEVON. She opens it:

DEVON (TEXT)

You better be getting red-y! It's date night and I'm taking my baby out somewhere nice (winky-face with tongue out emoji)

CHELSEA smiles softly, rolling her eyes at DEVON's pun. DING! Another TEXT appears from DEVON:

DEVON (TEXT)

Hope your week's gotten better (face throwing a kiss emoji) Looking forward to an uneventful night (smirking face emoji)(kiss mark emoji)

CHELSEA's smile fades.

CHELSEA

Uneventful? Seriously?

She types back:

CHELSEA (TEXT)

Thanks (kiss mark emoji) See you tonight.

CHELSEA drops the PHONE back onto the BED and turns over to face the ceiling.

CHELSEA

She just had to say something. Like I can just turn it off.

After taking a moment she sits up, puts her JOURNAL on the NIGHTSTAND beside her BED and walks to the BATHROOM. She turns on the light and almost shuts the BATHROOM DOOR behind her, leaving it slightly cracked open. The SHOWER turns on. One-by-one, CHELSEA'S T-SHIRT and JEANS are tossed up onto the cracked BATHROOM DOOR. The sound of the SHOWER CURTAIN/DOOR opening and shutting is heard as CHELSEA steps in and washes.

The PHONE DINGS.

The SHOWER turns off. The BATHROOM DOOR opens. CHELSEA, wrapped only in a towel and tussling her wet hair, walks back into the bedroom. She looks briefly at the PHONE on the bed and then walks straight into the nearby open CLOSET.

Moments later, CHELSEA exits the CLOSET in a RED DRESS to look at herself in the TALL MIRROR. After a few turns and a moment of thought, she sighs and shakes her head.

CHELSEA

Does she really want me to wear  
this tonight? It's just too much  
for me.

She goes back into the CLOSET briefly and re-emerges wearing a BLACK DRESS. Looking at herself in the TALL MIRROR, CHELSEA smiles. After a few turns, her smile fades as she sighs.

CHELSEA

Devon will kill me if she catches  
me wearing all black again. Color,  
I gotta wear at least some color.

She goes back into the CLOSET and, after taking a little longer than before, re-emerges wearing another DRESS. She looks at herself in the TALL MIRROR.

CHELSEA

A little compromise won't hurt.

Satisfied, CHELSEA leaves the BEDROOM barefoot and heads down the HALLWAY to the KITCHEN, leaving her PHONE on the BED.

#### **INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

As CHELSEA walks down the HALLWAY to the KITCHEN, an UNSEEN FIGURE--with stark resemblance to CHELSEA--darts into the BEDROOM behind her.

**INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

CHELSEA enters the KITCHEN and grabs a WATER GLASS from the CABINET. She fills it with water, takes a sip, then looks at an open WINE BOTTLE on the counter. She hears DEVON's voice from a past conversation:

DEVON (V.O.)

Pop Quiz: Can wine go into a glass other than a wine glass?

CHELSEA (V.O.)

I don't know, probably.

DEVON (V.O.)

That's what an alcoholic would say.

CHELSEA picks up the WINE BOTTLE.

CHELSEA

Doesn't count if you don't own any wine glasses. Plus, I need a sip for my nerves.

She pours some WINE into the WATER GLASS, filling it halfway, and then takes a long, satisfying sip. Closing her eyes, she takes a moment to enjoy the taste of the grapes and the soft rush from the alcohol, which effectively helps in cooling her nerves.

CRASH!

CHELSEA jumps as she hears the sound of glass shattering from the direction of her BEDROOM. Putting down the almost-empty WATER GLASS, she runs in the direction of the noise.

**INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

CHELSEA stands in the doorway in shock. Lying on the bed exactly where she was and reading her JOURNAL is DOPPËL CHELSEA, wearing the RED DRESS that CHELSEA tried on earlier. DOPPËL CHELSEA continues to read the journal, entertained by its contents and ignoring CHELSEA still standing in the doorway.

CHELSEA

Um...excuse me?

DOPPËL CHELSEA ignores CHELSEA and continues reading the JOURNAL with a smirk on her face. CHELSEA is not amused and raises her voice.

CHELSEA

Hey--bitch--I don't know who you  
are, but you need to get the Hell  
out of my house!

DOPPËL CHELSEA looks up from the JOURNAL at CHELSEA, and CHELSEA realizes how truly alike they look: minus the difference in clothing and wet-vs.-dry hair, they are identical, down to the light scar on the left wrist. CHELSEA is visibly taken aback, her anger morphing into confusion and then fear. DOPPËL CHELSEA chuckles and shuts the JOURNAL.

DOPPËL CHELSEA

If you could see your face right  
now--well, I mean in a way I guess  
you can--but your face, it's just  
*chk*

DOPPËL CHELSEA makes the "OK" sign and winks playfully at CHELSEA, who is still frozen in fear. Annoyed by CHELSEA's lack of reaction, DOPPËL CHELSEA groans and meanders off of the BED, placing the JOURNAL back on the NIGHTSTAND.

DOPPËL CHELSEA

Lighten up! You're always so  
serious. It's not like I don't  
already know what's going on in  
that mind of yours. I just enjoy  
reading your pathetic little words  
on paper.

As DOPPËL CHELSEA speaks, CHELSEA notices her PHONE still laying on the BED. She quickly looks back at DOPPËL CHELSEA and takes a couple of steps into the room, not breaking her gaze and moving towards the BED but taking care to keep her distance from DOPPËL CHELSEA. Despite her best efforts, DOPPËL CHELSEA notices and picks up the PHONE, waving it teasingly at CHELSEA.

DOPPËL CHELSEA

Looking for this? What does Devon  
keep telling you? "You really need  
to stop just leaving it places,  
you never know who might pick it  
up!" I took the liberty of texting  
our girlfriend back. She loves how  
the dress looks by the way.

DOPPËL CHELSEA shows CHELSEA the PHONE SCREEN, which shows an alluring photo of DOPPËL CHELSEA in the RED DRESS that was sent to DEVON, before turning it OFF right in front of her and tossing it back onto the BED.

CHELSEA

"Our" girlfriend?

DOPPËL CHELSEA  
 Oops! You're right--for once--I  
 mean "my" girlfriend.

CHELSEA  
 Wait, "your" girlfriend?!

DOPPËL CHELSEA  
 You keep second-guessing yourself,  
 you're going to end up having  
 "problems".

DOPPËL CHELSEA swirls her finger in circles on the side of her  
 head in a "crazy person" motion.

DOPPËL CHELSEA  
 It's not healthy.

CHELSEA  
 Why do you look like me?

DOPPËL CHELSEA  
 "Look like"? Isn't it obvious? I  
 AM you.

DOPPËL CHELSEA poses gloatingly for CHELSEA.

DOPPËL CHELSEA  
 Take a good look sweetie. I'm the  
 real deal, or at least I will be.

CHELSEA  
 What's that supposed to mean?

DOPPËL CHELSEA  
 Let me put it this way: I'm  
 everyone's perception of you--  
 smart, confident, conniving and  
 manipulative--the true you.  
 Because let's face it, the only  
 thing that matters in this world  
 is what everyone else thinks of  
 you.

As she speaks, DOPPËL CHELSEA slowly circles CHELSEA like a big  
 cat stalking its prey, cutting her off from her exit to the  
 HALLWAY.

DOPPËL CHELSEA  
 You, for example, waste your  
 talents trying to be someone  
 you're clearly not, and just look  
 at how much you've suffered.

(MORE)

DOPPËL CHELSEA (CONT'D)

Admit it: you're not strong enough  
to embrace your true nature. I  
think it's time I take over.

Fear covers CHELSEA's face as she realizes what DOPPËL CHELSEA means and she begins to back up, trying to put distance between her and DOPPËL CHELSEA, but for every step she takes back, DOPPËL CHELSEA takes one forward.

CHELSEA

Devon will know. She will be able  
to tell the difference. Devon will  
know.

DOPPËL CHELSEA makes a buzzer sound.

DOPPËL CHELSEA

Wrong. What did I just say? It  
doesn't matter who you think you  
are or who you're trying to be.  
The only thing that matters is  
everyone's perception of you--and  
that's me. You think Devon really  
sees past all your flaws and  
freak-outs? Or does she see the  
you that everyone else sees--the  
bubbly and outgoing yet emotional  
and manipulative bitch who will do  
anything to get her way, anything  
to survive--the real, true you?

DOPPËL CHELSEA scoffs.

DOPPËL CHELSEA

The only thing we may actually  
have in common--I mean, outside of  
the obvious killer looks--is that  
I'm just as empty as you are.

CHELSEA

That's not true. I'm not empty.

DOPPËL CHELSEA laughs.

DOPPËL CHELSEA

Not empty? Yeah, keep telling  
yourself that sweetie. When's the  
last time you did anything for  
anyone but yourself? Truly? The  
only time that you ever do  
anything for someone--including  
your sweet Devon--is when it  
benefits you.

(MORE)

DOPPËL CHELSEA (CONT'D)  
Hell, you can't even wear a sexy  
red dress for her without bitching  
and moaning about it. You can't  
lie to me.

DOPPËL CHELSEA takes a single but sudden step forward, causing  
CHELSEA to flinch, lose her balance, and fall backwards.

**INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS**

CHELSEA falls into the BATHROOM DOOR, knocking the T-SHIRT and  
JEANS off of it and onto her face. She panics, throwing them  
off of her and in DOPPËL CHELSEA'S direction. As she puts her  
hands down on the bathroom floor, she SCREAMS. CHELSEA looks  
down and sees SHARDS OF BROKEN GLASS from the BATHROOM MIRROR  
digging into her palms and littered all over the floor.

DOPPËL CHELSEA laughs maniacally and slowly pulls the clothes  
off of her face, revealing an eerily-wide smile.

DOPPËL CHELSEA  
Back to hurting yourself? Some  
things never change.

CHELSEA  
That's not what happened, and if  
you're me you know that.

DOPPËL CHELSEA  
Haven't you caught on already? It.  
Doesn't. Matter. What. Really.  
Happened. What matters is what  
everyone else thinks!

DOPPËL CHELSEA steps forward, bends down, and picks up a large  
MIRROR SHARD from the floor. CHELSEA backs up further into the  
BATHROOM until her back hits a hard surface behind her.  
As DOPPËL CHELSEA moves closer, CHELSEA tries to back up  
further but realizes she has nowhere to go.

DOPPËL CHELSEA  
Just face it. It's better this  
way. I am who you are meant to be.

CHELSEA  
No. Please. I'm the real me!

DOPPËL CHELSEA laughs and raises the MIRROR SHARD ominously.

DOPPËL CHELSEA  
Take a look in the mirror  
sweetheart. You're just the  
reflection.

CHELSEA screams. DOPPËL CHELSEA brings the MIRROR SHARD down hard into the middle of CHELSEA's FOREHEAD between her eyes.

CUT TO BLACK.

**EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - EVENING**

DEVON, wearing a classy women's suit and a grin that says "tonight's the night", approaches the MAIN DOOR. After making sure she looks her very best and taking a small breath in-and-out to expel any nerves, she KNOCKS.

The APARTMENT DOOR opens. DOPPËL CHELSEA answers the door wearing the RED DRESS. One arm is out of view. She smiles brightly at DEVON.

DEVON  
Hello Gorgeous!

DEVON leans in and kisses DOPPËL CHELSEA, who kisses her back.

DEVON  
You wore it.

DOPPËL CHELSEA  
Anything for you baby. Come on in,  
let me model it a little for you  
before we go.

DEVON  
Someone's in a mood. How can I say  
no? As long as we're not late.

DOPPËL CHELSEA  
Don't worry baby, it will be  
quick.

DEVON walks past DOPPËL CHELSEA inside the house towards the KITCHEN where the WINE BOTTLE and half-drunk WATER GLASS of WINE are still sitting on the counter. With an innocent look back outside that slowly morphs into a sinister smile, DOPPËL CHELSEA closes the door with the MIRROR SHARD, now covered in BLOOD, held firmly in her hand behind her back.

The DOOR shuts. DEVON screams.

END.