

Title: Spacek

Status: Completed screenplay

Genre: Psychological Thriller - 'Open Your Eyes' meets 'Arbitrage'

Setting: US City

Period: Near future

Page Length: 94

Logline: A mind transplant patient discovers he has committed a brutal murder he can't remember, but for reasons he is desperate to hide.

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(please scroll down for excerpt)

EXT. CITY/RESTAURANT - DAY

An upmarket street - high-end antique shops and designer boutiques.

The restaurant itself is discreet, unadorned.

INT. RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

The humble front belies its most sumptuous interior.

Amongst the low hum of dignified chatter, bow-tied waiters hover attentively over well-heeled, smug diners enjoying lunch on their companies' expense accounts.

Across the room two MEN sit at one of the more exclusive tables for two.

One is a refined, DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMAN - 60's.

His COMPANION is younger, devilishly debonair. He has a conceited smile on his face as he raises his glass of wine in a mocking toast.

Distinguished Gentleman fixes him with a steely gaze. Then he half-smiles, defeated.

He raises his hefty glass of scotch and downs it in one. Then removes his spectacles and rubs his tired eyes.

He puts his glasses back on and gets to his feet.

He wavers for a moment and steadies himself on his chair. His face turns ashy.

His Companion looks on sceptically.

Disoriented now, Distinguished Gentleman takes a few faltering steps before clutching at his chest. His face contorts in agony, in the throes of a heart attack.

The dignified chatter comes to an abrupt halt as with a desperate cry he falls across a table then topples to the floor - a noisy clatter as he drags cutlery and dishes with him.

Fully convinced now, his Companion leaps to his side and shouts out to the shocked room.

COMPANION

This isn't a fucking sideshow
people! Somebody call an
ambulance!

EXT. BUSY ROAD - DAY

An ambulance races through the lunchtime traffic.

INT. AMBULANCE - CONTINUOUS

Distinguished Gentleman is strapped down on a stretcher. His face is covered by a ventilator mask, only his eyes are visible. They are surprisingly steady for somebody the recent victim of cardiac arrest. He breathes calmly, the monitor beside him shows a steady pulse.

A female doctor sits beside him. Austere, brittle elegance - DR. NICOLA STERLING, 40's.

She prepares a syringe with a translucent liquid and holds it up to Distinguished Gentleman.

DR. NICOLA STERLING

Ready?

Distinguished Gentleman closes his eyes, this is a tough decision...

He opens his eyes and nods quickly.

Wasting no time, Dr. Sterling plunges the needle into his arm, injecting the liquid into his system.

A moment for the effect of liquid to take hold, then Distinguished Gentleman's eyes widen, the pain this time completely authentic. He looks at Sterling in shock, then grunts, thrashes wildly. The pulse on the monitor goes haywire.

He continues to writhe and jerk.

Dr. Sterling watches him, detached and devoid of all sympathy.

His movement begins to subside. The monitor shows his pulse slowing until he stops moving altogether. His pulse flatlines.

Unperturbed, Sterling runs a check on his vitals. Process complete she sits back calmly, satisfied that he is dead.

INT. SPACEK CLINIC/OPERATING THEATRE - DAY

CLOSE ON - A MAN'S face - STAN SCHRADER 30's, handsome. His eyes are closed, his face as still as a statue.

PULL BACK TO SEE:

He is lying on an operating table, securely strapped down. Wires are affixed to his temples.

The other ends of the wires trickle down, run across the floor and then lead up to the temples of dead Distinguished Gentleman who lies on a table a few feet away.

Sterling stands beside a monitor. The screen pulsates with steady readings. She assesses the measurements then nods to a JUNIOR DOCTOR who stands behind a complex looking touch-screen control panel.

Junior Doctor swipes the panel and a low hum sounds. In response, the readings on the monitor next to Sterling begin to fluctuate.

DR. NICOLA STERLING

Ready?

JUNIOR DOCTOR

Yep.

Sterling gives him the nod to go ahead. Junior Doctor performs structured swiping motions across the panel - an expert at work. The readings jump.

Stan's face begins to twitch, then as the readings' activity increases, his entire body becomes animated.

Sterling watches intently.

DR. NICOLA STERLING

Check.

JUNIOR DOCTOR

Cerebellum conditioning complete.

Frontotemporal lobar...

(waits, monitors
reading)

...pretty much there. Another
twenty seconds or so.

DR. NICOLA STERLING

I want F.T conditioning stopped
now.

Junior Doctor looks up, puzzled.

DR. NICOLA STERLING (CONT'D)

Do it.

Her tone leaves no room for argument. Junior Doctor shrugs - she's the boss - but he's not happy. He returns his gaze to the panel. A final few swipes and the hum subsides. The monitor readings slow down then stop.

JUNIOR DOCTOR

All done.

Stan continues to twitch, then stills. Sterling watches fixedly. Waits...

Stan's eyes slowly open. They are deep, wise, convey a life experience far beyond his physical years.

His gaze alights on Sterling who stands above him and smiles. His expression becomes confused.

She clasps his hand.

DR. NICOLA STERLING
Slowly now.

Stan's head swivels and his view takes in dead Distinguished Gentleman lying beside him.

Stan is shocked, his world pulled from under him. He begins to panic, struggling against the straps that bind him. Flailing violently he begins to scream, but the sound of his voice disturbs him even more.

Ever prepared, Sterling pulls out a syringe and injects him. In a matter of moments Stan begins to settle, his eyes glazing over. As he drifts back into unconsciousness, the last thing he sees is Distinguished Gentleman's lifeless face.