



the
PSION
dilemma

Reality
Just Got
Darker

Screenplay by
Stephen Hall

The Psion Dilema

Format: Psychological Thriller Feature

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Jack Corral lives a solitary life, burdened by the trauma of a childhood car crash that claimed both his parents. To survive, Jack has constructed a fragile reality supported by therapy, medication, and a group of imagined flatmates — each representing a piece of his fractured psyche. . In a pivotal moment, Jack discards his remaining medication, signalling his disillusionment with recovery. When Jack meets Amy, a kind and intuitive artist, their unexpected connection offers him a chance at something real. But his emotional awakening also stirs deeper fears, triggering the rise of Gerrat Tensh — a powerful and destructive internal persona determined to sever Jack's ties to the outside world. Meanwhile, a journalist begins investigating Jack after he's labelled a hero for saving a child, unknowingly closing in on the truth Jack is barely holding together.

As Jack's inner world begins to turn on him, his flatmates grow erratic, a mysterious note warns "Dark ventures approach," and a new persona — KP, an internal "agent" — emerges to protect Amy. But KP's presence cannot hold back the collapse. When he discovers a hidden darkroom filled with surveillance photos of his life, Jack realizes his inner selves have been monitoring him for years. The final battle with Tensh forces Jack to confront the darkest part of himself — and choose between isolation and intimacy. In the aftermath, Jack returns to an eerily quiet flat, unsure if the storm has passed, but finally willing to face the future — with Amy by his side.



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Logline

Haunted by the trauma of his parents' death, a reclusive man must navigate a collapsing inner world ruled by imaginary flatmates, a protective agent, and a destructive alter ego — all while struggling to hold onto the woman he loves before his mind tears them apart.

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Synopsis

Jack Corral lives a solitary life in Edinburgh, haunted by the trauma of a childhood car crash that killed his parents. To survive, he's constructed a fragile inner world sustained by therapy, medication, and a group of imagined flatmates — each representing a fragment of his fractured psyche. When he meets Amy, a grounded and intuitive artist, her presence offers a glimpse of real connection — but also awakens deeper fears, triggering the rise of Gerrat Tensh, a destructive alter ego bent on isolating Jack forever.

As Jack discards his final pills and a journalist begins investigating his secret life, his mental world collapses: the flatmates turn against him, a mysterious note warns "Dark ventures approach," and a self-appointed internal agent named KP emerges to protect Amy. Discovering a hidden darkroom filled with surveillance photos of himself, Jack realizes his imagined selves have been monitoring him all along. In a final confrontation, he must battle the force inside him that would rather destroy everything than let him be loved. In the aftermath, alone but conscious, Jack chooses not to retreat — but to face what comes next, with Amy by his side.



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Tone, Genre and Style

Genre: Psychological Thriller / Character-Driven Drama

Tone: Moody, cerebral, emotionally intimate with surreal elements

Visual Style: Gritty realism mixed with stylized internal visions (e.g., the darkroom, imagined personas)

Comparable Films: *A Beautiful Mind*, *Black Swan*, *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*

The Psion Dilemma is a psychological thriller rooted in emotional realism, blending internal suspense with grounded character drama. The tone is introspective, tense, and quietly haunting — maintaining a constant undercurrent of unease as Jack's internal world unravels. Visually, the style leans into atmospheric minimalism: shadowed interiors, sharp contrasts between the mundane and the surreal, and symbolic use of space (the flat, the darkroom) to reflect Jack's psyche. Genre-wise, it draws from psychological suspense, but instead of focusing on external crime, the story builds tension from within — where imagined allies become threats, and the protagonist is both hero and battlefield.

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Themes

Moral Complicity – Jack's internal personas enable or suppress aspects of his behaviour.

Survival vs. Conscience – Does protection mean control, or letting go?

The Cost of Progress – Healing comes at a psychological price.

Power and Protection – The tension between autonomy and emotional defence.



The Characters

Jack Corral

A solitary, emotionally scarred man living in Edinburgh. Haunted by the childhood loss of his parents, Jack survives through therapy, medication, and a fractured internal world inhabited by imagined personas. His journey is one of confronting trauma, self-sabotage, and the possibility of love.

Amy Lees

A kind, intuitive artist who brings light and stability into Jack's life. Her presence offers him a chance at real connection, but also threatens to disrupt the psychological system Jack has built to survive.

Lizzy

Playful, chaotic, and emotionally instinctive — Lizzy represents Jack's spontaneity and suppressed desire for joy. She often distracts Jack from discomfort but avoids deeper reflection.

Simon

Intellectual, cautious, and rational. Simon serves as Jack's analytical voice, interpreting events but struggling to engage emotionally. He's more comfortable with facts than feelings.

Annette

Withdrawn, observant, and tightly wound, Annette spends much of her time in the "darkroom." She embodies Jack's paranoia and obsessive need for control, eventually turning against him.

Rees

Disciplined, assertive, and physical, Rees reflects Jack's drive for strength and self-reliance. Protective but rigid, he believes in suppressing emotion to avoid vulnerability.

KP

A late-emerging persona — calm, formal, and strategic — KP acts like an internal agent tasked with protecting Amy and stabilizing Jack. He represents Jack's desire for order but is eventually overwhelmed by darker forces.

Gerrat Tensh

Jack's most dangerous alter ego. Charismatic, manipulative, and cold, Tensh emerges from Jack's repressed trauma and seeks total control by severing emotional ties. He is the antagonist within.

Brendan Clements

A persistent journalist investigating Jack after a heroic act draws media attention. His pursuit adds real-world pressure, unwittingly threatening to expose Jack's unraveling internal reality.

3-Act Structure Summary

Act I – The Fragile Surface

Jack's world is introduced — structured but artificial. He meets Amy and begins to change, but his internal personas stir with unease.

Act II – The Shadow Within

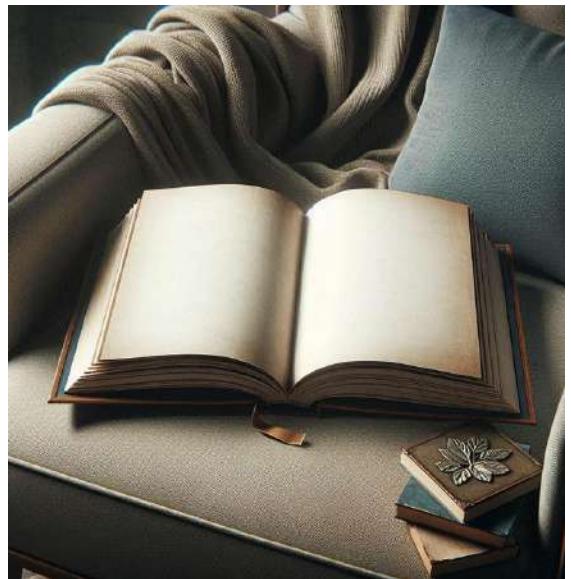
Tensh begins to rise. Jack loses his medication, and the flatmates turn. Brendan investigates. Jack's inner world fractures as hallucinations intensify.

Act III – Confrontation and Choice

Tensh kills KP. Jack discovers the surveillance darkroom. A final battle ensues, and Jack chooses to fight for Amy — rejecting the fear that controls him.



Mood Board



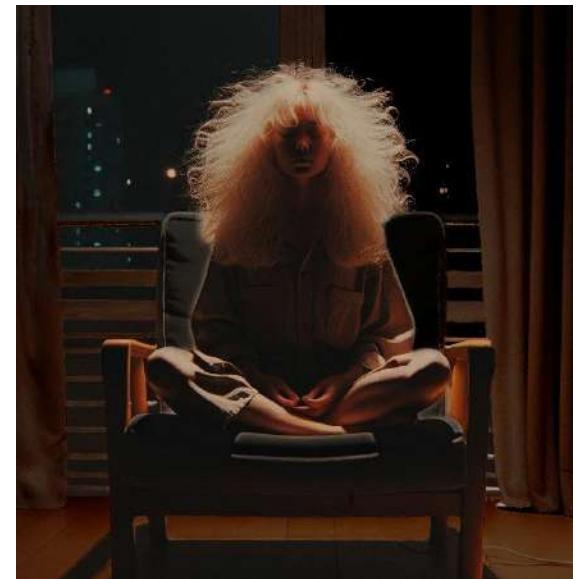
The blank book: An indicator not all is as it seems.



Annette and The Darkroom: The revelation begins



The Stranger who appears to Jack



In the darkness, the voice of Tensh speaks but it is Lizzy in the room.

Why This Film?

The Psion Dilemma speaks to mental health, emotional vulnerability, and the struggle for identity in an age of disconnection. In a world increasingly fractured — internally and socially — this story challenges the notion that healing is linear. It's a story about the battles no one sees and the courage it takes to let someone in.



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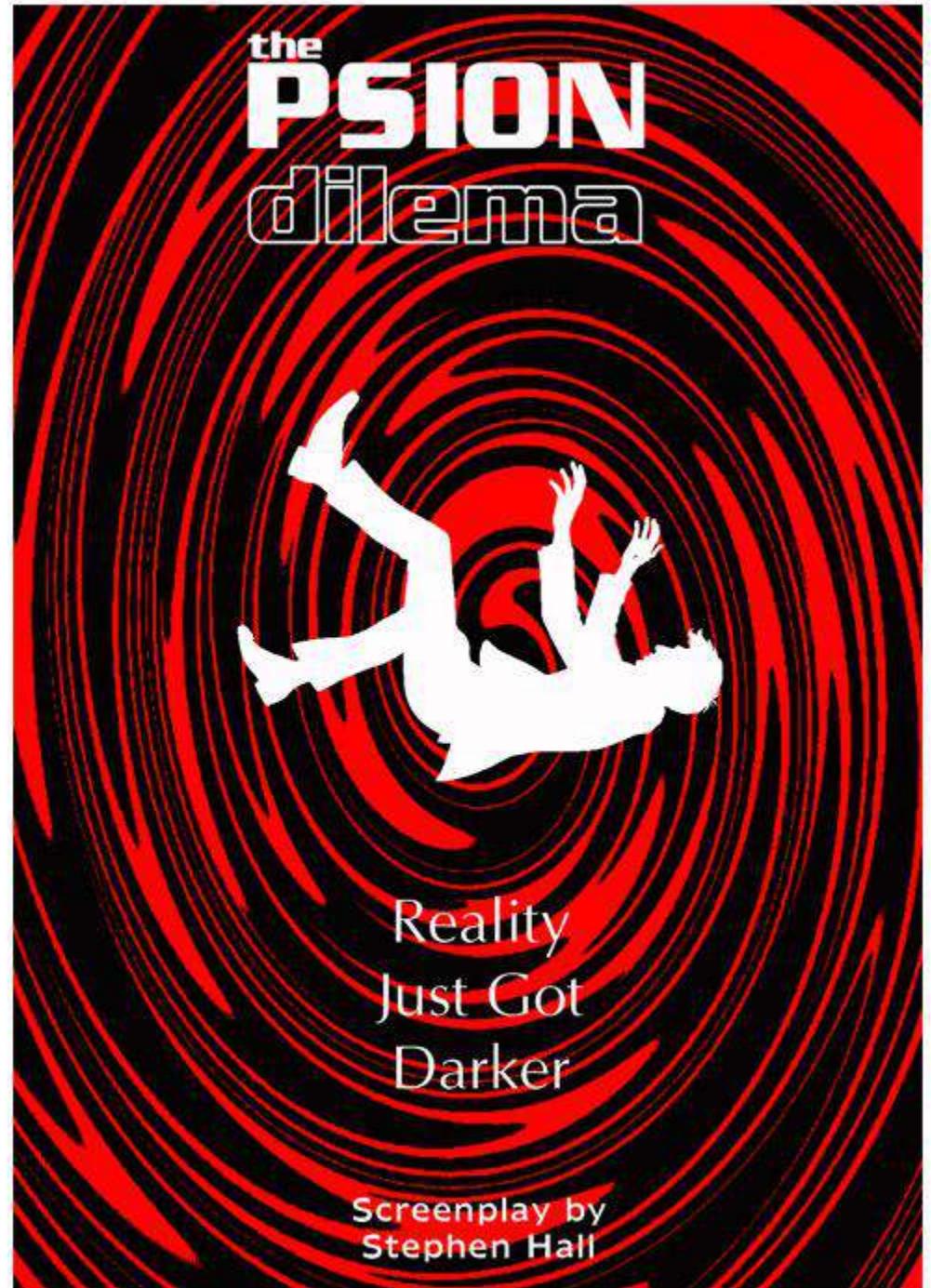
Written By: Stephen Hall

Status: Complete Feature Screenplay – Seeking Representation / Development

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“Dark ventures approach... unless we choose not to answer.”

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The Writer

I started writing my first screenplay in December 2021 based on the true story: Burke and Hare – The West Port Murders then in September 2023, I began the first draft of Inside Reach, a story and genre very different from my first piece of work.

By August 2024 I was ready to return to this second screenplay and complete the first draft. These two projects and the awards culminated from the first, has encouraged me to continue with this extremely fulfilling interest in screenwriting and there are at least a further three stories lined up for the future.

At the time of writing, I have completed the first draft of my third script, another full-length feature called Greatrex.

Stephen Hall

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