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ENEMY

If you saw someone in a movie who looked exactly like you, what would you do? We all like to believe we know who we are. Yet what happens when we come face to face with another version of ourselves? *Enemy* explores that terrifying possibility, revealing that the greatest enemy we could ever meet might be hidden inside us.

The film's order of images in the opening is crucial. First, a voicemail from Adam's mother, worried about the state of his new apartment. Then, a flash of a nude, pregnant woman. Finally, the quote:

“Chaos is order yet undeciphered.”

The film then cuts to a secret club. Men watch a woman crush a spider under her heel. It is a disturbing image, yet strangely hypnotic. This is our entry point into a story about dominance, guilt, and the primal fear of the feminine.

Adam Bell, played by Jake Gyllenhaal, is a withdrawn history professor living a repetitive life. One night, he rents a movie and sees someone who looks exactly like him on screen. He seeks out this actor, Anthony Claire, and their encounter becomes a psychological collision rather than a simple mystery.

My interpretation is that Adam and Anthony are not two separate people. They are two sides of the same man. The film externalizes

an internal struggle. Anthony represents Adam's repressed impulses: infidelity, aggression, ego. Adam is the part of him trying to suppress those urges and live a stable life.

We are told immediately that this story is about the human mind. Like spiders, we build structure in chaos. We create routines. We fall into patterns that feel safe but can turn into traps. A web we can no longer escape. The spider imagery reflects Adam's fear of commitment and the overwhelming power he gives to women. Every affair, every betrayal, becomes another silk thread tightening around him.

Adam teaches a lesson about dictatorships and how they maintain control. He explains that when power becomes too restrictive, the people eventually fight back, the system collapses, and a new authority rises. This creates a repeating cycle of control and rebellion. That same pattern exists in Adam's personal life. His need for control over his desires and his relationships is constantly challenged by the more reckless part of himself that refuses to be contained. Each time he tries to suppress his impulses, they return stronger. His own mind functions like a dictatorship, and the uprising is inevitable. Villeneuve uses history not as background detail, but as a metaphor for a man trapped in a cycle of his own making.

This psychological cycle is reinforced by the environment. Toronto is portrayed as a cold and repetitive maze of concrete and glass. The identical high-rise apartments and endless power lines create a sense of monotony that mirrors Adam's internal state. The city lacks landmarks or warmth, so every space feels like a copy of another. Villeneuve uses this architecture to show how Adam's world has collapsed into routine. He is surrounded by structures that reflect his mental prison. There is no escape

because everywhere he goes looks the same, just like the patterns he keeps repeating in his life.

The giant spider looming over the city represents Adam's trauma and his fear of being consumed by responsibility and intimacy. It also symbolizes Anthony's lust, the part of him that seeks escape through affairs and objectifies women. In Villeneuve's film, desire becomes the real enemy. Lust threatens the stability Adam claims to want. When he gives in to that impulse, the woman he loves transforms into a terrified spider. He no longer sees a partner. He sees a trap.

Everything in *Enemy* feels intentional. The suffocating yellow palette, the unsettling score, the recurring spider imagery. These elements build a psychological landscape that resembles a maze. Adam is lost inside himself, wandering through his own anxiety and guilt, trying to find a door that does not exist.

As the film reaches its conclusion, Adam recognizes that he is still caught in the same destructive cycle Anthony embodied. The horrifying final moment is not just a jump scare. It is a realization. His impulses have returned, unchanged. The question the film leaves us with is devastating. Will he confront who he really is and break the cycle, or will he surrender to it once again?

In the end, Adam is not imprisoned by the world around him. He is trapped by the cycle he continues to repeat. He is both the spider and the fly. The predator and the victim. The man and the enemy.