

Treatment

"The Lateral Hotel"

Script:

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Storyboard:

Monling Lee

Production:

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Lighting:

Flux Studio



Something happened in Chinatown at Fifth and Eye...

The Lateral Hotel

by Julian Hunt & Lucrecia Laudi

SYNOPSIS:

A mysterious destination in a resurgent capital, the Lateral Hotel is the site where the international set meets a rising class of entrepreneurs, investors, and fixers at the ambiguous interface of private interest, public policy, and national ambitions. Everyone wants to find out the Lateral angle.

STEP SHEET:

Scene 1) "The Enigma of Arrival" - A red-eye flight, long lines at immigration, and a detour to answer a few questions about the bandage. Then release to fend for yourself under an assumed name, Jake.



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Scene 2) "Passing the Threshold" - The pleasure of seeing the Lateral Hotel doors cannot be explained except as that of finding shelter from the unrelenting glare of surveillance. The act of entry from the street is dramatized in a prolonged threshold space designed as its own enclosure to suggest doors within doors, a decompression chamber between external pressure and noise to the hushed chill of a narrow, protected lobby.



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Scene 3) "My Concierge" - At the end of the narrow lobby, in understated greys and the odd figure of a moose antler, the familiar trusted concierge who knows exactly who and when to call. A faint pattern on the wall behind descends like lines of code.



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Scene 4) "A moment to get your bearings" - The bartender prepares a transparent drink and very carefully brings the glass down onto the calacatta marble without a sound except for a background of white noise, slowly rising and falling like a rain shower.



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Scene 5) "My contact at the restaurant is discrete" - An imminent Russian invasion of Ukraine has provoked a grave international crisis. Negotiations are tense and operating at all levels and in many capitals. Back-channel communications are engaged to avoid calamitous misunderstandings.



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Scene 6) "A diversion to the Biergarten" - Without being observed, documents must be exchanged. The noise and crowds in the Biergarten, with its pleasant distractions and temptations, provide the necessary cover. Business concluded, absorbed into the crowd, Tinder contact established.



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Scene 7) "Who is this woman in my room?" - Tinder disappoints, but my contact seems to have made alternate arrangements. Must be an android. A call to the concierge resolves the intrusion. Alone, the room responds and allows for the necessary preparation for the next phase. Mental notes are written into cipher for divulgence at meetings after returning. Lack of sleep and the strain, fueled by caffeine and alcohol, exhaustion can lead to mistakes. Two more personal items to take care of before turning in.



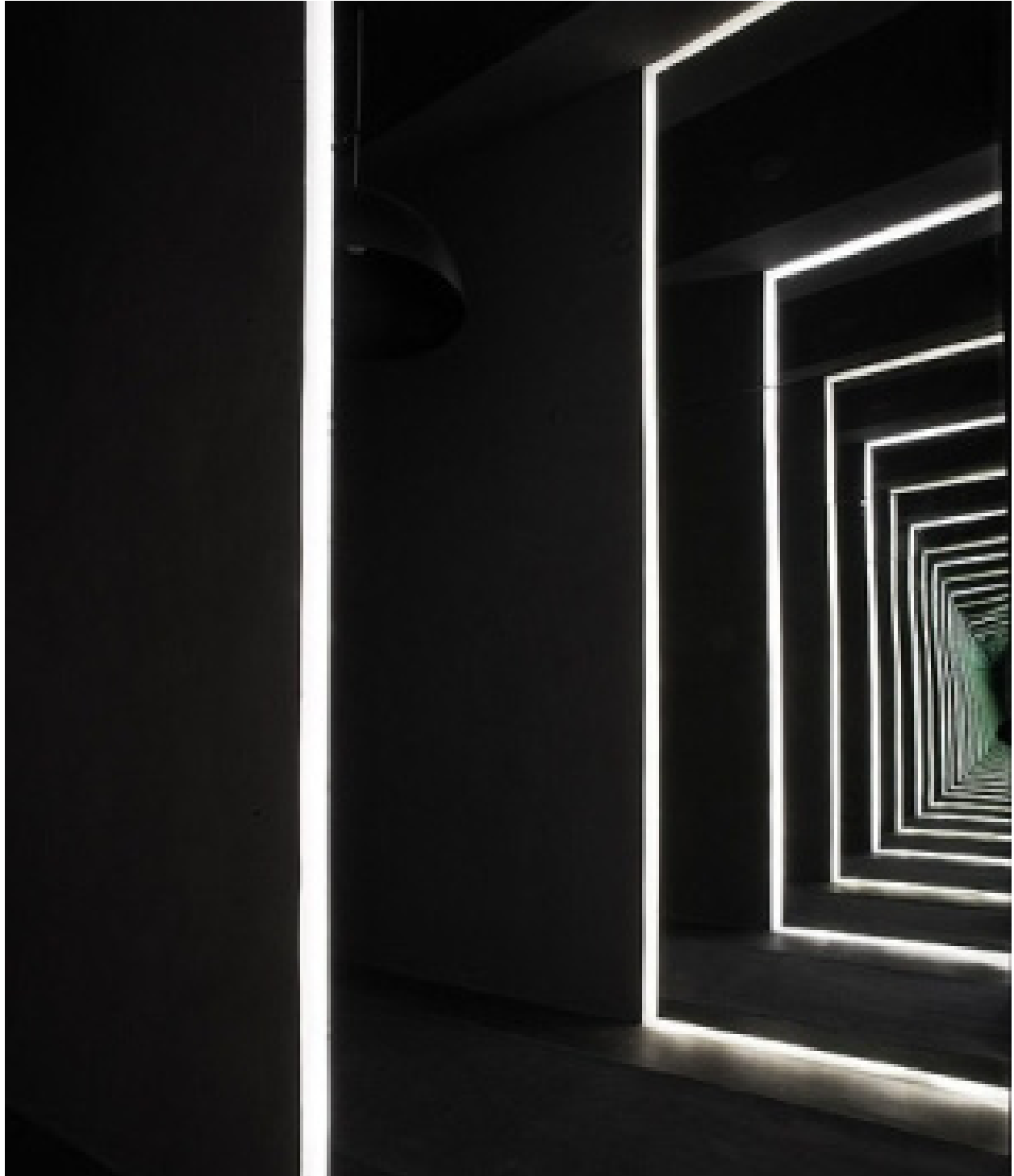
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Scene 8) "Do not fall asleep in the bath" - A lingering sense of threat persists and a decision is made to seek a more thorough treatment in the Zumthor steambaths below streetlevel.



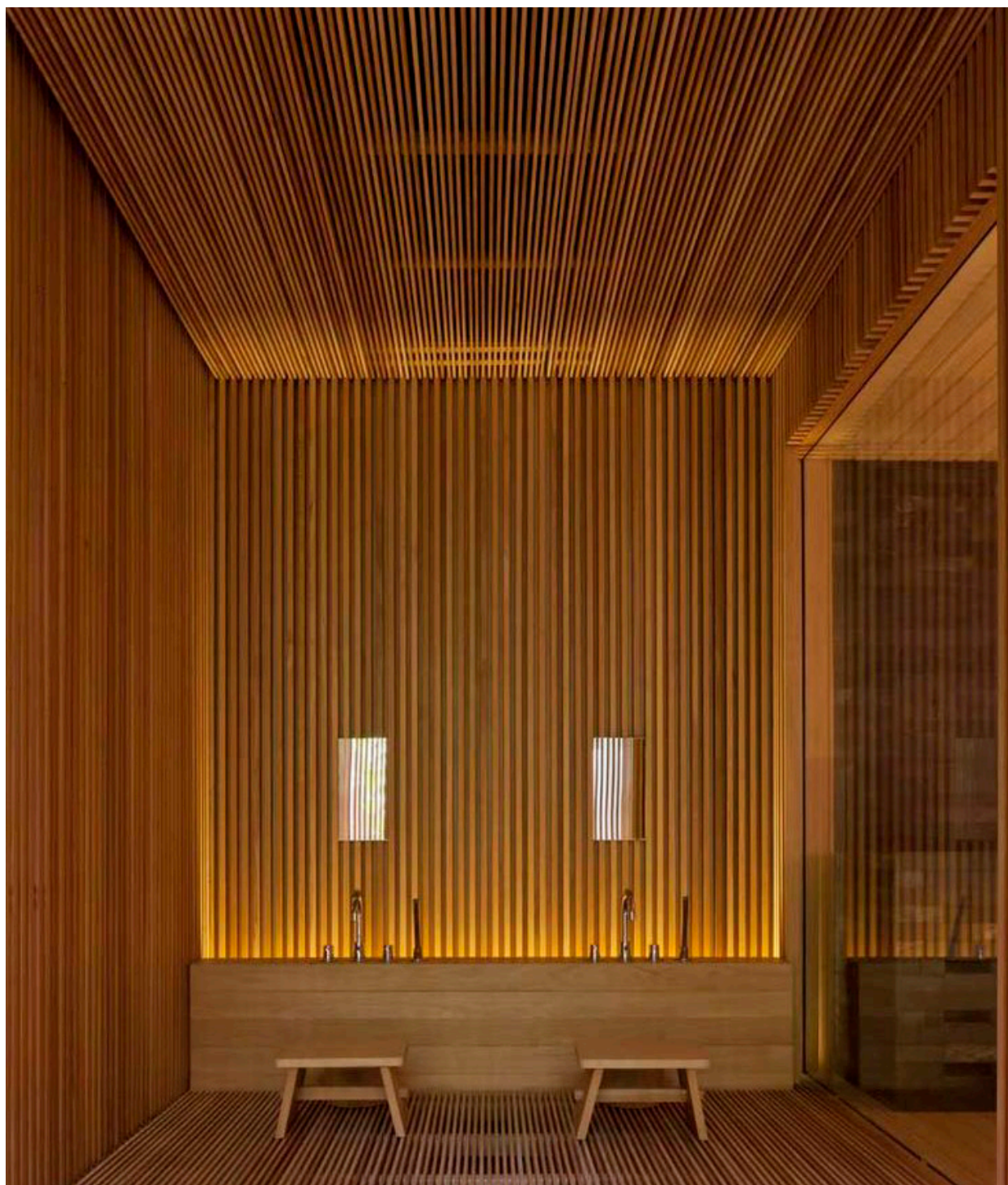
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Scene 9) "The corridor is part of the nervous system" - The lighting and soundscape are designed to respond to passage and movement with subtle variations and minor modulations to engender a sense of being watched.



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Scene 10) "The steambaths recall ancient rites" - The baths are un-gendered. A large Russian matron maintains the temperature close to dangerous and provides birch switches. She will also take the Strigil to anyone in need of an exfoliation of the skin.



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Scene 11) "The room is my mother" - The heat has dissolved any lingering anxiety and reduced all background worry to insignificance, washed away, the body now floats just on the edge of sleep and the window transforms into cloudscape.

But before drifting off, a voice is heard... "Forget it, Jake; it's Chinatown."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

