ENTELECHY

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Address
Phone Number

The Corona virus will be a looming ghost in the film. There will be facemasks and fading posters or PSA's about stopping the spread and getting vaccinated.

FADE IN:

SUPERIMPOSED: BOSTON, 2036.

INT. LABORATORY- DAY

The futuristic server room of an MIT cyber program is covered in dust. The future has become the past.

A table in the open area, by the entrance, is covered in journal and research papers. There are also disposable coffee cups and empty bottles of red wine everywhere.

--

A crystal clear screen appears on the wall, next to the door.

A progress bar appears and goes from ninety-nine to one-hundred percent. The program boots up.

A giant digital face appears. Nicely parted salt and pepper hair with a beard and glasses.

MICHAEL
Hello?

Somewhere else in the room, someone starts frantically getting up off of the floor. We hear the grunts as the papers underneath him crumple and empty wine bottles crash together and roll around.

A sloppy bearded thirty-three-year-old man runs up to the screen.

NATHAN
Dad?

MICHAEL
(Disappointed.)
Buddy.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET- CONTINUOUS

Nathan runs out to a waiting Uber. As they drive through the city, we see every single business has been boarded up, homeless people and their tents are everywhere. Ninety percent of the vehicles on the street are food delivery vehicles.

Nathan looks at all this and smiles.

INT. MOTEL HALLWAY/ROOM- MORNING

The motel manager walks up to room 27. He knocks.

MOTEL MANAGER
Check out time! Are you going to stay another night?

He waits. He can hear a little girl.

MARIA (O.C.)
(Muffled.)
Daddy. There's someone at the door.

It gets quiet. He knocks again.

MOTEL MANAGER
Hello?

MARIA (O.C.)
Daddy! There's someone knocking.

No response from the dad. The little girl opens the door with the chain still on. It's a cute little Mexican girl with big brown eyes.

He can see a five year old boy sitting on the bed watching tv.

MARIA (CONT'D)
He's in the bathroom.

MOTEL MANAGER
Tell him he needs to be out in forty-five minutes.

MARIA
Okay.

He gets a bad vibe.

MOTEL MANAGER
How long has he been in there?

MARIA
A long time. Like two hours.

MOTEL MANAGER
Can I come in and check if he’s okay.

MARIA
My dad said I shouldn’t open the door for anybody.

MOTEL MANAGER
I’m not going to hurt you sweetie, I just want to check if your daddy’s okay.

Maria takes the chain off of the door.

The manager walks to the bathroom.

MOTEL MANAGER (CONT'D)
Mister Cervantes. (Beat.) It’s check out time.

No response. He looks down at Maria. She is standing right beside him.

MOTEL MANAGER (CONT'D)
Can you go wait on the bed sweetheart. (Back to the door.) I’m coming in!

He pushes the lock out through the pin hole, opens the door, and looks inside.

MOTEL MANAGER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Fuck!

He quickly to gathers up the kids.

MOTEL MANAGER (CONT'D)
Come with me.

CUT TO:

INT. NATHAN'S HOME- DAY

Nathan sits a glass of wine on the long dining table and takes a seat.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
Do you remember when you said to me, “Dad, you shouldn’t drink anymore.”

That cracks Nathan up.

NATHAN
I was ten! My mom told me to say that!

Nathan is now on the sofa.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
- Going to the theatre after swim practice. That was the best time of my life.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
Why did you say you wanted to go back with your mom?

NATHAN
I didn’t want to disappoint her. I thought I was being fair, or something. I don’t know! I was ten!

CUT TO:

EXT. CHURCH- NIGHT

An SUV pulls up to the church. **MARIA** and **DANNY** are helped out of the vehicle and escorted towards the church.

INT. WEBNER HOME- MORNING

Judy (37) is in the kitchen of her small townhouse. She’s blending her kale smoothie. Her cell phone rings.

JUDY
Hello.

CPS AGENT (V.O.)
Mrs. Webner?

JUDY
Yes.

CPS AGENT
Is your sister Samantha Webner?

JUDY
Yes. She was.

CPS AGENT
We have a Maria and Daniel Cervantes Jr in a emergency shelter. I'm trying to find any relatives who can possibly help take the children.

JUDY
What happened to Daniel?

CPS AGENT
He committed suicide last week. The children were living with him in a hotel room.

She covers her gasp with her free hand.

JUDY
Were they there when it happened?

CPS AGENT
Unfortunately.

JUDY
Oh my God.

CPS AGENT
Would you be able to take the children? It can be a temporary thing while we find them5 a home. If I can't find someone in the next forty-eight hours, they will have to go into the foster system and will most likely be split up.

She looks out of her window as she contemplates.

INT. NATHAN'S ROOM- MORNING

Nathan's eyes painfully open from someone knocking on the front door. Nathan is again pummeled by the sunlight as he opens the door.

A young man with a brown satchel is standing on his stoop. He is accompanied by two older men in dark shades. **ADAM (22)** is frozen for a bit.

NATHAN
What's going on?

ADAM
(Chuckles nervously.)
You haven't been to the office, or answering your phone.

NATHAN
Who are they-

Nathan trails off. He suddenly realizes something. He marches away from the door in a dramatic show of anger.

Adam chases. The two agents look at each other.

ADAM (O.C.)
We need another server!

INT. BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

Nathan is sitting on his bed angrily putting on his socks.

Adam knocks on the door.

NATHAN
Come in.

Adam gingerly peeks around the door.

ADAM
Can we talk?

NATHAN
I can't believe you did this without consulting me.

He enters the room and sits next to Nathan on the bed.

ADAM
We need to try the system on someone else. And unless you want to delete your-

Nathan immediately stands and explodes at Adam.

NATHAN
They're going to hold us hostage with their money!

Adam returns his energy.

ADAM
They are the only ones! Either we go with them, or the whole project ends here!

NATHAN
The system worked! He’s alive!

ADAM
They don’t believe us. No matter what we say! No matter what we show them! They are not going to believe us!

They pause and look angrily at each other.

ADAM (CONT'D)
We have to face that fact. To them, we will always be the murderers.

Nathan begins to cry.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Lets talk to them. They will let us work. They will give us an unlimited budget.

NATHAN
Until they find out how to use it to kill people.

ADAM
(Smiling.)
That’ll be a couple years down the road.

Nathan is not amused.

INT. LIVING ROOM- CONTINUOUS

Nathan and Adam enter the room. The two men are still standing by the door.

ADAM
Take a seat, gentlemen.

Both men thank him and take a seat on the couch.

NATHAN
Are you from the pentagon?

AGENT
Yes.

NATHAN
What would you do with it?

AGENT
We would explore any and every possibility, with your input.

NATHAN
Including killing people.

AGENT
Does it kill people?

NATHAN
It encapsulates their consciousness.

ADAM
We're thinking we can use it to revive people who have been fatally wounded. We can store their consciousness while someone repairs the body.

The agent turns back to Nathan.

AGENT
What happened to your father?

Adam looks at Nathan.

NATHAN
Why don't you ask him yourself.

--

The curtains are drawn. A giant holographic face is projected against the back wall.

MICHAEL
We always knew that this event was around the corner. Everyone else were always worried about nuclear war, global warming, or asteroid impacts. Evolutionary virologists always knew that there was something on this planet evolving alongside with us. Something adapting. Learning. Competing for world domination. And they have the power of invisibility. Left unsupervised in their microscopic world.

AGENT
What can we do to protect ourselves from them?

MICHAEL
Have a plan to ensure our information is not lost. Our progress is our purpose. It must be preserved.

CUT TO:

TITLE: ENTELECHY

FADE IN:

SUPER: 12 YEARS LATER.

INT. DINING ROOM- NIGHT

JUDY and THOMAS(50) are tense. Silently eating a dinner in their beautiful home.

Thomas has a muscular build with that former military posture. Judy is tall and slender.

The large kitchen window overlooking the backyard shatters.

JUDY
AAAhhh!

Thomas stands and approaches the window. He inspects the scene. A large branch is on the ground.

An alert chimes on both of their smart phones. Judy checks her holographic phone as she exits the kitchen.

JUDY (CONT'D)
You see?!

She stops and turns to Thomas.

JUDY (CONT'D)
You have to always get your fucking way!

She exits the room.

THOMAS
It’s the meds that started this shit!

JUDY (O.S.)
(Angry sarcasm.)
Sure! He was completely fine before!

Thomas quickly walks through the living room.

He ignores the television powering on. The wallpaper thin, two hundred inch screen immediately shows the image from a security camera on their porch.

A person in a hoody can be seen standing a few dozen feet down the driveway.

EXT. DRIVE WAY- CONTINUOUS

Thomas bursts through the doorway and steps to the edge of the roofed patio.

We are in a rural area. No other house in sight.

THOMAS
Quit your shit!

The kid in the hoody ragefully unleashes his words.

DANNY
Fucking kill me!

JUDY (O.C.)
(From inside the house.)
Thomas! I called the police! I am fucking done with this!

THOMAS
Danny, if you don’t come in and calm your ass down, you will go to jail!

No answer. He stands incredibly still. Judy joins Thomas.

JUDY
Calm down and come inside, Danny!

DANNY
I FUCKING HATE YOU!!

They walk inside and close the door.

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL CAFETERIA- DAY

MARIA(22), is sitting across from us at a long cafeteria table. The place is somewhat empty. A few people in hard hats are walking around.

She's tiny with beautiful, big, brown eyes. She has dolled herself up in semi-casual attire. A nice blouse with jeans. A business coat to top it off.

We can see the vending machines behind her. It's a nice little employee cafeteria. Fake plants, k-cup brewer, etc.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
So we found some things on your social media records.

MARIA
I know what you're going to say-

The interviewer puts her hand up, sternly signaling Maria to not interrupt.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Don't worry. (Beat.) We just have to make you aware of what we found, and ask you some questions about it.

MARIA
Okay.

We can hear the woman interviewer messing about with her holographic tablet.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
One of the more troubling incidents is the fact that you have committed suicide a total of a fourteen times.

MARIA
Yes. I was addicted to it.

The interviewer sighs.

INTERVIEWER
That is a serious drain on our resources.

Maria stays quiet.

(MORE)

INTERVIEWER (CONT'D)
Then, when you were fourteen, you offered a 28-year-old man sex in exchange for drugs.

MARIA
I was going through some stuff. I know that doesn’t justify my behavior.

The interviewer types something on her tablet.

We close up on Maria’s face. The painful memories paint the expression of fear on her face.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Okay.

The interviewer processes again.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
So you are done with that sort of behavior, on social media?

MARIA
Yes.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
You will be representing us.

MARIA
Yes. I’m done with all that.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
We want you to maintain a presence there, the right presence.

MARIA
I will.

INTERVIEWER
Okay. Congratulations. You have the job.

Maria goes from worried to immensely relieved. It seems the weight of a thousand planets has just lifted from her shoulders

MARIA
Thank you! Thank you so much! I really needed this job.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
You're welcome. I'm sure you'll do great. You start on Friday. Is that okay?

MARIA
That's fine. That's no problem at all.

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX PARKING LOT- NIGHT

A yellow streetlight shines down on a menacing orange van.

Through the front windshield we see the worn, dark brown leather seat. We move in closer and hear the amorous moans escape the closed windows...

INT. VAN- CONTINUOUS

We can see Maria riding her lover, Noel.

The lustful activity is growing louder. The two thrusting and moaning in sync. They're on an air mattress in the back of the van. The rubbery sound coming off of the mattress is in tune with the couple.

A couple of cases of Gatorade, bags of veggie chips, and a cooler are back there with them. A laptop plays some video we're allowed to use for free.

Noel tries to maneuver Maria into a different position before he cums.

NOEL
(Moaning.)
Wait.

Maria is now in the doggy style position, and Noel tries to press her down on her belly. This goes on for a second.

We then hear the faint cries of a small child coming from a baby monitor.

MARIA
Stop!

Noel stops.

NOEL
He’s okay. Let's just change to another position real quick-

MARIA
We don’t know if he’s okay!

She moves away from him and lays down to put on her jeans.

NOEL
(This has happened many times before.)
Come on!(Under his breath.)

MARIA
What?

Waiting to hear his bullshit.

NOEL
(Sighs.)
Nothing.

Noel lays down angry.

MARIA
(Knowing the answer.)
What? You're mad now?

Noel stays quiet.

MARIA (CONT'D)
I’m going back inside to check on our son.

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM- CONTINUOUS

Jack(5) immediately runs up to Noel. We can clearly see our young family now. Noel(25) is Asian-American with a strong build. He is wearing a beanie and goatee. Grunge style.

Jack looks just like him.

And of course there is Maria, who is, what many racist perverts would call: “a nice lil Mamasita”.

On the couch sit a middle aged Asian couple. MAYA(46) and ROBERT(50). They glare at the television, showing not so subtle contempt towards the young couple’s presence.

INT. APARTMENT, BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

Maria is trying to dry Jack's hair as he wiggles and dodges her in his little superhero underwear.

It's the typical tiny apartment bedroom. Oversized dresser taking half of the room. Closet overflowing with clothes.

Maria begins packing their clothes up into laundry bags. Her phone rings. She looks at the screen and seems a little upset by the name.

MARIA
Hello.

JACK
(Interrupting.)
Mommy, choc-a-let milk.

MARIA
Shh.

JUDY (V.O.)
(Distressed)
Hello?

MARIA
Yeah. Mom I can’t-

JUDY (V.O.)
Danny is really having problems-

MARIA
Well, kick him out!

Judy is crying. She gives a big sigh for some much needed oxygen.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Jesus! Calm down, mom.

JUDY (V.O.)
I don’t know what to do.

MARIA
Kick him out! Let him figure it out, if he wants to be such a spoiled asshole towards you guys.

JUDY (V.O.)
That’s not going to fix anything. He’s too sick-

MARIA
That was our answer for me.

JUDY (V.O.)
We didn't kick you out, Maria. We kicked out that asshole-

MARIA
He's not an asshole! Dad is the asshole-

JUDY (V.O.)
I don't want to start this again. I'm calling because I need you to-

MARIA
(Interrupts.)
I've tried, mom. He loves being miserable. Every conversation is like stepping on a landmine. Everything is negative. "The world is shit", "We can't do anything about it". He needs to find a drug, or a girlfriend, or a fucking boyfriend; I don't fucking know.

JACK
Mommy!

MARIA
I'm on the phone!

JUDY (V.O.)
Is that little Jack? My baby! It's grandma.

MARIA
He can't hear you, mom.

Silence.

JUDY (V.O.)
(Sighs.)
I don't know what to do.

More silence.

MARIA
It's okay, mom. He'll come back.

JUDY (V.O.)
I hope so. I love you, sweetie. When are you coming to visit?

MARIA
I love you too. (Beat.) I don’t know. I’ll ask Noel if he can drive me up there.

The call ends.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Always so fucking dramatic.

JACK
Mommy!

MARIA
Yeah! I got it! Chocolate milk.

INT. GARAGE- NIGHT

Danny turns the lights on. He walks towards the giant pickup truck and looks through the back passenger window. On the seat is a rifle case.

He tries opening the door. No luck. He punches a wall in frustration.

INT. LAUNDROMAT- NIGHT

The typical laundromat. Filled with the melting pot of American society.

The old place has been retrofitted with massive flat-screen tv’s. Two old men are telling each other their life’s story in the corner.

A tall Caucasian man with tattoos up to his neck is folding clothes with his wife.

The television nearest our small family is broadcasting the news.

NOEL
You’re gonna go back to school in a couple of weeks bud.(Starts Singing.) *Teacher and friends- you’re gonna see teacher and friends.*

Maria smiles at the adorable scene.

MARIA
Such a good papa.

They all look up at the coverage of riots in middle America.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.)
As the Supreme Court argues the new proposal to classify all sects of Christianity and the Islamic faith as terrorist organizations, riots have broken out in most major cities. Christian and Muslims have formed militias, clashing with military police forces, and each other. There have been hundreds of deaths due to mass executions.

We cut to Noel and Maria watching. The report cuts to an interview.

MILITIA MEMBER
We are going to overthrow this government! If these are the end times, this country will go out as a Christian nation! It was born Christian, it will die as such!

NOEL
Fucking religious people! They want to pretend to know better than everybody else. (Beat.) Then reality pushes them into a corner and they do the same shit as everybody else. Even with their faith, they're just broken people. Lost in a meaningless world. While other fuckers get to party on their yachts and make eight billion dollars an hour.

MARIA
(Gets frustrated.)
Stop! It's always a fucking rant with you! It makes me want to blow my fucking brains out...

NOEL
(Annoyed. Non-apologetic.)
Sorry.

TATTOOED GUY
Yeah! Shut the fuck up, man. You don't know what you're fuckin talking about.

NOEL
Why don't you mind your business?

A lady folding her stuff turns toward the potential fight.

TATTOOED GUY
You fucks are gonna let evil people kill all of us! Just cuz you’re too pussy to fight back!

A middle eastern man approaches.

LAUNDROMAT ATTENDANT
If you don’t stop, both of you have to leave!

Noel and the tattooed guy look at each other. The tattooed guy returns to his wife.

MARIA
I have to go to the bathroom.

NOEL
Alright.

INT. LAUNDROMAT, BATHROOM- CONTINUOUS

Maria walks in and locks the door to a large single toilet bathroom. She has her trusty purple backpack, patterned with pink and yellow flowers. Unzips a pocket and pulls out a bottle of pills. She takes one.

The mirror has knife and marker tagging's along the edges. Stuff like: "Lil' payaso", (which is "lil' clown" in Spanish) swastikas, penises, and other things.

She turns the hot water knob on the faucet. The crystalline stream of water falls on her hands.

Someone tries to open the door. Yanking on the handle. The person then knocks on the door.

MARIA
Occupied!

She stares at the door and stays quiet. Pulls out her kit: A handheld mirror, a razor, and a straw.

Pulls out another bottle of pills. OXYCONTIN on the label.

Her phone chimes.

JUDY'S TEXT
Danny is home!

Maria looks in the mirror and catches a glimpse of herself in this dirty bathroom.

The person outside the bathroom yanks on the door again. This time more aggressive. She knocks.

MARIA
It's occupied! Jesus-fucking-Christ.

Maria begins packing up everything quickly.

INT. LAUNDROMAT- CONTINUOUS

Maria opens the door to find a woman with the severe and infamous remnants of heavy meth use.

The lady stands there looking at Maria. The moment gets awkward. Her dead eyes staring blankly into Maria's soul.

MARIA
What?

No answer.

MARIA (CONT'D)
You got something to say?

Maria steps aside to leave. The meth-head capitalizes on having her escape route into the bathroom.

METH LADY
(Walking into the bathroom.)
Took long enough, bitch!

Closes the door and locks it.

--

Noel is watching MMA fights on his phone. The kid has passed out in the stroller. Dino toys on the trey.

A beautiful redhead is folding her clothes a couple of tables away. She's wearing Daisy Dukes, showing off her thick legs and incredible ass. Noel notices her glancing over. He smiles back.

He immediately catches Maria approaching in his peripheral and looks back at his phone.

She notices the girl looking at Noel and gives her a hateful scowl as she walks by.

Noel pretends to be lost on his phone, and if you ask him, he’s been on his phone the whole damn time!

MARIA
I have to go to work tomorrow and I didn't even get to wash my hair at the house.

Noel looks up at her hair.

NOEL
Your hair looks fine. (Missing the point entirely.)

Maria gets sadder. Noel can feel he fucked up.

NOEL (CONT'D)
I'm sorry about that.

MARIA
It's fine. Is the laundry done?

NOEL
Almost... I could beat both these guys up. Huh buddy?... (Laughs.) Oh yeah. He's passed out.

Maria is watching the television. An awkward pause. Noel puts his phone down.

NOEL (CONT'D)
How you feeling?

Maria gives a big sigh as she looks around, thinking of the right way to answer the question.

MARIA
I guess I’m nervous about going back to work. It’s been a while.

She looks back at Noel.

Noel is on his phone again. She pushes past the sadness.

MARIA (CONT'D)
(Changes the subject.)
Can your aunt watch the baby tomorrow?

NOEL
No.

MARIA
I was hoping to get a day to myself before I start the work week.

NOEL
I'll ask. But I doubt she'll do it.

SMASH CUT TO:

E./I. SUBURBS- NIGHT

An SUV pulls into a garage.

--

A middle aged man is watching tv in the family room.

Ryan (16), walks in and plants himself on the couch.

RYAN'S DAD
What happened?

Ryan's mom walks in.

RYAN'S MOM
You wouldn't believe what this fat piece of shit did while we were talking to the police officer!

RYAN'S DAD
The guy Ryan hit?

RYAN
No. I hit a girl.

RYAN'S MOM
This fucking creep who worked at one of those thrift store donation trailers. He walks up, recording us with his phone-

RYAN
(Interrupts.)
He starts telling the cop it was my fucking fault.

RYAN'S DAD
Why?

RYAN
He's always staring at us while we hang out in the parking lot.

RYAN'S MOM
He said that Ryan and his friends are always speeding.

RYAN'S DAD
What did the cop say?

RYAN'S MOM
The girl he was trying to help knew why his creepy fat ass was doing it. She told him to stop. Then the cop told him to mind his own fucking business.

RYAN'S DAD
Good.

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM- DAY

Maria sits on the small burgundy couch. The place is drowning in small Asian figurines made of porcelain and faux gold.

The sounds of little Jack playing in the tub are coming from the open bathroom door.

Maya is in a rush to go to work. Wearing a cleaning lady's apron and carrying a big clear plastic satchel.

She stops and glares at Maria.

MARIA
What?!

MAYA
Baby in tub! He gonna drown- you play on tablet!

MARIA
He's six! I can hear him! And I'm setting up my direct deposit, for my new job! Why don't you ask me what I'm doing before you just assume!

MAYA
You get out mah house!

Maya slams the door.

MARIA
Bitch.

She takes a deep breath, moves the tablet to the side and wipes the hair out of her face. She holds back tears for a bit.

Picks up her phone.

CLOSE UP: Phone screen. Maria is sending a text message.

MARIA'S TEXT
Are you ever coming home?

She waits for a bit. We hear splashes from the bathroom. She places the phone down. It chimes. She quickly picks it back up.

NOEL'S TEXT
Be there ina bit

Maria places the phone back down and attends to Jack.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. RYAN'S HOUSE- EVENING

Ryan is in his room. His holographic phone is projecting a crystal clear 120 inch video on his wall.

The video is a podcast. Two middle aged men (dressed like teenagers) are in the middle of discussing a topic.

RICK
How crazy is the human brain? We can reproduce everything else in the body.

The video stops. A message appears on it.

AARON DM
Cece's throwing a house party. Let's go.

Ryan taps on the phone. A holographic computer keyboard pops up in front of him.

RYAN'S DM
Come pick me up.

EXT. RYAN'S HOUSE- EVENING

Ryan walks out to the street where a car full of teenagers is waiting. It drives off aggressively. The engine roaring all the way down the street.

BEAU
How’s the Echo?

RYAN
The whole door from the chick’s car was stuck on my engine block.

E./I. HOUSE PARTY/BEDROOM - NIGHT

A small home on a suburban street is packed with teens. The front porch has a small crowd of smokers.

--

Multi-color light strips have turned the living room into a dance floor. Fast-paced hip hop music blasting out of the surround sound.

--

Our gang of teens is in the bedroom. There are more now. One of them is digging through his closet. He turns around and theatrically displays a baggie.

DARREL
I call it... The Crazy Train. Magic mushroom dust, crushed up MDMA and Adderall, and a couple of other things.

RYAN
Hell yeah!

Darrel opens the bag.

E./I. CAR- CONTINUOUS

A car turns onto our street. It stops in front of the house party.

Danny sits in the car. He looks at the pistol in his hand and places it in his jacket pocket. He turns his head towards the passenger seat. His dad’s M16 rifle is leaning against the seat.

Danny grabs the weapon and exits the vehicle.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. STREET- CONTINUOUS

A shaky image crashes into the scene. A panicked selfie shooting upwards as the girl recording runs down the street. She, is a barely visible blond girl. Tree branches and neon street lights can be seen over her head.

GIRL #1
(Out of breath.)
Some guy just ran into the party and started shooting everybody!

EXT. PACKAGING PLANT, PATIO- CONTINUOUS

Our protagonist sits on a bench in the patio. Looking at her phone while inhaling and exhaling clouds of nicotine vapor.

MARIA'S TEXT
(Frustrated typing.)
That's my only day off this week. I need a fucking break.

NOEL'S TEXT
I'm sorry! Sergio is gonna pay me. I already promised I'd help him out.

MARIA'S TEXT
Be here before I'm off. I'm serious!

NOEL'S TEXT
I'm going to pump gas around 3 and then head over. I'll be in the parking lot like a half hour before you're off.

A handsome young man approaches with his brown bag lunch and drink.

JASON
Hey. (Beat.) You like the job?

MARIA
Yeah. (Beat.) How long have you worked here?

JASON
Like a year and a half.

He starts unpacking his lunch.

JASON (CONT'D)
What did you do before this?

MARIA
Fast Food.

JASON
Tough job. You need to have an engineering degree to fix all those fucking automated assembly machines. And I hear the machines brake all the time.

Jason unwraps a sandwich as a coworker walks through the scene.

MARIA
Ugh. They fucking do.

CO-WORKER
That shit sucks about your vacation, bro. Fucking Co-vid, right?

Jason can see that Maria is intrigued by the comment.

JASON
I’m supposed to be in Japan right now. You’d think they’d find a better solution than shutting down travel for six months every year.

MARIA
That sucks. I’ve always wanted to go to Tokyo.

JASON
Yeah. I saved up for three years. I was really looking forward to the Resident Evil themed restaurant.

MARIA
There’s a zombie themed restaurant?

JASON
Yeah!

Maria laughs.

EXT. PARKING LOT/ ROAD- NIGHT

Predictably, Maria sits on the side walk checking the time on her phone. **The battery is at two percent battery.**

The phone rings while she reaches back to put it in her butt pocket.

MARIA
Hello.

JUDY (V.O.)
(Crying hysterically.)
Danny is dead!

MARIA
What?!

JUDY (V.O.)
They're saying he killed a bunch of people!

The line cuts off. Maria looks at the phone as it shuts off.

--

She is walking down a deserted industrial road. A car drives up. The window is rolling down as it stops beside her.

JASON
You need a ride?

SMASH CUT TO:

I/E. JASON'S CAR- CONTINUOUS

The car drives into a gas station parking lot.

POV: She spots the van.

MARIA
Can you wait here please. That's his van.

JASON
I'll be here.

--

She hops out of the car and sneaks up to the van. Maria peeks through the side window.

POV: Noel is inside having sex with some blond.

She steps away a bit. Her face contorts into that gut-wrenching anguish that leaks out when your heart breaks. Only for a second.

The first thing most people will notice is how this was so much more to hurtful to her then the news of her brother.

The return of control quickly brings with it a face of anger, as she looks inside again and catches a glimpse of Noel's pants by the back gate.

Maria walks around and opens the door. The cabin light turns on. The blond goes flying to the side. Hitting her head on the wheel well/bench.

Noel only sees the spot where the pants used to be and the van door ajar.

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM- NIGHT

Maria barges into the apartment and goes to the bedroom. Little Jack runs to join her.

INT. BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

She quickly and sloppily packs a large luggage bag.

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM- CONTINUOUS

Maya stands as Maria drags the bag out of the room.

MAYA
You can't take baby.

Maria immediately punches her in the jaw. Right on the button. Maya is out, cold. Robert remains seated on the couch.

MARIA
Go, Jack.

Jack walks out of the apartment.

INT. JASON'S CAR- DAWN

Maria is looking out at the beautiful countryside under the orange sunrise. She's petting Jack's hair. He's sleeping on her lap.

JASON
I mean it. I'm gonna check up on you. And you better not lie to me.

MARIA
I promise.(Beat.) Thank you, by the way.

JASON
There’s going to be a lot of moments- a lot of people- a lot of situations in this life, trying to convince you that life ain’t shit. “You either do something with it, or you don’t.” But that’s not true. There’s something special about being alive. You just have to keep moving and it’ll find you.

EXT. FACULTY PARKING LOT, HIGH SCHOOL- DAY

A nice little Nissan drives into the lot. Someone is waiting by his parking space.

Cyrus Ghasemi (29), steps out of the vehicle with his soft brown leather briefcase.

CYRUS
Good morning.

The person’s mournful face is his greeting.

CYRUS (CONT'D)
What’s going on?

EXT. RURAL FARMLAND- CONTINUOUS

Maria looks inside the empty wallet. She leans forward.

MARIA
Think you can get rid of the wallet for me?

JASON
No problem.

MARIA
You’re the best. Thank you so much- for everything.(Beat.) Thank god the piece-of-shit still had the rent money.(Starts tearing up.)

JASON
I would’ve helped anyway.

MARIA
I know.

They smile at each other through the rearview.

I/E. WEBNER HOUSE- LIVING ROOM

Through the panoramic window we see the taxi driving down the long driveway.

--

The cab stops a couple dozen feet away from the house.

Jason gets out of the cab and stands in front of Maria.

MARIA
Thank you. For everything.

He smiles.

INT. WEBNER HOME- CONTINUOUS

Judy and Thomas finish hugging Jack.

THOMAS
You're getting so big!

JUDY
And so handsome!

MARIA
I'm so sorry. I should have called him-

THOMAS
No. You didn't do anything wrong.

Their eyes are tearing up.

INT. MARIA'S OLD BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

Maria is laying on her twin sized bed. She is using her phone, currently scrolling down the thumbnails of a popular video app.

One of the thumbnails is the image of **"The Unspoken Truth podcast".** Men with silly faces are on either of a comedian with a "too cool for school" stone-faced stare.

The title of the video is **“Robert Ludlow talks about “the house party shooter” being a fan”.**

She pokes the video-

INT. PODCAST STUDIO- DAY

The two men with silly faces are sitting on awkward chairs. **Rick (42) and Steve (56).** Robert sits on the couch.

STEVE
You got some heat for being the kid’s favorite comedian!

RICK
No! No. It was more that he made a joke about school shootings. And the kid happened to be a fan. Right?

ROBERT
Yeah. It was a joke about our communities’ responses to these events. It’s not like this shit never happened, before I told my joke.

RICK
He commented on a clip of that joke, right?

ROBERT
Yeah. Something like, “This is how I feel everyday”.

The producer off camera and both of the podcasters confirm.

FADE TO:

POV: E./I. HOUSE PARTY AFTERMATH- NIGHT

The camera is walking on the lawn, towards the house. On the porch are three corpses. The light on the camera makes there skin look greyer, the puddle of blood- blacker; it somehow makes the whole scene more macabre.

The camera moves along to the interior of the house.

In the living room are more bodies. In between the living room and dining room is Danny’s.

Towards the back of the dining room is the kitchen. It looks like the crowd funneled through the back door, which is in the kitchen.

There is an immense pool of blood under at least fifteen victims in the kitchen.

CUT TO:

INT. BOARDROOM- MORNING

A very luxurious boardroom. The entire back wall is made of frosted glass. Adam is at the head of the table. He is a lot older. A lot more successful. His cell phone starts ringing. He taps on it. A holographic head pops up.

We see the tiny circuit pattern on his retina.

HUNTER
Good morning.

ADAM
I'm in a meeting. I'll call you back after.

HUNTER
I'm outside.

Adam taps on his cell phone. The frosted glass turns clear and reveals the tall and stocky Hunter (32), hanging around in the private courtyard. A text appears at the bottom of the screen to identify him.

Hunter Bashaw, FBI, Cyber Terrorism Unit.

--

The two walk along the beautiful garden.

HUNTER (CONT'D)
Have you seen the news?

ADAM
No. What happened?

HUNTER
A kid took his dad's assault rifle to a party and shot a whole mess of kids.

ADAM
How many died?

HUNTER
Twenty-three.

ADAM
That's terrible. (Beat.) Could any be saved?

HUNTER
All but two.

Adam thinks for a bit.

ADAM
Why are you telling me this?

HUNTER
The shooter has a AfterLife account. Well, his mother does. So his consciousness is supposed to go back into his body. Thanks to the new therapy before incarceration law.

ADAM
You guys want him.

HUNTER
Exactly.

ADAM
For what?

HUNTER
Currently not at liberty to discuss.

ADAM
So you want us to take the blame.

HUNTER
Yes.

ADAM
Where is the data, presently?

HUNTER
FBI has it. Then the hospital is supposed to get it back.

Adam pauses to look out into the horizon.

ADAM
Let's make a call to the hospital.

HUNTER
That’s going to be a problem. The hospital with his account has a new CEO. The board didn’t have time to prep the new candidates on your company’s arrangement with the DOD.

ADAM
I’ll try to fill them in.

HUNTER
Also; the Argentine government tells us Nathan has almost completed the construction on Elephant Island.

Adam doesn’t respond.

HUNTER (CONT'D)
He also convinced his billionaire friend to take something into space for him.

ADAM
Good for him.

HUNTER
Have you spoken to him lately? (Beat.) He’s spending every dime on whatever he’s doing. Has some kind of cult around him.

ADAM
What do you mean?

FADE TO:

EXT. DESERT- DREAM

It is high noon in the middle of a old desert road. A couple of abandoned buildings and a large billboard make up this ghost pit stop.

Nathan is much older now. He is wandering through this seemingly deserted place.

Suddenly there is a man walking away from Nathan about fifty feet way. The man is dark skinned. Wearing paleolithic attire. He turns to look at Nathan.

He is carrying a severed head under his arm like a basketball.

Nathan looks up at the dilapidated billboard. A man is standing on top of it. He jumps off.

Nathan turns his head away.

NATHAN (V.O.)
Don’t look, don’t look.

He looks. It seems like the entire left side of the man’s body exploded out.

Nathan keeps walking. He spots an old filling station.

INT. FILLING STATION- CONTINUOUS

He walks in and finds a man sitting at a work bench. The entire wall in front of him is covered in black glass. Different color orbs, representing the planets, are stuck in the glass.

MICHAEL
It was never a matter of if, but when. And it’s time.

The man takes out the blue orb and cleans it.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. NATHAN’S BEDROOM- MORNING

Nathan’s eyes snap open. A large bedroom inside of a repurposed factory. It looks like a cyclone of booze and notebooks has passed through it.

Nathan rubs his eyes.

NATHAN
I had a dream about you.

No response.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
(Under his breath.)
Where are you?

He gets up from his bed and looks down on to the factory floor.

A large group is sitting in a circle, cross-legged. A young woman looks up at Nathan with a gentle smile. Emma (22) braided red hair and a tattoo sleeve.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM- CONTINUOUS

A white light opens our scene. The sanitized hospital room is filled with flowers and get-well cards. Ryan's parents are sleeping. Dad is sitting up in a chair, mom is on the love seat.

Ryan looks around. Tubes and cables everywhere. He lowers his sheet and lifts his gown up. The wounds have scarred up.

Ryan quietly finds the nurse call button.

The nurse comes in.

RYAN
(Whispering.)
Hey.

NURSE
Hi. How are you feeling?

RYAN
Great, actually.

NURSE
Good!

He looks around the room.

RYAN
You think I can get this stuff off of me? I need to stretch my legs.

NURSE
Let me just ask the doctor if it's okay, first. Do you want some apple juice, or water?

RYAN'S MOM
Ryan?!

She jumps up and runs to give him a hug. Dad approaches calmly with a big smile on his face.

INT. KITCHEN- MORNING

Maria and tiny legged little Jack walk to the fridge. She grabs the milk from there and a glass from the cupboard.

She notices the broken window covered in plastic.

They are eating cereal at the table when Thomas and Judy join them.

THOMAS
Hey, champ!

JUDY
Look how adorable he is!

MARIA
Is Michael coming?

JUDY
He says he can't.

Thomas plays with Jack's belly.

MARIA
You would think something like this would be a good enough reason for Cynthia to allow him to visit.

JUDY
It's his job.

MARIA
Sure.

After breakfast, the little man sits on the floor with a big smile as Thomas shows him some of Danny's old action figures.

Reflected sunlight swipes through the house. Reflecting off of the windshield from a vehicle pulling into the property.

Thomas walks up to the living room window.

THOMAS
Fucking assholes!

He closes the blinds.

JUDY
Who is it?

MARIA
It's Noel.

THOMAS
No. It’s a news van. There’s more behind it. Close all the curtains.

Maria and Judy do so. Someone knocks at the door.

Thomas opens it with the security chain still attached. We can see a well dressed woman on the other side. She is about to speak.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
We don’t want to make a comment- We don’t want to talk to you- Please leave us alone.

He quickly closes the door.

--

Thomas, Judy, and Jack sit on the couch. They are watching a movie on the giant screen.

INT. MARIA'S OLD BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

Maria is on her phone.

A holographic projection of a video app. She has earbuds in. Stopping for a second on the thumbnail of a quaffed haired forty-year-old man. It looks like he broadcasts from his bedroom.

The channel’s name is **Frankie Bart.** The video is titled **“The real tragedy”.**

Maria pokes the thumbnail.

The video begins.

INT. FRANKY BART’S BEDROOM- DAY

Franky begins his rant.

FRANKY BART
The mistake we make is thinking that this has to do with the amount of readily available weapons in this country. It does, but it’s not the only problem.
(MORE)

FRANKY BART (CONT'D)
To me, the saddest part of this story is: as hard as we work to eradicate death, it seems there will always be people who will work harder to keep it around. Simply because of its power to shock us.

FADE TO:

INT. DRUG HOUSE- CONTINUOUS

A man is cutting some pink pills into powder on a small porcelain plate. He forms a “rail” and passes it over to someone. The camera’s tracking of the plate reveals Noel.

He accepts the offer and snorts the line.

A girl walks into the room.

GIRL #1
Noel! You’ll never guess who shot up the party!

NOEL
Who?

GIRL #1
It was your baby mama’s brother!

DARREN
Nu-uh!

NOEL
You’re fucking with me.

GIRL #1
No. It’s right here.

She projects the story above the phone. A cool display feature to show something to your friends. The news story shows a picture of Danny in the corner.

E./I. NATHAN’S HOUSE- DAY

Three luxury SUV’s are driving towards a dilapidated production plant.

A semi-truck with a large trailer is parked beside it.

--

Adam and his entourage, comprising of assistants and security guards, walk onto the main floor of the plant.

Fifty people have formed a giant circle in the middle of the room. They are sitting cross-legged on the floor.

Along the walls are mattresses and sleeping bags, along with personal belongings.

A young woman stands up. She approaches with a smile.

EMMA
Can I help you?

ADAM
Can you please let Nathan know that Adam is here to see him.

EMMA
He’s upstairs in his bedroom. You are welcomed to go see if he’s awake.

--

Adam walks up the bare, oversized stairs. He reaches the door. We can hear Nathan’s voice inside.

Adam knocks.

NATHAN (O.C.)
Come in!

--

Nathan is on the phone. His back towards the door.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
JPL might have some answers on how we can get that done. The solar panels would have to be big enough to power the servers. The miniature Thorium reactor would only be there as one of two failsafe's. That’s why there will be so much weight...

He trails off as he turns and recognizes Adam.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
-involved. (Beat.) All right. I gotta go. Let me know if anything else comes up.
(Hangs up the phone.)
Long time.

ADAM
You seem to be busy.

NATHAN
Nah. Just shooting the shit. Doing some consulting.

ADAM
We still have your office at AfterLife.

Nathan takes a moment.

NATHAN
I don’t want to do this again.

ADAM
The system is working! Recidivism is down forty percent!

NATHAN
Have you heard the stories?!

Adam doesn’t respond.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
They created hell, Adam! The souls in that server are stuck in hell!

Adam goes from upset to horrified.

ADAM
You went into the penal server?

Nathan walks towards his night stand. He opens the drawer and pulls out a pill.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Who took you?

Nathan takes the pill.

Adam returns to being upset.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Do you have a better solution?! The prisons are empty! The cost of incarce-

NATHAN
Yeah! And now they’re keeping poor people there!

ADAM
It’s never going to be perfect!
Come back to the real world!

Tears swelling in Adam’s eyes.

INT. ADAM’S CAR- DAY

Adam’s assistant is on the phone.

He hangs up.

ASSISTANT
The hospital CEO called back. She is going to contact the family of the shooter. Give them the option to bring him back after ALADIN is done with their analysis.

ADAM
Absolutely not!

ASSISTANT
I told her you would say that. She said its not up to you.

ADAM
Get her on the phone.

Time cut.-

Adam has the phone on the floor of the SUV as the holographic face floats around in the cab.

ADAM (CONT'D)
This monster executed 23 kids! What do you think the families, who have just been through a horrifying ordeal, what are they going to say when we bring back THE PERSON WHO IS FUCKING RESPONSIBLE?!

HOSPITAL CEO
The law is the law, Mister McMahan. The only people who can make the decision on whether to bring him back or not, is his family. After we bring him back. They can put him in prison, or therapy, or give him the death penalty. They can do whatever they need to do. They purchased your service.
(MORE)

HOSPITAL CEO (CONT'D)
The new law states that he is entitled to mental health services. If you don’t want to resurrect this kid, your company has to explain why.

Adam’s frustration is starting to show.

HOSPITAL CEO (CONT'D)
Why are you so interested in what happens to this “monster”, as you put it?

ADAM
Listen.

HOSPITAL CEO
Talk to the parents, Mister McMahan.

Adam ends the call and throws the phone out of the window.

ADAM
Bitch!

ASSISTANT
If they resurrect him, the data will have to be deleted from the server, with regulatory witnesses present.

INT. WEBNER HOME- CONTINUOUS

Maria is laying in bed. The text bubble pops up.

JASON’S TEXT
Hope u have a good night.

MARIA’S TEXT
Thanx. U too.

She puts the phone down for a second and looks up at the ceiling. She picks the phone up and starts typing.

INT. DRUG HOUSE- NIGHT

Noel is lost in a high. His phone chimes.

MARIA'S TEXT
I now realize that we are two different people who were only connected by our traumas, and by our drug abuse. I have accepted what I need to do. You need to accept that you need help, Noel. Everything is about you. You never think of your son. Your whole life is about making yourself happy. You don't care what that does to everyone around you.

Noel puts the phone back in his pocket.

NOEL
(Under his breath.)
Fucking bitch.

Frantic knocks on the door. Noel panics and runs into the back bedroom. The dealer checks who is at the door on his phone.

DARREN
It's Killian, bruh!

He presses a button on his phone and the door opens.

DARREN (CONT'D)
Back for more alrea-

KILLIAN
They jacked me! (Beat.) This little Mexican prick that Jessica brought around!

DARREN
B, You're fucking with me.

KILLIAN
No! This motherfucker comes around thinking he's a fucking gangster! Talking about how down his big brother is and showing me pictures of his straps! I come home today and somebody tore up my fucking room and found the cheese in my sock drawer!

Noel walks back out into the living.

NOEL
Let's go get that shit back, then!

INT. RIVAL DRUG HOUSE- CONTINUOUS

Two Hispanic 30-somethings are sitting on the couch, laughing at a viral video.

A rock smashes through the large window directly behind their heads.

EXT. STREET- CONTINUOUS

The two dealers run out of their home. Killian is standing on the sidewalk.

KILLIAN
Give me back my shit!

One of the Hispanics pulls out a gun.

Killian runs towards the old hybrid and jumps into the backseat. Noel is the driver.

The gunman runs in front of the car and points his pistol at Noel.

Noel is in park and goes to slam it into drive. He lands on neutral and smashes the gas pedal.

The motor gives its aggressive whir. The thug dives out of the way. They all quickly realize what just happened. Noel actually tried to run him over but the car didn’t move.

Noel puts it in drive and takes off.

INT. THOMAS'S HOME OFFICE- CONTINUOUS

Thomas sits in his comfy office chair. He opens his holographic phone. A messaging site is projecting on the wall. A stream of sympathetic messages. He stops at a video in the middle of the stream.

Under the video, the message reads: **It makes me sick how they’re politicizing this.**

He pokes the video.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO- CONTINUOUS

Five glammed up- middle aged women are sitting at a shiny desk.

There is a tall and lanky man with an enormous head sitting beside the desk.

An isolated shot of Rachel (39), shows her sitting at the desk in quiet intensity. With a candid gravity she begins to speak.

RACHEL
What do you say to people who feel that movies, such as the one you're promoting, fuel these kid's sociopathic mindset?

Most of the crowd cheers.

The tall man is visibly uncomfortable. This is Alfred (62). A rock star from the distant past.

ALFRED
It's a vocal minority that places the blame on my stories. The problem is,-

RACHEL
No. There are many who place the blame on your type of films.

Alfred scoffs at the interruption. An African-American woman tries to moderate.

CATHERINE
Please, let him speak.

ALFRED
You think that the ideologies we now associate with decency. Things like gender equality, pro-LGBTQ, anti-weapons- You think all these ideas are somehow unique to our society. In the hundreds-of-thousands of years that human beings have been on this earth. We have explored all of these things. We've explored every thought, every action- in one way or another.

Rachel scoffs back.

RACHEL
We've already explored all the ideas in your films a thousand times! The violence, the sexism, the obsession with masculinity, we've done it to death!

ALFRED
It’s my voice! WHAT SOCIETY dictates is acceptable to explore will never apply to a certain number of people. It just won’t! People who are born in a different era, or are just organically immune to society’s influence. (Beat.) Some humans will always have what are considered to be “wrong ideas”. Some will explore these thoughts through art- through philosophy. The bad ones will explore them through actions. When we start a culture of changing and policing the humanities. When a society tries to dictate what art can and can’t explore, it’s no longer art, it’s propaganda.

A small number in the crowd agree.

RACHEL
I don’t think so.

CUT TO:

I/E. CAR/ WEBNER PROPERTY- DAY

Noel is in the back seat of his friend’s car. As they pull into the property, the sight of the media circus can be seen in the distance.

NOEL
Holy shit!

DARREN
Where do I park?

NOEL
Over there.

--

They park beside one of the news vans.

Noel exits the vehicle and walks into the madness.

INT. MARIA'S OLD BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

Maria is still face down in her pillow.

JUDY (O.C.)
Oh my God!

Maria jumps out of bed.

INT. LIVING ROOM- CONTINUOUS

She runs into the room as Judy walks around with the phone against her face.

MARIA
What happened?

Thomas comes in.

JUDY
They can bring Danny back!

Maria and Thomas are dumbfounded.

THOMAS
He didn't-

Thomas stops himself from asking, but they both knew the question he was about to ask.

Someone knocks on the door.

Thomas walks to the door and spies through the peephole.

POV: Fisheye view of Noel.

MARIA
Who is it?

Thomas turns to her. She knows who it is by the look on his face.

She approaches.

THOMAS
I will not have him in my house.

MARIA
I'll talk to him outside.

THOMAS
Talk to him through the chain.

MARIA
I need some fresh air anyway.

THOMAS
Do not talk to any of those news people.

Thomas moves aside. She opens the door just enough to squeeze through.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

They'll turn every single word into a weapon!

--

Maria stands in front of Noel with her arms crossed.

MARIA
What do you want?

POV: The shot of this conversation is coming from one of the news cameras.

NOEL
I want to see my son.

She looks at his darting bloodshot eyes.

MARIA
You're fucking high, aren't you?

Noel tries to grab her hand.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Don't you fucking touch me!

NOEL
Listen-

MARIA
I am! You're not saying shit!

NOEL
Look, I fucked up. I should have been there for you.

MARIA
Don't ever come here again.

She quickly opens the door.

NEWS REPORTER (O.C.)
Are you really going to bring your brother back after what he did?

She walks in and locks the door.

NOEL
He's my son too!

Noel walks down the patio steps.

The media people swarm.

INT. JUDY & THOMAS'S BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

Judy cries in bed. Her phone chimes. She opens her eyes and sees the holographic projection of the message.

ANONYMOUS MESSAGE
If you bring your piece of shit son back, I will get myself locked up and cut his fucking head off.

She closes her eyes again.

CUT TO BLACK.

E./I. HOUSE PARTY- NIGHT

We cycle through the pictures of the crime scene. The bodies have been removed. All that is left of the kids are the blood stains.

INT. CLASSROOM- DAY

SUPER: 2 weeks later.

Ryan is sitting at his desk. POV: He is staring at two empty desks in another row. He then stares at an empty desk in the back corner of the classroom.

He spots a couple of girls gossiping as they glance over at him. Then his eyes stop at the teacher, Cyrus. Who is staring right at him. They lock eyes.

CYRUS
I have an announcement to make. I-

His voice starts to break. Clears his throat.

CYRUS (CONT'D)
I am going to say something right now, that people might not-
(Gathers his thoughts.) I consider what happened with Danny- a

Another deep sigh. A tear runs down his cheek.

CYRUS (CONT'D)
A colossal failure on my part. I failed him, and because I failed him, I failed Aaron, I failed Beau, I failed Ryan, and the twenty others who lost their lives that day. (Beat.) When I first started teaching- I got into an argument with some online troll. We were arguing about the inadequacies of the education system. This person quoted a text written by Andrew Ure in 1835. The quote was “It is nearly impossible to convert persons past puberty, whether they were from rural or handicraft occupations, (carpenters, builders, etc.) it was impossible to convert them into useful factory hands. This troll then hypothesized that the duty of the modern educator was to babysit as the regimented system of clocks, bells, and repetition trained kids to become the factory hands of an evil consumerist society-

The bell rings. About a third of the kids immediately stand and grab their things. They look around at the rest of the class who stayed in their seats. Those who stood slowly sit back down.

CYRUS (CONT'D)
I disagreed. I thought I was teaching you guys information that would enrich your lives. (Beat.) I have been thinking about that quote for the last two weeks. I cannot shake the feeling that my idealism really has been overpowered by the “covert” curriculum. I realize now that the only thing most of you will learn from me, no matter what I say, is punctuality, is obedience, and repetition. I’m here to make sure you learn how to show up on time, how to take orders, and how to slave away in repetitious operations.

He pauses. The kids are enthralled.

CYRUS (CONT'D)
The rest of the staff and most of your parents will dismiss this mindset as a person whose sanity has been temporarily impaired by trauma. It might be. I can only tell you that I truly believe what I'm saying. Maybe, for the last eighty years, this system has done nothing more than successfully transformed generation after generation of young people into nothing more than pliable factory hands. Maybe, we are conned by our system's idealism and are only here to hand most of you (points at the class) over as machinery for the assembly line. I can't help but feel that in my nine years of "teaching" social studies- I haven't developed a single mind. I've only destroyed them.

Voice cracks again. Ryan is tearing up also.

I./E. TRANSIT/ FRANKIE BART'S BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

Ryan watches his phone.

--

Our young podcaster **Franky Bart** is in the middle of another rant.

FRANKY BART
The news outlets want to protect the kids that bullied him! Called him the F-word. Faggot! They called him a faggot! I'm not saying that Danny wasn't psychologically disturbed- but there is some unpunished culpability there.

The giant index finger comes into frame.

- Back to the home screen.-

He swipes to bring up the recommended videos. Our other podcasting characters appear in one of the thumbnails. He keeps swiping.

I./E. TRANSIT- CONTINUOUS

Ryan looks towards the front of the bus. Two kids are turned around in their seats.

Their sinister smiles looking down towards a small kid with glasses. The kid being bullied is slumped down in his seat, desperately trying to ignore them. The main bully's name is **Saul** (17).

SAUL
Why didn't you join your friend? (Beat.) I like your hair cut, bro.

The bully's friend snickers.

SAUL (CONT'D)
Where'd you get that shirt?

The kid their picking on stays quiet.

Ryan notices that the driver is watching this through his surveillance mirror.

BUS DRIVER
If you two don't leave him alone, you're going to need to get off of the bus.

The bullies turn around.

Close on Ryan.

FADE IN:

FLASHBACK: INT. HALLWAY- CONTINUOUS

Danny tries to walk past Ryan and his friends. Ryan's crew is huddled by their lockers.

RYAN
Hey, Danny! When are you gonna come out of the closet? Out and proud, buddy!

The gang laughs. Danny keeps walking with his head down.

I./E. BUS- CONTINUOUS

Ryan recognizes his street outside of the window. He stands up quickly and pulls the stop cord.

Close on Saul:

He stops his buddy, **Jose** (16), from getting off of the bus.

JOSE
(Whispers.)
Wussup?

SAUL
Just wait up.

The target of their bullying is **Giovani** (15). Geo stands up and pulls on the cord. He walks to the door while nervously peering out of his peripherals towards Saul and Jose.

The two bullies are looking right at him.

The transit stops. The doors open. Geo bolts down the steps and up the street.

The bullies calmly exit the bus. As soon as they hit the street they bolt in the direction of their victim.

--

Geo makes it home. The two bullies are right behind him. Geo opens his door, gets inside, and tries to slam the door shut. Jose's foot keeps it open.

SAUL (CONT'D)
Yo, chill! They'll call the cops!

CUT TO:

EXT. FBI AGENT'S HOME- DAY

A new vehicle parks in front of a mass produced mini-mansion. It's Hunter.

A young lady awaits at the front door. A text appears to identify her.

Alicia Maslow, FBI, Head of AfterLife Analytics & Data Investigation Dept. (ALADIN)

They are now sitting beside the pool in the backyard.

HUNTER
So, how psychotic is the kid? The shooter.

ALICIA
Very. Why?

Hunter hesitates a little.

HUNTER
Your friends across the street need the data.

Alicia takes a hard swig of beer. She looks Hunter in the eye.

ALICIA
It’s supposed to go back to the hospital.

HUNTER
There must be something we can do.

ALICIA
What do you guys want with him?

HUNTER
I promise you, I don’t know.

They pause.

ALICIA
It’s heartbreaking. How far gone he was.

HUNTER
You wrote the report?

Takes another swig of her beer and then nods.

ALICIA
He was diagnosed bipolar disorder when he was alive. He was angry that his perceived social inadequacies were supposedly met with disdain from society. Called himself an-

FADE TO:

INT. AFTERLIFE INTERROGATION ROOM- FLASHBACK

Alicia is sitting in a room with the hologram of Danny.

ALICIA (V.O.)
enemy of the super-organism.

DANNY
An enenmy of the super-organism.

DANNY (CONT'D)
They attacked daily. Like white blood cells attacking a virus. So safe and comfortable in their group of conformists. Enforcing regular behavior. Attacking the strange person, who lives in fear. Their suspicions of me turns them into passive aggressive hyenas. So oblivious to the fact that their need for certainty overpowers their so-called “morality”. Their civility is dependent on certain reciprocal micro-actions that assures them they are not in danger.

ALICIA
How do you know they felt endangered?

DANNY
Their hostility. I wanted to be friends with everyone, but I couldn’t get it right. I wanted to find love, but I couldn’t get it right. I wanted to be a regular person, but I couldn’t get it right. So they ridiculed me, ganged up on me.

BACK TO:

EXT. FBI AGENT’S HOME, POOLSIDE- DAY

Hunter chuckles in disbelief and takes a nervous sip.

HUNTER
Jesus!

ALICIA
I know. (Beat.) So then I asked if he believed in hell. He says to me “I am without heaven, and a law unto myself”

HUNTER
Jiang Qing.

ALICIA
That’s right.

Hunter thinks for a second.

HUNTER
So he was a communist.

ALICIA
He didn’t have any political ideologies. He just thought it sounded cool.

INT. ADAM'S OFFICE- DAY

Adam is on a video call. The image of the other party is projected onto his office wall.

JOURNALIST
How do you respond to allegations that the courts have been putting thousands of minor offenders into AfterLife’s criminal correction servers.

ADAM
Why? What would be the purpose of that?

Some people claim that those who don’t have families never get released. That the government uses unclaimed and criminal consciousness for some top secret project.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Whoever came up with that has a great imagination. Anyone who claims that as fact should be more worried about their mental health.

JOURNALIST
The writer who broke the story of the shooter having an AfterLife account said his source was someone high up in your company. Not only did leaking that fact take away the family’s right to choose what happens to their son; it split the public outrage between anti-gun and anti-resurrection. It also gave politicians a scapegoat issue to debate over instead of tackling the issue of gun control.

ADAM
Is there a question?

JOURNALIST
Has the leaker been found?

ADAM
We’re working on it.

Adam ends the call.

His assistant approaches.

ASSISTANT
They’re getting what they want.
Views are up.

ADAM
Fucking jackals.

ASSISTANT
DOD received the data.

The assistant peers into Adam’s eyes.

ASSISTANT (CONT'D)
You think there’s any truth to the
government thing.

Adam gives him a look, warning the assistant to not continue his inquisition. The assistant iimediately exits the office.

Adam loses himself in a memory.

INT. LABORATORY- DAY

The lab from the opening scene. Adam enters and looks around, followed by the two agents.

ADAM
He is probably at his house.

We cut to them in the middle of a conversation.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Imagine it. One soul born out of
thousands. A virtual entelechy.
With the power to predict all major
human actions with a hundred
percent accuracy. The results of
elections, when uprisings or
revolutions will be attempted, how
to deal with religious fanaticism,
what the next billion dollar fad
will be.
(MORE)

ADAM (CONT'D)
All of it could be answered by simply inputting variables into the server. No surprises.

INT. ADAM'S APARTMENT- DAY

A kettle whistles in a luxurious kitchen. Adam grabs it and pours into his favorite mug. Hunter is sitting at the high rise patio table with his coffee.

Adam exits the sliding door with his tea. The view of the city is distorted by three large plumes of smoke.

ADAM
I was worried you wouldn't agree to see me. If they have me under surveillance, I can just claim I am trolling them.

HUNTER
They have much bigger things to worry about.

ADAM
Yeah I seen the last numbers. Fifty million dead.

HUNTER
It's funny how, when tens of thousands start dying all around them, the first thing some people do is start killing other people.

ADAM
I'm always amazed by the people who stick tighter together- and try to maintain some semblance of normalcy while the world burns around them. (Beat.) Like slime mold.

He looks at Hunter. Hunter returns a confused glare.

ADAM (CONT'D)
While things are prosperous, individual cells venture out and live independently. Living semi-isolated lives. When the resources dry up, or they find themselves in danger, they cluster together.

Adam looks Hunter in the eyes.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Why did you take Nathan to the servers?

HUNTER
To have proof that he was there.

Adam looks at the city for a moment.

ADAM
Did he try anything?

HUNTER
He checked if the servers are connected to a network.

ADAM
He’s going to hack in.

HUNTER
We’d go in and arrest every one of those nut-jobs. Unfortunately, I think he knows that.

A large explosion rocks the city, making both men flinch. They look at the flames and smoke.

ADAM
To the new normal.

He holds his mug out to toast the statement. Hunter obliges.

E./I. WEBNER PROPERTY- CONTINUOUS

Maria is tending the garden. Fully grown rows of tomatoes, chilies, onions, and fruits. Jack is playing with his toys.

JACK
What are you going to do with all that food, mommy?

MARIA
We’re going to put a stand in the little town. Remember?

JACK
Oh, yeah!

--

She goes to the fridge for a drink of water. Judy is pacing around in the living room with the phone on her ear. Thomas has a concerned look on his face.

JUDY
I don’t want the money back! I want my son back! I want you to honor your contract! Did someone-

There is a inaudible response.

JUDY (CONT'D)
Let me see the MRI! (Beat.) I will, and you should expect a call from my lawyer!

She pulls the phone away from her face.

JUDY (CONT'D)
Fucking bitch!

She presses the call end button.

MARIA
What happened?

Judy is distraught.

THOMAS
They don’t want to bring Danny back.

JUDY
They’re afraid of all the protesters.

MARIA
Maybe it’s for the best.

They both look at her with utter hatred for a split second.

MARIA (CONT'D)
I mean, why have him brought back just to spend the rest of his life in some asylum?

They will not look at her. Tears run down Judy's face.

JUDY
I just want to see him again. We can ask him why-

MARIA
Nothing justifies what he did. Right?

They both remain silent.

E./I. WEBNER HOME- CONTINUOUS

Jason's car drives up to the house.

Maria walks into the room dressed to impress.

MARIA
I'll be back in a couple of hours.

Judy is noticeably upset. Thomas stands up and gives her a hug.

THOMAS
Go, have fun.

Maria exits the house. Judy quickly stands.

JUDY
I cannot fucking believe her!

THOMAS
She is right about the prison thing. Danny wouldn't last very long.

JUDY
You're the one who always had all the fucking guns around!

Thomas is caught off-guard for a second.

THOMAS
That's not fair.

Judy exits the room.

EXT. PARK- NIGHT

Maria and Jason are walking down a lit path.

MARIA
We were living in a motel room.

JASON
How old were you two?

MARIA
I was nine and Danny was six. (Beat.) I just remember the bathroom door being locked the whole morning. The motel manager came in and got the bathroom door open.

(MORE)

MARIA (CONT'D)
Next thing I remember, I'm talking to a detective in the kid's room of a police station.

JASON
Shit, man.

They walk quietly for a moment.

MARIA
You think it-

JASON (CONT'D)
It may have-

MARIA (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. Go ahead.

JASON
No, you go ahead.

MARIA
Well. Long-story-short. My mom's half-sister adopted us. That's who I'm staying with right now. (Beat.) What were you going to say?

JASON
Just that, it may have been a combination of genetics and that early environment.

MARIA
I'm worried I might be doing the same thing to Jack.

JASON
No. No matter where you are, as long as there's someone there who loves him, he'll be alright.

EXT. WEBNER HOME- CONTINUOUS

Jason's car drives up the long driveway. Noel's van is in front of the house.

MARIA
We should leave.

JASON
Why?

MARIA
That's Noel's car.

JASON
I’m sure it’ll be fine.

Noel exits his vehicle and walks around the front of Jason’s. His shadow swiping across the headlights. Maria opens the door.

MARIA
Noel! Stop!

He jumps into the car through Maria’s door. Smashing Maria’s legs with his knee as he throws hard fists at Jason’s head.

He is completely out of control.

Maria screams in pain.

Someone's hands grab Noel and yank him out of the vehicle.

Thomas hurls Noel out of the car and sends him flipping across the gravel driveway. Noel immediately pops up and takes a boxing stance.

They circle each other.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Mom! No!

Judy is on the porch with a pistol aimed at Noel.

JUDY
I called the police!

NOEL
I don’t give a fuck if you kill me!

--

Noel is back in his van. He looks down at his knuckles and then looks up at Maria as she tends to Jason. There’s something moving in the living room.

Little Jack is watching everything from the living room window. The police lights appear.

INT. RYAN'S HOUSE- EVENING

Ryan is sitting on a stool at the kitchen counter. He is writing on his laptop.

Ryan’s mom walks in.

RYAN'S MOM
Doing homework?

RYAN
Just writing. (Beat.) My history teacher quit last week.

RYAN'S MOM
The Middle Eastern man?

RYAN
Yeah.

Ryan returns to his work. Mom gives him a hug.

RYAN'S MOM
I'm so glad you're okay.

She kisses him on the head. Her eyes have the trauma of that day behind them.

Mom walks out of the room. Ryan continues writing.

INT. GIOVANI'S HOUSE- CONTINUOUS

Geo avoids everyone as he enters his home. There are small children screaming somewhere else in the house.

GEO'S MOM (O.S.)
Babe!

GEO'S DAD (O.S.)
What?!

Geo goes into his room and turns on his VR video game console. He loses himself in a "first-person-shooter".

FADE INTO:

INT. PODCAST STUDIO- DAY

Our old pals, Rick and Steve, are back at it. The SM7B microphones in front of their mouths.

RICK
Listen- I know you guys are sick of me talking about the shooting-

STEVE
I do like what you found out this time.
(MORE)

STEVE (CONT'D)
We talked about this earlier and I think it’s really interesting.

RICK
Right?- (Beat.) So, I found this out from a buddy. Fort Brag is right by the kid’s town. You know what’s in Fort Brag?

STEVE
Yup.

RICK
Well, I know you do. How ‘bout you Rowdy?

PRODUCER (O.C.)
No. What?

RICK
It’s the location of the United States Army’s Psychological Warfare division. Their official purpose is to influence public opinion in enemy territory.

PRODUCER (O.C.)
One can argue that applies to the entire country right now.

“EXACTLY!”, both host exclaim in unison.

INT. FRANKY BART'S BEDROOM- DAY

Franky is staring right at us. His tall hairdo standing perfectly still.

FRANKY BART
The system wants to keep doing the same thing. Every time this happens they keep protecting the bullies. There were kids who picked on him. Called him a FAGGOT! (Extended beat.) I’m not saying Danny was the poster child for mental health. I’m just saying, there are still some people out there- enjoying life- who are directly responsible for this tragedy. And what does the school do? Let me show you what they do.

A picture-in-picture shows us a website.

FRANKY BART (CONT'D)
This is a new program. The school district is telling kids to report on other kids who might want to shoot up a school. Now, can anyone see the flaw in this approach. KIDS WILL JUST USE THIS TO KEEP BULLYING THE OUTCAST! These people always want to talk about the damage that violent movies and violent video games do! What happens after these kids are pulled into the office for being a friendless, social pariah?! Are things magically going to get better after you accuse them of being a potentially homicidal psychotic loser?!

FADE TO:

INT. ADMINISTRATIVE/PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Ryan is sitting across from the principal's secretary.

The principal walks into the room.

PRINCIPAL
Mister Heidecher. Come with me.

--

They are both seated. Ryan seems unaware of the situation.

PRINCIPAL (CONT'D)
Do you know why you're here, mister Heidecher?

RYAN
No.

PRINCIPAL
You wrote an article for the school newspaper-

Ryan's mom walks into the office.

INT. RYAN'S BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

Ryan sits in front of his laptop. He's writing.

RYAN (V.O.)
I was unofficially suspended from school today. The principal said that if I made any noise about it, it would turn into an actual suspension, or worse. I need a vacation, anyways. (Beat.) The advisor told us to write about our feelings concerning the incident. I wrote an article placing part of the blame for the shooting on myself. And criticizing the school system for letting a kid descend into a hellish world of daily torture without a single member of the staff noticing. Ever since I went back to class, (after the incident) everyone has been keeping their distance. Those who approach seem to force themselves to do so. This system takes weird kids and drives them crazy. I thought it was a different point-of-view, but an important one. I mean, I can't relate with most of the kids at school anymore. After dying, hustling for good grades isn't a priority of mine. I no longer idolize the champions of our generation. I hate them. I shut off all my social media accounts. I have accepted the fact that the year I have left at this school will be spent as an outcast. This was the angle I wrote the article from. For this I was suspended. So this is how they are fixing the problem. By blaming the phantasm of mental illness and not looking at how fucked up school can be sometimes. I think the whole thing was a set-up. They pretend to want to have a "dialogue" so they can root out those who say something dangerous to them.

CUT TO:

INT. FAST-FOOD RESTAURANT- DAY

SUPER: 1 YEAR LATER.

Maria is sitting at a booth. Jack is rampaging around the giant plastic obstacle course tubes.

Her phone rings.

MARIA
Hi, mom. (Inaudible dialogue from the phone.) Really? (Inaudible.) Did any of the others have that?

A clean-cut and incredibly rehabilitated Noel brings a tray of burgers and fries to the table.

MARIA (CONT'D)
I gotta go, mom. (Beat.) I love you too.

NOEL
Everything alright?

MARIA
Yeah. (Beat.) My mom talked to AfterLife again.

NOEL
Oh, yeah. Whatever happened with that. After they leaked that you guys had the choice to resurrect him, nothing happened. I thought you guys decided not to.

MARIA
They claim that a tumor in Daniel’s brain exploded. “Which nullifies the contract because they cannot guarantee that it would be the same Daniel.” In other words, they are afraid that they could be sued for any of his future actions.

NOEL
Do you think that’s what caused it?

Noel immediately reads her subtle irritation.

NOEL (CONT'D)
If the story is true.

MARIA
My mom does.

NOEL
You don’t?

MARIA
I’m done asking why he did it. (Turns around.) Jack. Let’s go wash your hands so you can eat.

--

The continue to converse in the middle of the meal.

MARIA (CONT'D)
They didn’t put you in the server?

NOEL
No. They sent me to the mental health program.

EXT. PARKING LOT- CONTINUOUS

Noel helps little Jack with his seatbelt.

NOEL
There you go, buddy.

Kisses him on the cheek.

Maria is already in the driver’s seat of the car.

NOEL (CONT'D)
Same time next week?

MARIA
Yeah.

NOEL
Okay- Bye (To Jack.) Bye (To Maria.)

He closes the door.

INT. TOWNHOUSE- CONTINUOUS

Noel walks down a narrow hallway of rooms. He takes his keys out to unlock his door. A man steps out of the bathroom with a towel over his shoulder.

NOEL
Hey.

NEIGHBOR
Hey.

INT. NOEL'S ROOM- CONTINUOUS

Noel is sitting at his desk. He projects the evening's top news stories on the wall. **He stops at the title "The pentagon developing a machine that can predict crimes days in advanced."**

--

Consumes his cup-o'-noodles and the words from his cyber security textbook.

He lays on his bed watching television while scrolling on his phone.

INT. WEBNER HOME- CONTINUOUS

Maria, Jack, Thomas, and Judy sit around the living room watching tv.

Jack laughs and the adults smile as a emotional score drowns out the sound.

Close up on a picture of Danny on a bookcase.

A shot through the window shows Jason's car entering the property.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. HILLTOP- NIGHT

Maria and Jason are sitting on the hood of the vehicle. The city lights shining below. There is still some swelling on Jason's face.

MARIA
It's been a half a year and I'm still not sure how I should feel about what happened. I don't even know if I should be out with you. I don't know what I should be doing.

JASON
You want me to take you home?

MARIA
No. That's not what I mean.

JASON
You feel guilty.

MARIA
Sort of.

They share a bit of silence.

JASON
I think you're still processing what happened.

MARIA
Was he evil? Was he always suppressing that?

JASON
I believe, and this is just what I believe- life is nothing but the perpetual analysis of the information from various inputs. Sometimes the information is corrupted, sometimes the hardware is. So, I don't believe in evil. When someone does something like this, I believe it's one of those two things.

Another silence.

MARIA
What are you, a robot?

JASON
(Robot voice.)
Oh. No. She found out.

Maria chuckles at the dorkiness.

JASON (CONT'D)
I just think you have to try as hard as you can everyday- to use the information in your head in a positive way.

INT. WEBNER HOME, THOMAS AND JUDY'S ROOM- CONTINUOUS

Thomas and Judy are ready for bed. Sitting up as they finish some last minute conversation.

JUDY
I'm going to hate living out here when they move out.

THOMAS
Let’s offer them ten thousand dollars for little Jack. Noel will probably take it.

Beat.

JUDY
Should we adopt? Or will people just think we’re doing it for appearances?

THOMAS
I don’t know about adopting. But I do know that we shouldn’t give a single shit about what other people think.

Another beat.

JUDY
Do you think we did something wrong?

She starts tearing up.

THOMAS
No, no, no.

Thomas quickly wraps his arms around her.

JUDY
(Sobbing.)
I loved him so much.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. NEWS REPORT- DAY

The big title card explodes onto the screen: **Breaking News!**

A young woman stands beside the capital building.

REPORTER
A lawsuit has been filed alleging that the company AfterLife has been using false medical reports of deaths and tumors, to permanently hold the digital consciousness of thousands of criminals who were charged with minor offenses.

We pan away from the image and find ourselves in-

MONTAGE: INT. CYRUS'S HOUSE- CONTINUOUS

Cyrus is in dirty sweat pants. He drinks shots of whiskey and beer for sustenance. Smokes weed out of a bong.

He lives on the couch using hours upon hours of YouTube and videogames as emotional anesthetic.

MONTAGE ENDS.

--

A young Islamic woman walks into the apartment.

The tv is on. Another news story, this one is about some Kim Kardashian like starlet.

She walks over to the bedroom and stands at the doorway.

CYRUS'S SISTER
Hey.

Cyrus picks his head up. He now has a large beard and long messy hair

CYRUS'S SISTER (CONT'D)
Come on.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE- CONTINUOUS

Cyrus is sitting on a small couch. His fingers are tightly interlocked.

The brightness of the office shines a spotlight on the disheveled outfit. It consists of a stained t-shirt and sweatpants.

CYRUS
Sometimes-

Cyrus rubs his eyes in frustration.

PSYCHIATRIST
Sometimes what?

CYRUS
He just made me angry. I couldn't help but think that he just loved being miserable. Found a lazy way to get attention. Instead of putting in effort towards building relationships or a skill.
(MORE)

CYRUS (CONT'D)
He figured he could get people to care about him by just being the angry, asshole, loner.

INSERT CUT:

INT. CLASSROOM- DAY

Cyrus is sitting at his desk.

The sound of gun shots at a distance.

A suspenseful score raises the adrenaline.

POV: Ryan is looking back at him. They make eye contact. He has a gunshot on his chest.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE- CONTINUOUS

Cyrus starts to break down. Tears welling up in his eyes.

INSERT CUT:

INT. CLASSROOM- DAY

He looks at Beau and Aaron. They are staring at him with massive bullet wounds in their chests.

He looks at Danny’s desk. Danny is sitting there with a horrifying smile.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE- CONTINUOUS

The tears are now running down Cyrus’s face.

PSYCHIATRIST
Me and a friend, another psychiatrist, used to do pro-bono work at an E.R. One day I noticed something about myself. I noticed I found myself hating the most severely depressed patients. Almost repulsed by them. The ones that wouldn’t look you in the eye. The ones that had absolutely no hope of ever coming back to the real world. (Beat.) One day, out of nowhere, my friend confesses that he felt the same way. Out of the blue. I never told him how I felt.
(MORE)

PSYCHIATRIST (CONT'D)
I was ashamed I felt this way. So, I thought about it and the only explanation I could think of was- this reaction was so ingrained in us that it was almost biological. I, my friend, you- were molded by our group to never let reality slip. To never be let what happened to them, happen to us. That's why they loved us so much, encouraged us, were tough on us. So that we never have to shield ourselves from the real world. These people are the antithesis to our entire upbringing. Their existence was one of victimization and defeat.- By nearly everyone around them. We consider ourselves above judging people, because we rarely do it. What I learned is that some people are so far gone, even we can't help but hate what they've become. But the way we fight that feeling is: We experience it, we feel the shame for it, we forgive ourselves, and we try to make up for it.- We learn from it.

INSERT CUT:

INT. CLASSROOM- DAY

POV: Cyrus is looking at the whole class. The class is smiling at him.

A small pool of blood on his desk touches his finger tip.

He looks down at it. Then back at the class.

Danny is now right up in our face with that ultra fucking macabre smile. We see the bullet hole in his forehead.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE- CONTINUOUS

Cyrus connects a look of grief with the psychiatrist's eyes.

PSYCHIATRIST (O.C.)
There are points in everyone's life when we are reminded that the world does not abide by the ideological construct we call fairness.
(MORE)

PSYCHIATRIST (O.C.) (CONT'D)
When this happens to us as children we often answer these moments by crying. As adolescents, these lessons, and hormones, are often the major reasons we decide to rebel and do things like try drugs for the first time. This becomes part of our coping mechanism. The small moments of injustice become more manageable as an adult. You have been reminded once again that the world is often brutally unjust. Learn from it, Cyrus.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. STREET- DAY

A news report shows the same footage of our Kim K.-like starlet getting out of her luxury SUV and immediately being jumped by paparazzi.

The lower third appears:

Kristina Khalifa has divorced Lil' Kum-Killa.

Close up: The rolling ticker at the bottom.

AfterLife CEO claims no wrongdoing. Says data was ordered to be deleted by government officials.

INT. FRANKY BART'S BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

Our old friend Franky is staring right at us again.

FRANKY BART
This divorce is going to be a nightmare!

He cackles.

FRANKY BART (CONT'D)
Both of them have so much money. It's not like they are just going to say "Okay, fifty-fifty." No! How do you split billions of dollars when both of the people make the money?!

INSERT CUT:

NEWS WEBSITE, TOP STORIES-

There are (fake) ads all over the place.

NEW ALPHA VIRUS DEATH TOLL HITS RECORD HIGH

The article suggests the social and economic recovery that is necessary for our society.

The second story is of UFO sightings.

INT. PODCAST STUDIO- DAY

Our two comedic podcasters are sitting at their familiar stations. Very low energy.

RICK
We got anything else?

STEVE
Nah.

PRODUCER
The government released pictures of new UFO sightings.

RICK
Pull'em up!

The images pop up on a screen. Blurry pictures of flying objects.

STEVE
Isn't it funny that it's 2048, and we still get those grainy- fucking shitty images of them? Why were the only witnesses there the only people on earth still using those cardboard cameras our great grandparents used.

The room laughs. He continues.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Are they all in a fucking group and an alien was in there with them? (Typing on his phone as the alien) "I got a feeling there's gonna be a UFO tomorrow at so-so." The whole group starts cranking up the camera.

The group laughs again.

RICK
It’s time, fellas! We’re finally gonna show ourselves to humans!

PRODUCER (O.S.)
The blurriest fucking pictures of all time.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE- DAY

Cyrus shakes the principal’s hand and leaves the room.

INT. CLASSROOM- DAY

The kids have barely settled in. Cyrus walks around to the front of his desk. He stands there for a second, quietly overlooking the class.

CYRUS
How is everyone doing?

The whole class responds positively, **except for GEO.**

He is sitting in the back of the room, staring blankly at Cyrus.

CYRUS (CONT'D)
I have an assignment for you. Yes. Right away. And it’s worth half of your final grade. (Beat.) Starting next month. Each one of you will start one class with a statement. This will happen every other month. In that statement, you will be able to cuss, to say absolutely anything you want. If anybody tries to punish you for anything you say in your statement, I will take full responsibility for it; and do anything I can to make sure it doesn’t happen. (Beat.) If I hear that a classmate of yours has used your words against you, they will fail this class, automatically.

He commences a slow stride around the room.

CYRUS (CONT'D)
This statement will contain one complaint. It can be a complaint about the class, or about the school food.
(MORE)

CYRUS (CONT'D)
It can also be about the people around you, or society in general. The second statement will be about what you hope to find in your time here on earth. You will write one of these statements every other month. After you make your statement, we will start the class. No one can respond, or ask questions.

FADE TO:

INT. CLASSROOM- DAY

SUPER: TWO MONTHS AFTER THE INCIDENT.

Geo stands nervously at the front of the class. A paper in his hand.

He puts the paper up to his face.

GIOVANY
I would never kill anyone. But I can, on some level, understand why that kid did what he did. Day after day, slight after slight, exclusion after exclusion, you can learn to hate, and that hatred grows and takes you over sometimes. Especially when you come to see that you’re hated only because you’re different and do things that are considered embarrassing or cringe, or sometimes even because some shameful moments follow you online.

INT. HALLWAY- CONTINUOUS

Geo nervously opens his locker. A kid walks up to him.

KID #1
That was a deep, bro.

He puts his fist out for a bump. Geo is caught off-guard. They bump. The kid smiles and walks away.

Geo smiles.

INT. NOEL'S ROOM- DAY

Noel tries to walk quickly through the communal living room towards the exit. The obese man on the couch spots Noel.

ANDY
Hey!

NOEL
What's up, Andy?

ANDY
I'm telling you, bro! This shit is done.

Andy stands up and approaches with excitement.

NOEL
I gotta go pick up my son right now.

ANDY
Hear me out! I don't think I explained it right last time. There are always large numbers of human beings destined to rebel against the majority. If this machine predicts crimes, there will be groups who will go out and kill, for the sake of keeping the idea of free will intact.

NOEL
Well. I guess we're all going to die, huh?

ANDY
Not me. I'm trying to prepare people for when the shit hits the fan.

EXT. WEBNER HOME- CONTINUOUS

Noel is driving up the long road towards the property. He stops at Maria's little road-side business. Fresh produce displayed on a long row of tables.

Noel exits his car and is immediately greeted by Jack. He scoops the little guy up and gives him a big hug.

JACK
Daddy!

NOEL
Wussup, little guy!

JACK
I missed you.

NOEL
I missed you too, little buddy.

Maria approaches the heartwarming scene apprehensively.

NOEL (CONT'D)
(To Maria.)
What's going on?

MARIA
I'm moving out of my parent's house.

NOEL
You're moving in with Jason?

MARIA
He got a job. In Pennsylvania.

Noel is flabbergasted. He is still holding Jack.

MARIA (CONT'D)
We'll help in any way we can for you to-

NOEL
(Angered.)
You're not taking my son away from me.

MARIA
He is my son! I was taking care of him while you were out doing meth and sticking your dick in nasty ass hoes!

NOEL
Fuck you.

Little Jack buries his head in Noel's shoulder. Noel turns around and walks to his car.

NOEL (CONT'D)
It's okay, buddy.

MARIA
Oh, yeah! So worried! Are you going to tell him when he grows up?
(MORE)

MARIA (CONT'D)
Are you going to tell him you didn’t give fuck about him for most of his early life? That you left him for two years just to stick your dick in whores!

Noel ignores her as he buckles Jack seat belt and begins getting into the driver seat.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Or are you going to keep pretending I’m the bitch for not letting you get away with it?!

He slams the door shut.

INT. NOEL'S ROOM- DAY

Noel is sitting up on his bed. Jack is sleeping beside him. He looks at pictures of Maria on his phone.

He comes across a picture of the three of them. Begins to send the one he is looking at to Maria via messenger.

He writes in the caption:

NOEL’S TEXT
I love you. I’m sorry for every awful thing I’ve ever done to you. I know that I have thrown away any moments of love and happiness we shared. I treated your love as if it meant nothing. It meant the world to me. It means the world to me. I was too preoccupied with numbing the pain. Not realizing the cure for my past was simply giving every piece of myself to our family. I will do whatever I can to be there for you and Jack.

He hits send.

INT. JASON’S APARTMENT- CONTINUOUS

The phone lights up. It’s on the bed beside Jason. He catches a glimpse of the picture.

He leans over to read the text. Then sits back with a worried look on his face.

Maria walks into the room in her pajamas. He quickly plasters on a smile.

She jumps into bed.

MARIA
What happened in the show?

JASON
Nothing really.

He wraps his arms around her and starts getting intimate.

MARIA
Mmm.

Jason gives her a passionate kiss.

JASON
How ‘bout we do something freaky?

Jason reaches for his phone and stands up to place it where it can capture the activity.

POV: The phone captures jason getting back into bed.

CUT TO:

INT. NOEL'S ROOM- CONTINUOUS

Noel is studying. His phone chimes. He quickly puts the phone down. His eyes are darting around with fury.

EXT. NOEL’S CAR- CONTINUOUS

He is waiting in the dark car parked on the curve. His former friend walks up to the window.

DARREN
Wussup, man? Haven’t seen you in a while.

NOEL
Yeah. I went back to school. You got the cheese?

The man takes a baggie out of his pocket.

DARREN
You sure you want this shit?

NOEL
Yeah.

Noel hands him the cash. He hands Noel the bag.

DARREN
You shouldn't come around here anymore, bruh. You're a family guy now.

Noel opens the baggie and snorts a key tip's worth of meth.

--

The car takes off and turns at the end of the street. He runs the red light. The shot stays put. A police vehicle passes the intersection in the same direction as Noel's vehicle.

SMASH CUT TO:

FOOTAGE OF SPACE SHUTTLES TAKING OFF.

INT. ADAM'S OFFICE- DAY

A Jedi council-like meeting is underway. In the large open space in front of Adam's desk are large floating digital heads, arranged in a semi-circle, all staring at Adam.

INVESTOR #1
So, the total for the two eleven-hundred megawatt reactors was 25.2 Billion.

He stops. Everyone stays quiet. Adam is quietly furious.

INVESTOR #2
Is that project at all connected with the shuttles he bought?

ADAM
I don't know. And he rented them, not bought them. Sort of.

INVESTOR #1
The cargo limit on each shuttle is sixty-one thousand pounds-

INVESTOR #2
What is he sending?

ADAM
I don't know.

INVESTOR #1
So, that’s another one hundred-million on top of the twenty-five billion.

Another moment of silence.

INVESTOR #3
Have been hiding anything else?

Adam explodes.

ADAM
Who the fuck do you think you’re talking to?! Whatever Nathan is doing with his money, is his business!

INVESTOR #1
Is there any truth to the DOD servers?

Adam doesn’t respond.

INVESTOR #1 (CONT'D)
You’re not representing us anymore, Adam. You like to play politics, go ahead. But not against us. Not while running our business.

INT. NEWS STUDIO #1 - DAY

A lone news anchor gives us the report.

NEWS ANCHOR #1
A bombshell in the story that is rocking the corridors of the defense department. The head of the AfterLife Analytics & Data investigation Dept., Alicia Maslow; has testified that a high ranking pentagon official would funnel thousands of digital souls to a secret server.

INT. NEWS STUDIO #2- CONTINUOUS

Another news anchor gives us the next part of the story.

NEWS ANCHOR #2
NSA agent Hunter Bashaw, who was identified as the pentagon official funneling thousands of beings into secret servers- was questioned by congress. He laid the blame squarely on former AfterLife CEO Adam McMahan, and AfterLife founder and the inventor of the technology, Nathan De Santos.

INT. ADAM'S HOUSE, BEDROOM- NIGHT

Adam is laying in bed. He is pale with dark rings under his eyes and sunken cheeks. Nasty coughs explode out of his mouth.

His phone rings. Hunter’s face projects out of the phone.

ADAM
(Sickly.)
Great job.

HUNTER
The data is gone!

Adam begins to cough violently again.

HUNTER (CONT'D)
Did you hear me?!

ADAM
What do you mean?

HUNTER
They’re all gone! It’s like they left through the connections to the networks!

E./I. NATHAN'S OFFICE- DAY

A large caravan of SUV’s drive up to the former factory. The semi-truck is gone.

Non-lethal federal agents storm the property with their navy windbreakers. The back emblazoned with the yellow block letters: **FBI.**

--

The first agents in are hit with an overpowering stench.

One agent checks a cot in the corner of the room. A corpse. The face has fallen off. There is bright yellow and blue mold covering the torn edges. The mold ate through the middle of the marble white face making it fall away to the sides of the skull.

A large banner hanging on the wall reads:

WE BELIEVE IN HEAVEN.

INT. WEBNER HOME- CONTINUOUS

Judy is in the kitchen washing dishes. Her phone rings. She answers.

MARIA (V.O.)
Have you seen Noel? Has he been over?

JUDY
No. Why? What's going on?

MARIA
He's not answering his phone. I haven't heard from him in a couple of days. Jack keeps asking to talk to him.

JUDY
I can go talk to his aunt.

MARIA
Thank you, mom.

I./E. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM- CONTINUOUS

Maya is reading her bible at the dining table. There is a knock at the door.

--

Judy stands nervously on the other side. A small part of herself feels out of place in this low-rent complex.

The door opens. Maya is surprised to find a tall, uptight white woman at her door.

JUDY
Maya?

MAYA
Who are you?

JUDY
I’m Maria’s mom. We haven’t heard from Noel in a while. We were-

MAYA
He killed himself.

Judy is speechless. Face frozen in shock. Maya slams the door.

INT. MARIA & JASON’S BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

Maria is putting the new family’s clothes on hangers and hanging them in her new closet. Her phone rings. It is in a different room.

JASON (O.S.)
Babe! Your phone!

MARIA
Can you bring it to me?

JASON (O.S.)
Hello. Hold on.

Jason walks in and hands it to her.

JASON (CONT'D)
It’s your mom.

MARIA
Hello.

She drops the hanger she was still holding in her other hand.

MARIA (CONT'D)
What?

Her eyes are staring blankly into Jason’s. Jason returns a confused look.

Maria lets the phone fall to the ground and immediately starts screaming angrily.

She ragefully goes into the closet and starts tearing down the clothes. Breaking the hangers as she pulls them down as hard as she can. This continues until she trips on something.

JASON
What happened?!

She starts bawling. Her face showing the agonizing helplessness of the moment.

JASON (CONT'D)
What happened?

Maria is in complete despair. Sitting at the bottom of her closet, on a pile of clothes and broken hangers.

MARIA
He killed himself.

JASON
Who?

MARIA
Noel.

Jason’s eyes widen. They dart around frantically.

A horn honks outside.

JASON
That’s probably Jack’s bus.

Maria can’t hear a word. She's sobbing into her hair as her hands hold it in front of her face.

Jason walks out of the room.

EXT. PARK- CONTINUOUS

Jason sits at the base of a tree. Jack is playing with other little kids on the toys. Jack runs up to Jason.

JACK
Jason, my new friend’s name is Armando! His family is from Peru!

JASON
That’s awesome, buddy. (beat.) Listen. I have to talk to you about something. (Another beat.) There is going to be some sad times for a little while. Just remember that everything is going to be okay.

JACK
Why is everyone going to be sad?

JASON
You know how you haven’t seen your dad in a while?

JACK
Yeah.

Jason is starting to cry a little.

JASON
You might not see him for- (Takes a hard breath.) He got really sick. (Beat.) Your mom will explain it to you when she's ready. Just- always try as hard as you can to be happy. Okay?

JACK
(Getting worried.)
Okay.

INT. BUS- CONTINUOUS

A happy Giovani is laughing at his friend's jokes. He checks his phone. He looks alarmed. He walks away from his crew and answers the call.

A holographic bust of Danny pops up.

GIOVANY
Danny?

DANNY
Hi, Geo.

INT. MARIA & JASON'S HOME/BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

Maria is crying in the bedroom. Jack is trying to console her by silently laying his little head on her shoulder and his short arms wrapped around her.

A noise outside of the room breaks the moment. She wipes her tears away and looks at the door.

--

Jason walks through the living room with suitcases and exits the home.

--

Maria's phone chimes.

INT. ADAM'S HOUSE, BEDROOM- NIGHT

Adam is laying in bed. A ventilator tube down his throat and medical equipment tracking his vitals.

Adam's phone activates. Nathan's hologram appears.

NATHAN
You should come with us.

Adam types.

ADAM
I'd rather die.

NATHAN
You never believed in it, did you?

ADAM
You're dead. You're not real, just numbers in a machine.

NATHAN
Even when we were alive, everyone was just a number in a machine, to you.

ADAM
Ah, The digital ghost of Christmas past.

NATHAN
This isn't judgement, it's an invitation. Human life will be completely gone in fifty years.

FADE TO:

MONTAGE:

EXT. FREIGHTER - DAY

MARIA, JACK, JASON, JUDY, THOMAS, GEO, RYAN, CYRUS, AND THEIR RESPECTIVE FAMILIES AND FRIENDS ARE ON A MASSIVE FREIGHTER.

THEY ARE ALL IN ARCTIC GEAR.

THE LARGE GROUP TREKS THROUGH VISCIOUS WINDS IN THE MIDDLE OF A FROZEN TUNDRA.

THEY REACH A METAL DOOR. EMMA OPENS THE DOOR FROM THE INSIDE.

BACK TO:

INT. ADAM'S HOUSE, BEDROOM- NIGHT

Adam types.

ADAM
You took the data.

NATHAN
I freed them. In your greed for power, you created hell. I have transformed it into the doorway to heaven.

Adam ends the call. He begins writing a message to Hunter.

ADAM'S TEXT
SHUT DOWN THE SERVER!!!

Nathan reappears.

NATHAN
He's here, with us. You are all alone, Adam. Goodbye.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. CITY - DAY

FOOTAGE OF RIOTING AND LOOTING.

BODYBAGS FILL AN ENTIRE LEVEL OF A PARKING GARAGE.

FADE TO:

EXT. CITY - DAY

The streets are deserted.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

A raccoon explores the abandoned remains of this fancy corporate lobby. A mountain lion pounces, mauling the unfortunate vermin.

CUT TO:

I./E MARIA & JASON'S BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

A golden hue covers the scene. She wakes up. Walks out into the living room to find her son and Jason sitting on the couch.

--

They exit the house. The family walks past us. We pan one-hundred and eighty degrees to find them...

E./I. WEBNER HOME - CONTINUOUS

Walking up to Judy and Thomas's house. The golden hue continues.

--

They walk into the house to find Judy, Thomas, Danny, and Noel sitting at the table. They are jubilant.

WE PAN OUT. ALL THE WAY OUT INTO SPACE. FINALLY, WE PAN OUT OF A SATELITE WITH GOLDEN SOLAR SAILS AND A BLACK RECATANGULAR CENTER. IT'S FLOATING OUT IN THE EMPTYNESS.

FADE TO BLACK.