

FREE GUY

Written by

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EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

A BONA FIDE SQUARE-JAWED ACTION STAR -- Cool haircut. Cooler sunglasses. Leather jacket. -- runs down a city street with a sly smirk and a briefcase stuffed with money.

GUY (V.O.)
*Everybody thinks they're the main
character in their own life story.*

He slides across the hood into a MUSCLE CAR and speeds off.

GUY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*But someone's gotta be the bad guy,
the overbearing mother, the love
interest.*

A COP chases after him, a BEAUTIFUL WOMAN swoons.

GUY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*All I'm saying is that maybe some
of us are the supporting characters
in someone else's cooler, funnier,
action-packed adventure.*

We RACK FOCUS behind the swooning woman to settle on --

-- A RANDOM BYSTANDER walking through the background. This is **GUY** (30's). Well-kept. Blue button-up shirt. Clean cut. Just an average, nothing spectacular kind of guy.

GUY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*Sometimes I sure feel that way. I
mean, otherwise my life would make
for one boring story.*

EXT. FREE CITY - DAY

A Northern metropolis hums with life -- a small cluster of skyscrapers, old and new, surrounded by urban sprawl. Bridges extend over rivers that stream out to a busy harbor. Highways are jammed with rush hour traffic.

There's a big city park with a small zoo and a sizable lake. A theater district with a flashy city square. Elevated trains and subway stations. Doormen stand outside million dollar condos and bodegas sell lottery scratchers.

INT. GUY'S BEDROOM - DAY

An ALARM CLOCK goes off. Guy wakes up. Goes through his well-worn routine. Showers. Brushes his teeth.

Makes a muscle in the mirror - tries to make it look bigger.
Stares at the two suits and three blue oxfords in his closet.

GUY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Every day I do this shit.

INT. GUY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Guy exercises along with A CHEESY WORKOUT WEB VIDEO on his laptop to a DUMB POP SONG. Going through the motions.

FITNESS INSTRUCTOR
*Left, right, left, right, up, up,
down, down, punch, punch, kick!*

INT. GUY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Guy eats a bowl of cereal. Plays a dumb game on his phone.

GUY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*I was given the gift of life and
this is how I spend it.*

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Guy stands in line for coffee. The BARISTA is ready for him.

BARISTA
Medium coffee. Cream. Two sugars.

Guy smiles, trying to mask the shame of predictability.

GUY (V.O.)
Pathetic.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Guy window shops. Admires a RED SPORTS CAR in a showroom.
Gawks at COOL SNEAKERS on sale for "\$200" at "SOONAMI SHOES."

GUY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I have dreams...

EXT. ATM MACHINE - DAY

Guy checks the ATM Machine. His balance is "\$197.03".

GUY (V.O.)
But I can't achieve them.

EXT. CITY STREET, FINANCIAL DISTRICT - DAY

Guy walks to work in a CROWD OF COMMUTERS with his best friend, **BUDDY** -- sweet, oafy and nervous. Always distracted.

GUY (CONT'D)

You ever feel like we're just going through the motions? Never deviating out of our comfort zones. Never making decisions that can actually enrich our lives.

Buddy thinks about it.

BUDDY

Mmm. Nope.

They watch a STREET KID breakdancing on the sidewalk for tips. A GIRL RIDES BY on a cool skateboard.

GUY

Maybe we should take up a new hobby. Rock climbing!

BUDDY

No.

GUY

Yeah, that's dumb. We can try cooking classes. It'd be a good way to meet girls.

BUDDY

Yeah. No.

BLAM-BLAM! GUN SHOTS. They whip around to see a THIEF tear out of a CONVENIENCE STORE.

GUY

We should probably do something.

The criminal pulls AN OLD LADY out of her car and drives off. Throws a 40oz out the window. It explodes at Guy's feet.

BUDDY

Don't get involved.

GUY

This whole city is going down the tubes. Seems like every day we see another flagrant crime go down in broad daylight.

He looks up at an "FCPD" CHOPPER backlit by the SUN.

BUDDY

Yeah, well there's nothing we can do about it. The cops are in the pockets of the criminals.

GUY

Says who?

Buddy points to the newspaper headline on the STAND: "POLICE IN POCKET OF CRIMINALS."

BUDDY

Don't make waves, Guy. You know, I heard of this guy -- not you *Guy* -- but a guy who tried to stop a crime once. Tried to be a hero...

Guy waits for the punchline.

GUY

And...

LONG PAUSE. Buddy clearly has no details beyond that.

BUDDY

Let's just say he *regretted it*.

Guy concedes and follows Buddy into work.

INT. FREE CITY BANK - DAY

Guy works as a bank teller. Cranks through the routine of stamping the deposit slip.

He helps a slick DOUCHEBAG make a transaction. A BEAUTY hanging on his shoulder. Guy sees on his receipt that the Douche has hundreds of thousands of dollars in his account.

BEAUTY

(to Douchebag)

You are sooo hot.

She bites his ear, playful. Guy watches, jealous.

DOUCHEBAG

(obnoxious, to Guy)

Hello...

GUY

Sorry. Have a great day.

Guy passes him a WAD OF CASH and receipt through the window. Buddy works at the next station over.

GUY (CONT'D)
 We're good people. We play by the
 rules. Pay our taxes. But it
 doesn't make a difference.

Buddy looks at his friend, annoyed.

BUDDY
 You think too much. That guy I was
 telling you about... He thought
 too much too. And look where it
 got him.

GUY
 Where?

BUDDY
 (beat)
 You don't wanna know.

GUY
 Actually, I would like to --

BLAM! BLAM!

BANK ROBBER
 Everybody down on the ground!

A BANK ROBBER wearing COOL SUNGLASSES and a leather jacket
 fires a shotgun into the ceiling. The OLD SECURITY GUARD
 lays down like a submissive puppy.

GUY
 Here we go again.

Guy and Buddy SIGH, roll their eyes, and get down on the
 ground.

BEHIND THE COUNTER

The Robber leads the MANAGER around with a shotgun in her
 back as he empties the cash drawers.

BANK ROBBER
 Don't anybody try to be a hero.
 The bank's insured so sit tight and
 this will all be over soon.

Guy and Buddy lay on the ground.

BUDDY
 (calm, to Guy)
 You playing softball tonight?

GUY

Of course I'm playing. It's the only thing that gives me any joy in life.

BUDDY

Drinks at Timmy's afterwards?

GUY

Yeah, dude. Unless we're not gonna do what we do after every single game for the first time ever.

The Robber steps on Buddy's head and clears out his drawer.

BUDDY

(to Guy with mushed cheek)

You don't have to be sarcastic. I was jusht ashking.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD, PARK - DUSK

CRACK! Buddy hits a grounder. Gets to first. They're playing in a local softball league with a bunch of out-of-shape, NORMAL DUDES.

GUY

That's it, Buddy! Atta boy!

Guy is up to bat. He's playing for the "SOONAMI CORP BLUES". Looks at the score. Top of the ninth. Two outs. The Blues are down a point to The Reds.

TEAMMATE

C'mon Guy! We actually have a chance to win here.

PITCHER

Is that really your name? Guy? I mean, why didn't your mother just name you 'Person'. Or 'You'.

WHIFF! Strike one. Guy tries to loosen up.

BUDDY

(matter of fact)

I have a friend named Hugh.

While Guy psyches himself up, he notices:

A MYSTERIOUS GIRL WATCHING HIM.

She wears a tank top with a MOLOTOV COCKTAIL graphic. Leather pants. Badass boots. Sunglasses. Stands out in a crowd.

He's transfixed. Seems like she's looking right at him and --

-- STRIKE TWO! Guy collects himself, embarrassed. This is it. His team watches on from the dugout, nervous.

TEAMMATE

C'mon, Guy! This is it, buddy.

BUDDY

Huh?

TEAMMATE

Not you, Buddy. Guy.

The pitcher throws a fast ball.

CRACK! Guy blasts it out over center field. Home run! Guy can't believe it. Starts to run the bases.

MOLOTOV GIRL seems impressed. Guy pumps his fist.

GUY

Yes.

WHONK! The ball hits a flagpole and bounces back into the OUTFIELDER's glove.

GUY (CONT'D)

You gotta be kidding me.

The team can't believe it. A crushing defeat. He looks and --

-- Molotov Girl is gone.

INT. TIMMY'S BAR AND GRILL - NIGHT

Guy sits at the bar with the team, nursing their wounds.

He eyes the BEAUTY from the bank in a booth. Her DOUCHEBAG BOYFRIEND parks his EXPENSIVE SPORTS CAR outside and sits down next to her. Buys everyone drinks.

BEAUTY

(to Douchebag)

You are sooo hot.

Guy sighs. He'll never get a girl like that. Frustrated.

GUY
 (to Buddy)
 How long we been playing softball?

BUDDY
 Couldn't say. Long time.

GUY
 Every year we're the worst team in
 the league. We never win.

BUDDY
 Winning isn't everything.

GUY
 I'm not saying we don't have a
 winning record. We like, never
 ever, not even once have ever won
 one single game.

TEAMMATE
 You're such a downer, Guy.

GUY
 I don't want to be a downer! I
 just want to win. I mean, that's
 kind of the entire point of playing
 a sport, right --

MAC (O.S.)
 Freedom is just an illusion!

A CRAZED HOMELESS MAN walks into the bar. Everyone rolls
 their eyes -- this happens all the time. We'll call him **MAC**.

MAC (CONT'D)
 Me, you, everyone you love. We're
 not free. We're just puppets on a
 stage. Doing whatever *they* want us
 to do. Everything you see.
 Everything you do. This reality --
 it's all one big game to them and
 the game is fixed.

The Bartender yells at him from behind the bar.

BARTENDER
 Hey, Mac! Go speak your truth
 somewhere else.

MAC
 You're just a sheep! One of the
 sleepwalkers drifting through the
 maze while *they* call the shots.

Guy finds a dollar in his pocket for Mac.

BARTENDER

Don't. It'll only encourage him.

GUY

He's got something to say. I can respect that.

EXT. TIMMY'S BAR AND GRILL - NIGHT

Guy walks Mac out of the bar and gives him the money.

GUY

Here you go, Mac.

When Guy notices:

MOLOTOV GIRL --

-- walking down the other side of the street. Guy thinks about it for a second. Looks back at his friends having drinks. Tries to build the nerve. *What's he gonna do?*

She's just about to disappear down A SUBWAY STATION and Guy thinks better of it. Turns back to the bar.

But Mac has seen the whole thing. Stares at Guy through a pair of BROKEN SUNGLASSES, as if casting a spell.

MAC

Don't be a sleepwalker.

And with that, MAC SHOVES GUY into the street.

HONNNNNK! A truck slams on the brakes to avoid hitting him.

GUY

Ahh!

Guy scurries to the other side of the street just missing the truck and tumbles backwards DOWN THE SUBWAY STAIRS.

Buddy comes to the door, looking for him. Mac slips away.

BUDDY

Guy?

BASH! ANOTHER CAR slams into the back of the stopped truck.

The motorcycle behind it veers to avoid the accident and SMACKS into a POWER CONVERTER which SPARKS WITH ELECTRICITY.

ALL POWER on the block shuts down. The patrons of Timmy's sit in the darkness, puzzled.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT

Guy rubs his head, woozy, and realizes he's on the wrong side of the turnstile. He could just hop it, but Guy looks up at THE SECURITY CAMERAS and thinks better of it.

The EXIT is all the way on the other side of the station.

GUY

C'mon.

He heads for the exit when he walks past MOLOTOV GIRL, waiting for a TRAIN pulling into the station. Guy struggles to build the nerve to talk to her. Slows to a stop.

GUY (CONT'D)

Um. Excuse me.

The DOOR WARNING CHIMES and Molotov hops on the SUBWAY CAR.

GUY (CONT'D)

Hey. Um, excuse me! I --

AUTOMATED VOICE

The doors are closing.

Guy makes a quick decision. Runs through the closing doors only to realize:

THE INSIDE OF THE TRAIN CAR IS A VOID. Total nothingness.

GUY

What the --

Guy shirks back and THE DOORS SHUT ON HIM. Now he's trapped half in, half out of the train.

GUY (CONT'D)

Help! Stop the train!

He pounds on the side of the door as the train pulls out of the station. Looking into the train through the outside window, it seems normal inside.

GUY (CONT'D)

No, no, no, no!

He uses all of his strength to push the door open when --

-- HIS HAND PASSES *THROUGH THE METAL.*

Like it's fused *into* the door. Now the DOOR AND HIS ARM VIBRATE AND TWITCH, almost like they're GLITCHING OUT.

And the side of his body hanging out of the train is heading STRAIGHT FOR A COLUMN. He'll be crushed in seconds.

He pushes as hard as he can and at the last second --

-- TUMBLES OUT OF THE TRAIN.

Rolls across the platform and slams against the column that almost killed him.

His arm TWITCHES and VIBRATES with electricity for a second until everything goes back to normal. Everything is quiet.

Guy lies there and catches his breath, rattled but relieved.

GUY (CONT'D)
That went well.

INT. GUY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Guy wakes up. Morning routine. But can't shake last night's events out of his mind. He examines a BUMP ON HIS HEAD from falling down the subway stairs.

INT. GUY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Guy does exercises in front of the computer.

FITNESS INSTRUCTOR
*Left, right, left, right, up, up,
down, down, punch, punch, kick!*

INT. GUY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Eats breakfast. Stares at the cereal floating in his spoon. Pokes at one as if something would happen.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Gets his coffee. They have his order waiting for him.

BARISTA
Medium coffee. Cream. Two sugars.

GUY
Actually -- I think I'm gonna switch it up this morning.

The Barista freezes as if this were the craziest thing that's ever been suggested.

BARISTA

But I already made you a medium coffee, cream, two sugars.

Guy feels bad.

GUY

Okay. It's fine.

She's relieved. He pays and takes his coffee.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Guy walks to work with Buddy.

GUY

Let's take Waterfront today.

BUDDY

That bump on our head is affecting your judgement. Fourth is faster.

GUY

I don't know. Humor me.

BUDDY

C'mon. I don't wanna be late.

Buddy charges ahead. Guy relents.

INT. FREE CITY BANK - DAY

Guy is at his station, a little distracted.

BANK ROBBER

Everybody down on the ground!

And just like last time, everyone just lays down.

GUY

This jerk again.

BUDDY

Forget about it. Don't make waves.

GUY

This is *insanity*. What bank do you know gets robbed every single day?

BUDDY

Don't be a hero. Remember what happened to that guy.

GUY

No, Buddy! I don't remember what happened to that guy actually.

BUDDY

The bank's insured. What do you care?

GUY

I don't know. It's the principal of the thing!

BANK ROBBER

What did you just say?

The Bank Robber brushes past Guy right to Buddy. Buddy looks at the ground, shaking like a leaf.

BUDDY

Nothing.

BANK ROBBER

It didn't sound like nothing.

BUDDY

Please don't hurt me.

GUY

C'mon. He didn't say anyth--

BANK ROBBER

(to Buddy)

Oh. You don't want me to hurt you.

THUMP! The Bank Robber knocks Buddy off his chair and starts beating him up. Guy runs to his aid.

GUY

Hey! Just take your money and leave.

BANK ROBBER

Looks like we've got ourselves a hero here.

The Robber points the shotgun. Guy holds up A BAG OF MONEY.

GUY

C'mon, man. Just take it.

POLICE SIRENS sound outside.

The Robber thinks better of it and grabs the bag. Kicks an already limp Buddy hard in the stomach and leaves.

Buddy doesn't get up. He's hurt. Guy tends to his friend.

GUY (CONT'D)
 Hey. Buddy. Buddy?
 (to everyone else)
 Don't just stand there. Somebody
 do something!

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Buddy is wheeled into the emergency room on a gurney.

GUY
 Hang in there, Buddy.
 (to the NURSE)
 He's gonna be okay, right?

They roll him into an emergency room and Guy is left behind.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Guy paces in front of the hospital, really worried.

Looks around at everyone - just going about their routines. Angry that his friend is hurt and they don't even care.

And that's when, out of the corner of his eye, he sees --

-- THE BANK ROBBER. Walking down the street. Guy blanches like he's just seen a ghost.

GUY
 Hey.

He's in shock. Looks around for help.

GUY (CONT'D)
 Hey!

The Bank Robber doesn't notice. Guy fills with resolve.

GUY (CONT'D)
 Yeah, okay. Here we go.

EXT. CITY PARK - CONTINUOUS

The Bank Robber shoulders a PEDESTRIAN and sends her running. Pump fakes AN OLD MAN. This is a bad dude.

Guy cuts him off at the pass. Puts a hand up.

GUY

I -- I'm making a citizen's
arrest. You're gonna come with m--

BLAP! The Robber pops him in the face with a quick jab. Guy drops like a sack of potatoes and The Robber takes off.

Guy shakes off the punch, woozy, and gets to his feet.

GUY (CONT'D)

Stop him! Stop thief!

Nobody listens. Guy takes off after him. People look at him like he's got twelve heads.

PEDESTRIAN

What the hell are you doing?

PEDESTRIAN #2

Just let him go.

PEDESTRIAN #3

Don't be a hero!

Guy's too slow. He's breathing heavy. He watches as The Robber jumps down some stairs to a lower walkway.

This is Guy's chance. If he wants to get ballsy.

GUY

This is for Buddy!

Guy veers off the trail, through the park and LEAPS OFF A TWENTY FOOT WALL.

GUY (CONT'D)

Ahhh!

Landing on the robber but hitting the ground awkward.

GUY (CONT'D)

Ow.

THE ROBBER'S COOL SUNGLASSES FLY OFF.

BANK ROBBER

Hey! You can't do that!

The Robber is disoriented. Guy grabs him by the collar.

GUY
You hurt my friend. And now you're--

THWAP! The robber cracks Guy across the jaw. WHACK! WHACK!
THUD! He thumps him with a few sloppy punches and runs off,
disoriented and confused.

Everything happens quickly, but to us it almost looks like
The Robber *disappears* behind the trees. Guy yells after him.

GUY (CONT'D)
And let that be a lesson to you!

He rights himself. His eye is raw and banged up. Cut upper
lip. But he notices:

THE ROBBER'S SUNGLASSES.

Guy picks them up. Gets his bearings. The Robber is gone.
PEDESTRIANS walk past as if nothing happened.

GUY (CONT'D)
(to pedestrians)
Thanks. Really. Thanks for all
your help.

INT. BUS - DAY

Guy rides the bus home. Nurses his wounds. The other
PASSENGERS don't seem to care.

Guy fidgets with the sunglasses. Sun cuts through the window
and shines in his eyes. Without giving it too much thought
he puts the sunglasses on and:

FROM GUY'S POV:

HE CAN SEE FULL LED READOUTS ON THE LENSES.

UPPER LEFT CORNER: Has a "HEALTH STATUS" bar that's
dwindling in the mid-yellow range.

UPPER RIGHT CORNER: Has a picture of a FIST. \$197.03 in
cash with a green status bar next to it. And a timer.

LOWER RIGHT CORNER has a GPS MAP of the ten block radius
around his location.

OBJECTIVE POV:

Guy reacts. Rips off the glasses, shocked.

GUY

The hell?

He looks around to see if anyone noticed. Pockets the glasses. Feels guilty for some reason. Nobody cares.

Settles into the idea and takes the sunglasses back out. From all appearances, they just look like normal sunglasses.

He puts them back on and looks around.

GUY (CONT'D)

Whoa.

Besides the readouts, there's nothing exceptional about them until he glances DOWN THE AISLE and notices:

A FIRST AID KIT --

-- floating two feet off the ground at the back of the bus. Slowly spinning. A small spotlight on it.

Guy reacts. Looks around. *Is this some kind of joke? What should he do?*

He casually stands up and makes his way towards the kit. Looks at a BUSINESSMAN sitting next to it, oblivious.

GUY (CONT'D)

Do you see this?

Guy points to what looks like nothing. The Businessman looks at him like he's crazy and Guy smiles it off, embarrassed.

GUY (CONT'D)

Yeah. Me neither.

Guy takes off the sunglasses and the kit isn't there. Puts them back on and *there it is*, clear as day.

He takes a breath and builds some nerve. Reaches out and touches the first aid kit and --

-- BRRRRRRRUP! The kit disappears and a glowing light floats up his body. He jumps back, trying to brush it off until it's gone. What just happened?

He looks at his reflection in the window and watches as --

-- HIS WOUNDS DISAPPEAR. His eye, his lip. All healed.

GUY (CONT'D)

Holy crap.

EXT. BUS STOP - CONTINUOUS

DING! The bus stops and Guy runs off, freaking out.

GUY
Calm down, Guy. Just keep it
together.

He thinks about it and puts the sunglasses back on. It looks like just a normal day except for:

A WAD OF CRISP \$100 BILLS --

-- floating two feet off the ground by the newsstand. A little spotlight makes it stand out.

A PEDESTRIAN passes right through it, buys some gum and leaves, without noticing the money.

Guy rubs his mouth. Approaches the stack of money. Looks at it, just floating there.

NEWSSTAND MAN
Can I help you, sir?

GUY
Mmmm. No. Just looking.

Guy reaches out and touches the stack of money and --

-- BRRRRRUP! The MONEY STATUS BAR on his glasses jumps by TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS. Guy rips the glasses off. Can't believe it.

GUY (CONT'D)
No. That -- This is just not --
It can't be -- These are just --

EXT. ATM MACHINE - DAY

Guy punches his code into the ATM and checks his balance. Sure enough -- he has TWO THOUSAND MORE DOLLARS in his account than he did a few minutes ago.

He puts a fist to his mouth. *This can't be real.*

Reaches out, hits the 'withdrawal' button and --

-- CH-CH-CH-CH! The machine spits out hundreds of dollars. He stuffs his pockets, guilty, and gets out of there fast.

RUNS DOWN THE STREET and sees:

"SOONAMI SHOES" from earlier. The pair of sneakers he was admiring are still in the window. Guy raises an eyebrow.

CUT TO:

INT. SOONAMI HEADQUARTERS - DAY

A modern loft-like office space with a different color palate than anything we've seen so far. Clearly a tech company of some sort. "SOONAMI CORP".

Dozens of cubicles are filled with busy PROGRAMMERS. Some work on monitors, some use VR headsets. The bulk of them are Millennials and dressed casually.

INT. PROGRAMMER'S DESK - DAY

A twenty-something programmer, **PUNIT**, sits in front of a computer, on his phone. Reclining.

PUNIT

(on the phone)

C'mon, let's get a date on the books already. I'll come to you. I'll cook you dinner. I'll upgrade your home system. I've got this playlist I've been working on --

BEEP! Something on his monitor requires his attention.

PUNIT (CONT'D)

Sorry. I gotta deal with something here. But think about it.

He hangs up and opens:

"USER COMPLAINT #4521." He clicks on it and reads the complaint. Routine. Clicks to another screen and we see:

FREE CITY. Surveillance video of the whole city.

He scans the view from different angles. Can't seem to find anything wrong until -- something catches his attention.

THE SHOE STORE. Punit zooms in and reacts, surprised.

PUNIT (CONT'D)

Hey, dude. Come look at this.

A pudgy, disheveled programmer sitting next to him rolls his chair over. This is **GARETH**. He glances at Punit's monitor.

GARETH
What am I looking at?

PUNIT
Blue Shirt Guy.

He points and they watch as a REALISTIC ANIMATED VERSION OF GUY is buying the pair of sneakers he likes. Gareth reacts.

GARETH
Let's see the coding.

Punit hits a button that turns the feed of Guy shoe shopping into PROGRAMMING CODE. Hits it again to switch it back.

GARETH (CONT'D)
Huh.

PUNIT
You ever see something like this before?

GARETH
Noop.

Gareth takes a closer look. Reacts.

GARETH (CONT'D)
He's got our sunglasses on.

Punit checks it out and confirms. *Whoa.* The guys are shocked by this revelation.

PUNIT
That's weird. What do we do?

GARETH
We get 'em back.

CLOSE ON:

THE NEW SNEAKERS, walking down the street. A little CODE SYMBOL "</>" is on the back label. PAN UP to see:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Guy strutting around town in a new outfit. Sunglasses on. He's got a few shopping bags under his arms and a big smile. Looks around like the cat who ate the canary.

But he doesn't notice:

A POLICE CAR --

-- stalking him from behind. He finally gets the sense that something's wrong and turns around.

FROM GUY'S POV: A SHERIFF'S BADGE ICON starts blinking in the upper right corner.

OBJECTIVE POV: Guy notices. Uh-oh. Picks up the pace and --

-- WHOOP-WHOOP! Lights and sirens. TWO BADGE ICONS in his glasses. *Crap!*

Guy slows to a stop. Turns around with his hands up.

GUY

It's okay. I don't want any troub--

SCREECH! THE POLICE CAR GUNS FOR HIM.

GUY (CONT'D)

--ble.

It's headed straight for him.

GUY (CONT'D)

Hey! Wait. I surrender!

At the last second, Guy jumps out of the way and --

-- SMASH! The cop car takes down a light pole.

GUY (CONT'D)

What the hell?

Guy takes off down the street.

ANOTHER COP CAR cuts him off at the pass. Tries to mow him down with more intent than the first one. Hops up on the sidewalk. Takes out trash cans and a mailbox.

GUY (CONT'D)

Please! I can explain! I think.

As it closes in, Guy ducks into an empty construction site and the cop car SCREECHES to a halt. Reverses.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

Guy runs deep into the construction site and hides. The cops get out of their car and look around. Take out their guns.

PUNIT/COP
Come out, come out wherever you
are. We won't hurt you.

The cop sounds exactly like Punit, though he looks nothing
like him. And the other cop sounds like Gareth.

GARETH/COP
Much.

The cops LAUGH.

IN THE SKELETON OF A BUILDING

Guy curls up, trying to hide.

GUY
Crap, crap, crap.

The cops move in, looking for him.

PUNIT/COP
C'mon, Blue Shirt. We know you're
around here somewhere.

They narrow down his whereabouts. Motion to each other.

GARETH/COP
(into walkie)
Shut down quadrant Thirty-Seven 'A'
Four.

BACK WITH GUY

Guy hears them say that and looks up at a number spray-
painted on the building. "37-A-4". Reacts and --

-- THE WALL BEHIND HIM DISAPPEARS,

Causing him to tumble backwards over a ledge. He grabs an
exposed beam and realizes:

A RECTANGULAR BLOCK OF REALITY --

-- has been cleanly lifted from the fabric of the Universe.

Part of the building behind him is completely missing, half-
exposed pipes leading to nowhere. A BULLDOZER parked besides
the building is *perfectly cut in half*, totally intact. A
CLOUD above has A PERFECT CORNER removed.

And Guy dangles over a PERFECTLY SQUARE SINK HOLE.

Filled with adrenaline, he pulls himself back up onto solid ground. But he's trapped. Nowhere to run.

Guy is freaking out, cornered behind a stack of wood. The cops move in. Guy can't figure out what to do when he sees:

A GLOCK.

Floating two feet off the ground a few yards away from him. Slowly spinning. Small spotlight. He can't believe it.

Guy reaches for the gun, amazed and CH-CHK! It falls into his hand. *Whoa*. His POV READOUT shows:

GUY
Six bullets.

The cops are closing in. It's now or never.

Guy holds up the gun but can he really shoot a cop? His hand shakes like a leaf. He can't do it. But he gets an idea.

WITH THE COPS

They have him cornered and move in for the kill.

PUNIT/COP
You're just prolonging the
inevitable. We can fix everything.

THUNK! Something knocks a trash can and they whip around. BAM! BA-BLAM! BLAM! FIRE FULL ROUNDS INTO THE AREA. The cops move towards the trash can, kick it away and see --

-- A PILE OF GARBAGE. No sign of Guy anywhere.

GARETH/COP
Dude. Look.

He finds Guy's gun, surprised.

GARETH/COP (CONT'D)
He threw it.

EXT. FAR SIDE OF TOWN - DAY

Guy runs away from the site and down the street, knocking into pedestrians.

PEDESTRIANS
Hey! / Watch where you're goin'! /
Do you mind? / Move along people.

Guy HEARS SIRENS in the distance when he notices:

"THE MULTIPLAYER LOUNGE."

An internet cafe on the corner in an iconic building. He looks around, orienting himself, confused, and pulls down his sunglasses seeing --

-- *The entire building isn't actually there.*

He puts the glasses back on and *it reappears again.*

The SIRENS get closer. He takes a deep breath and heads towards the door.

INT. MULTIPLAYER LOUNGE - DAY

Guy steps into a cafe JAM-PACKED WITH PEOPLE. Only this is not your typical coffee house crowd.

CYBER PUNKS with crazy hair, HOT GIRLS with spiked jackets, GANGBANGERS covered with tattoos.

Everyone has their NAMES floating above their head. Well, not so much names as *usernames*. "FLAILINGMAGE2342", "THEGODFATHER2pt0", "VIXEN5232".

And that's when he sees a familiar face:

MOLOTOV GIRL.

Leather pants, form-fitting attire. Twirling a ninja star between her fingers while she talks to A FEW CYBER-PUNKS. Her username and level float above her head, "MOLOTOVGIRL4482. Level 125." She seems disappointed.

MOLOTOVGIRL4482

You mean, none of you have even gotten the MiG-35 out of the Russian's hangar before?

CATLOVER69

Like you have?

Catlover69 is a jacked with a big afro the voice of a prepubescent boy. Zelig2693 shoves him.

ZELIG2693

Dude, show some respect. This is *MolotovGirl*. Highest-ranked Free City gamer in the world.

They fawn over her like a celebrity.

DOUGIEPUGGIE808

Got any tips for us? I've spent a hundred and forty bucks trying to find the Spyder Convertible.

MOLOTOVGIRL4482

Sorry. I'm looking for someone with a little more experience.

MolotovGirl turns and bumps into Guy. No recollection of him.

MOLOTOVGIRL4482 (CONT'D)

Hey. Watch where you're going.

GUY

Uh, excuse me. But what is this place, exactly?

MOLOTOVGIRL4482

(uh duh)
Um. The Multiplayer Lounge.

GUY

Multiplayer?

MOLOTOVGIRL4482

Yeah, Free City Multiplayer.

She tries to get past and he stops her.

GUY

Yeah, okay. But -- like, what does that mean? Multiplayer.
Multiplayer of what?

She GROANS, annoyed and pushes past him. Guy stumbles into one of the desktop computers. He's amazed by what he sees --

-- it's A MENU SCREEN FOR "FREE CITY."

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)

Welcome to Free City. The world's most realistic cloud-based open world adventure game by Soonami.

It's got a Map of Free City. Video of people engaged in different types of criminal activities. Guy goes wide-eyed.

GUY

This can't be -- this isn't real.

Guy shirks back and fumbles through the cafe, dizzy.

EXT. MULTIPLAYER CAFE - DAY

He walks outside, hyperventilating. He looks up into the sky and around the city. It will never look the same to him again. His entire world is rocked.

Mac, the homeless man, yells at people on the street.

MAC
You're living in a game! This is
all just a game!

Guy starts to put it all together, floored and --

-- *WHAM!* A POLICE CAR mows him down. Lights out.

CUT TO:

INT. GUY'S BEDROOM - DAY

The ALARM CLOCK goes off and Guy snaps out of bed as if from a nightmare.

GUY
Ah!

He feels his body, frantic. He's in one piece. *Whew.* Runs to the mirror. He's fine. But remembers.

GUY (CONT'D)
The sunglasses!

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Guy jogs through the neighborhood the cops chased him through yesterday. Ends up at the same corner where the Multiplayer Lounge should be but now:

THE LOT IS EMPTY. Exactly what it looked like with the glasses off yesterday.

Guy sees THE TOP OF THE BRIDGE in the background.

EXT. BRIDGE - DAY

Guy walks out of the city across the bridge, determined.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Guy makes a beeline away through brownstone suburbs.

EXT. MARSHLAND - DAY

He pushes through dense marshland but always comes out of the weeds staring at the same view of the Free City skyline.

EXT. WATERFRONT - DAY

Guy jumps in a small motorboat. Drives it away from the city. He moves past buoys and boats until he's out in open water.

Looks back at the skyline. He realizes --

GUY

It's not getting further away.

-- he's inexplicably treadmilling in place. A BUOY besides him stays in place. His boat isn't caught on anything.

He throws the engine in reverse and the boat glides again back towards the city.

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Guy sits on a bench, watching the city with new eyes. He realizes that there are ONLY A DOZEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF PEDESTRIANS walking around the area at any one point.

GUY

Man in black business suit. Old lady in shawl. Chubby dude. Hipster mustache. Slob in a wife-beater.

They all say ONE PHRASE to each other as Guy walks past.

BLACK BUSINESS SUIT

Hey!

OLD LADY

Watch where you're going!

CHUBBY DUDE

Do you mind?

STREET COP

Move along, people.

A GANGBANGER pushes past and they REPEAT THE SAME LINES.

Guy clocks that The Gangbanger is wearing --

GUY

Sunglasses.

The same kind that he had. The Gangbanger pulls A MAN out of his car, screaming, and drives off, BLASTING THE RADIO.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

Guy watches a robbery in progress. A GUY IN A MASK is holding up a convenience store. He's wearing the same exact --

GUY
Sunglasses.

EXT. BUSY CITY STREET - DAY

A JAPANESE SCHOOL GIRL steps out of a car with a MISSILE LAUNCHER and BLOWS UP A FALAFEL STAND. She too wears --

GUY
Sunglasses!

INT. TIMMY'S BAR AND GRILL - NIGHT

Guy runs into the bar and finds HIS SOFTBALL TEAM, drinking after their game. Everybody is in their same seats. Even Buddy, a little banged up, but fine.

BUDDY
Guy! Where've you been? You didn't come to work.

TEAMMATE
We had to forfeit the game. Incomplete roster.

GUY
Buddy! Are you alright? You got beat up pretty bad yesterday.

BUDDY
Oh. It's nothing.

GUY
Buddy, it's *not* nothing. There's something I need to tell you.

BUDDY
Guy, just give it a rest.

GUY
No. This is important.

Guy climbs up on a stool. Announces to the entire bar.

GUY (CONT'D)

Listen. Everyone. I don't know quite how to say this. But -- This bar -- Everything in the -- *Us* -- It's all just a game. We're living in a real, actual -- I mean, I think a video game of some sort -- for another, dimension? And we're like -- We're not the players. The people with the sunglasses are. We're, like, *the background people!*

BUDDY

Guy! Knock it off.

GUY

You were right, Buddy. They don't want us to rock the boat. In fact, the whole reason we're here is to be screwed with by the sunglasses people. For their sick amusement -- that's so messed up -- but I'm gonna figure it out! I just need to talk to this girl. MolotovGirl! But I need to get the sunglasses first--

BUDDY

You're acting crazy.

GUY

That's just the thing. For the first time in my life I feel completely sane. I can see the world with perfect clarity. I --

MAC (O.S.)

Freedom is just an illusion!

Guy looks outside the window and Mac, the Homeless Man, walks by, spitting craziness at anyone he passes.

MAC (CONT'D)

Everything you see and know and speak is just pre-programmed gobbledy-gook! Nothing you own is truly yours.

Guy reacts. Realizes how crazy he looks. Everyone is staring at him, confused and weirded out.

GUY

Ha. Just kidding everyone.

Guy leaves the bar, embarrassed. SMASH! (PRELAP)

MONTAGE: GUY TRIES DIFFERENT WAYS TO GET THE GLASSES**EXT. JEWELRY STORE - DAY**

A DREADLOCKED WOMAN wearing SUNGLASSES throws a brick through a Jewelry Store window. An ALARM SOUNDS. She grabs a handful of diamond necklaces and startles to see:

Guy, blocking her way.

GUY
 Hey. Um. I know this might sound weird, but I need to borrow your glasses for a --

Guy reaches for her sunglasses and *WHACK! WHAP! THWIP!* She grabs his arm, flips him over and heels his Adam's apple.

DREADLOCK WOMAN
 (speaking French)
 Foutre fluage!

GUY
 (Donald Duck voiced)
 Sorry. My bad.

EXT. CHINATOWN - LATER

A different THUG WEARING SUNGLASSES walks through Free City's small Chinatown district.

Guy tails him from behind, hood pulled over his head. Follows him through the city until the thug turns down --

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

An empty turnout. The thug stands in front of a garage door and it opens. Enters and it closes behind him.

Guy watches, curious, when THE GARAGE DOOR OPENS and --

-- A DIFFERENT THUG EXITS, wearing the same sunglasses. He pulls out in a Tesla and drives past Guy.

OVER THE COURSE OF A DAY - MONTAGE

Guy watches DOZENS OF PLAYERS leave the garage - ALL WEARING THE SAME SUNGLASSES. All driving different cars.

Guy gets an idea.

EXT. ALLEY - LATER

The garage opens and a JACKED HIPSTER walks out wearing the glasses. He looks around, not noticing:

UP ABOVE

Guy is carefully lowering a makeshift hook. He's just about to hook the glasses when the jacked hipster notices. Pulls out a GUN and OPENS FIRE. Guy runs away.

GUY

My bad!

I/E. VARIOUS ATTEMPTS

Guy charges players from behind, throwing things, tripping them, timing it wrong, missing entirely.

GUY

Sorry. Sorry! Sorry.

He hits a player on the back of the head with a TWO-BY-FOUR.

GUY (CONT'D)

Sorry!

TINK! The glasses bounce across the pavement, unscathed.

Guy can't believe it. While the player runs around, disoriented, Guy puts them on and sure enough:

THE READOUTS APPEAR. *Yes!*

CUT TO:

INT. ACCOUNTING OFFICE - DAY

A mousy secretary sits behind a desk. Her hair covers half her face. Librarian glasses. She clutches the top of her blouse, protective. Mid-twenties. This is **MILLIE**.

BOSS (O.S.)

Millie! I need the Fentons' W-2's on my desk now!

INT. OFFICE KITCHEN - DAY

Millie tries to make copies and the machine craps out on her. She opens a side door, frustrated and PLOOF! A cloud of black ink sprays all over her.

EXT. MAGAZINE STAND - DAY

Millie picks out A TECH MAGAZINE and pays for it. The CLERK leers at her and she clutches her blouse. Avoids eye contact.

 CREEPY CLERK

 S'up girl?

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

HONK! A terrible traffic jam. Millie sits in her tiny Honda. She's about to move forward when someone cuts her off and gives her the finger. She quietly takes it.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

Millie runs into a house and darts directly upstairs.

 MOTHER (O.S.)

 Millie! I thought we were gonna
 talk when you got --

INT. MILLIE'S ROOM - DAY

SLAM! Millie locks herself in her room and takes a DEEP BREATH, finally safe.

She takes out the Tech Magazine she bought earlier and leafs through a profile on:

"SOONAMI'S ILLUSIVE CEO, **ANTWAN HOVACHELIK**, HIS UNSTOPPABLE GAMING EMPIRE AND THE LAUNCH OF THE LONG-AWAITED SEQUEL, FREE CITY 2." It features a skinny, young guy in his mid-twenties.

She *sticks a tack right into his forehead* on:

A CORKBOARD FILLED WITH CLIPPINGS ABOUT ANTWAN and FREE CITY. We see words like: "CHEAT CODES" and "UNHACKABLE PLATFORM".

She sits down at her desk, sets up her takeout food, ritualistically, and puts on A VIRTUAL REALITY HEADSET.

INT. MULTIPLAYER LOUNGE - DAY

Millie appears in the Multiplayer Lounge as MOLOTOVGIRL4482 -- the kickass avatar she uses in Free City. A tall, confident version of Millie with a few cosmetic enhancements.

[**Note: Millie and her avatar are played by the same actress, so we'll just call her Millie from now on.**]

She turns heads here. She's in her element.

ANONAMOU\$E
Hey... MolotovGirl.

She sits down at a corner table with **ANONAMOU\$E** - a shady dude who wears a trenchcoat and motorcycle face mask. Talks with a MODULATED VOICE.

MILLIE
You got that thing for me?

ANONAMOU\$E
It's in a briefcase on this shipping container.

He slips a "SHIPPING MANIFEST" across the table. She reaches for it and he grabs her wrist.

ANONAMOU\$E (CONT'D)
This *thing* is strong enough to take down the whole game. I'd like to know what it's gonna be used for.

MILLIE
I've got my reasons.

She JAMS A KNIFE INTO HIS HAND and kicks the table over. Tosses a wad of cash onto his lap as he tries to get unstuck.

ANONAMOU\$E
You know they're about to release the sequel! In a few days it's all gonna be gone anyway.

MILLIE
That's why I don't have any time to lose with a-holes like you.

She gets up to leave when GUY RUNS INTO HER.

GUY
Hey, there. Not sure if you remember me from the other day but, I was wondering if I could bother you for a sec --

MILLIE
Um, no.

She walks away and he scurries after her.

GUY
Ha. No, but really --

She looks at his username. "GUY (NPC) Level 1".

MILLIE

Sorry, I don't talk to newbs. I'm not even sure how you got in here.

GUY

Yeah. Well, that's kind of what I want to talk to you about --

She's already out the door.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Millie struts down the street. Guy follows her.

GUY

It's just that you seem like someone who knows a thing or two about this place.

MILLIE

I thought I told you to get lost, newb.

GUY

Yeah, but, um. And a newb is...

She spots an ARMORED TRUCK up ahead.

MILLIE

Wow, you really are a newb. You're like a newby-newb, newb.

GUY

So true. So true. But, really.

She's captivating and graceful as SHE PULLS THE PIN OFF A GRENADE and tosses it underneath a parked car.

MILLIE

I don't associate with anyone under Level Fifty.

KABOOM! The parked car launches off the ground from the explosion and everyone runs off, screaming.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

You gotta have a better wardrobe. Garage filled with ultra-rare vehicles. And a full arsenal.

Millie uses this moment as a distraction to jump into the driver's seat of the armored truck.

GUY

Right. Sure. And I do that by...

Annoyed, she leans in towards him, seductive. He reacts as she reaches into his front pocket and pulls out:

A NOTEBOOK. Tosses it at him and jump starts the truck.

MILLIE

Your mission log.

He thumbs through the book.

GUY

(reading)

Steal a car. Fire a bazooka. But --
I just need *answers*. I don't -- I
don't wanna hurt people.

She looks at him like he's nuts.

MILLIE

That's kind of the point of this
whole place, newb. It's a license
to do anything you want with no
consequences.

GUY

No consequences for you maybe.

MILLIE

Well, you better get started on
your criminal empire. Free City's
not gonna be around much longer.

GUY

Why? Where's it going --

WHUNK! She kicks him square in the chest and slams the door.

Guy watches her drive away in the truck, uncorking a FIRE HYDRANT in the process. He's amazed and intimidated.

He picks up his mission log. Knows what he has to do.

INT. DOLLAR STORE - DAY

A few CUSTOMERS wait to buy things from the CASHIER.

Guy mills about behind a shelf, pretending to pick out an item. He keeps glancing up at the counter, nervous.

Guy checks his notebook and finds an item on the checklist. "ROB A STORE."

Opens his jacket and HE'S GOT A GUN tucked in his belt.

GUY
(muttering to himself)
What are you doing, Guy? What are
you doing?

THE LAST CUSTOMER clears out and the store is empty.

GUY (CONT'D)
Okay. Here we go. Here we go.
Now or never.

He's super nervous. DEEP BREATH and he approaches --

THE FRONT COUNTER

Puts down his bag of chips. The CASHIER looks bored.

CASHIER
One dollar.

Guy is having trouble hiding his nerves.

CASHIER (CONT'D)
One dollar.

GUY
Excuse me?

CASHIER
One item. One dollar.

GUY
Yeah. Oh, but -- Could you, um --
Well, the thing is --
(beat)
Give me all your money, motherf--

Guy fumbles to take out his gun. Drops it on the floor. Holds it up, shaking like a leaf.

GUY (CONT'D)
Gimme the cash. Please.

The cashier nonchalantly reaches under the counter and suddenly Guy is *staring down the barrel of a SHOTGUN.*

GUY (CONT'D)

Oh, sh--

BLAM!

CUT TO:

INT. GUY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Guy snaps awake in bed as if from a nightmare.

GUY

Ahhhhhh!

Realizes what's happened. Checks his face. No sunglasses.

GUY (CONT'D)

As long as I'm wearing the glasses,
I can't die.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

A TALL GANGBANGER exits the garage and turns, only to see:

A ROLLING DUMPSTER speeding towards him. WHUMP! His sunglasses skid along the ground and SOMEONE WEARING COOL SNEAKERS wanders up to it.

PAN UP TO REVEAL: It's Guy! He picks the glasses up and puts them on. He's trying his best to look like a criminal.

The bassline of DOWN FOR WHATEVER BY ICE CUBE kicks in for a:

GUY COMMITS CRIME - MONTAGE

Guy walks the streets in SLOW MO. Shoves A PEDESTRIAN and a WAD OF CASH falls onto the ground. BLOOP! He picks it up.

Guy fidgets with a jimmy in a window and STEALS A CAR.

Guy fires an AK-47 at cans in a dump. Big smile as his body pulsates with the shots in SLOW-MO.

Guy shuffles around a corner with a wounded arm and a bloody shirt. Sees a FIRST AID KIT floating in the air and touches it. His wounds heal.

Guy tosses a mailbox through a department store window and steals watches.

Guy slams into people and WADS OF MONEY fall out of their pockets. He scoops them up.

Guy runs from the POLICE.

Guy crosses missions off his list. The LEVEL over his head goes up.

Guy covers his ears and walks down a dock when -- A YACHT BEHIND HIM blows up.

Guy touches a FLOATING PROTEIN POWDER in the gym and gains muscle mass.

Guy chases down GANG MEMBERS in a truck.

He checks in a bathroom mirror and the "Level" above his head keeps getting higher and higher.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Guy wanders out into the street, cool and collected. Reaches out for a SLOW-MOVING CAR's door -- perfectly timed. The WOMAN DRIVER reacts, surprised.

GUY
Outta the car.

Guy points a gun at her sideways. Looks tough.

The Driver is scared and hits the gas. Guy's sleeve gets caught on the door handle and pulls him along. The COOL MUSIC STOPS and it all gets very real.

GUY (CONT'D)
Wait. What are you doing? Stop
the car. Stop the car!

He whacks the roof, pleading.

GUY (CONT'D)
Lady! You're gonna --

His sleeve rips, he trips and --

-- WHUNK! WHUNK! He falls under the back wheel (OFF CAMERA).

CUT TO BLACK:

For a beat.

CUT BACK TO:

GUY COMMITS CRIME - MONTAGE

MUSIC KICKS BACK IN.

Guy is back at it. Steals car after car. Handles bigger and bigger weapons. SUBMACHINE GUNS, ROCKET LAUNCHERS. Collects money. Destroys property. Gets fitted for suits at A HIGH END CLOTHING STORE.

MEANWHILE:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

The Barista holds up a coffee BUT NOBODY'S THERE.

BARISTA
(confused)
Medium coffee. Cream. Two sugars.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

Buddy waits for Guy where they meet for work, staring at his watch. Nervous.

BUDDY
Guy?

INT. FREE CITY BANK - DAY

A LINE OF PEOPLE at the bank wait at his empty window.

BANK PATRON
Hello?

The line extends out the door and into the street where:

TRAFFIC IS BACKED UP FOREVER. Total gridlock. Accidents happen as a result. Fires break out.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The DOUCHEBAG in a FERRARI is stuck in the traffic. HONKS.

Distracted, The Douche doesn't see Guy stroll up to his door. Guy pulls him out of the car in SLOW MO, climbs in, drives up onto the sidewalk and speeds out of traffic.

MUSIC STOPS. SEQUENCE ENDS.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD, PARK - DUSK

Guy's softball team stand on the field. Silent. Waiting. Totally confused. It's an eerie scene.

TEAMMATE

We don't have enough players.

BUDDY

Guess we gotta forfeit *again*.

GUY (O.S.)

Not just yet.

All heads turns as --

-- Guy drives up alongside the field in the Ferrari.

Everybody watches him, stunned speechless. Guy saunters over and grabs the baseball bat. Reacts.

GUY (CONT'D)

Well? What're you all standing there for? Let's play ball!

The Green Hat's Pitcher shrugs and gets ready to pitch. Guy points a finger out towards center field, calling the shot.

The Pitcher is caught off guard. Hunkers down. Pitches the ball and just before it leaves his hand --

GUY (PRELAP) (CONT'D)

Drinks are on me!

INT. TIMMY'S BAR AND GRILL - NIGHT

The Blue Team CELEBRATES. Guy is the center of attention.

TEAMMATES

You did it! / That was amazing! / Where'd you get those clothes anyway, Guy?

GUY

Oh. These old things. Picked 'em up this morning at Soonami's.

TEAMMATE

And that car. It probably costs twenty times what you make in a year.

GUY
I got the original owner to part
with it for pennies on the dollar.

Buddy looks him up and down as if he were an alien. Afraid.

GUY PULLS BUDDY ASIDE

GUY
You okay, Bud?

BUDDY
I've been waiting for you every
morning. You don't show. You're
not at your apartment. You don't
come to work. And then you just
show up in the middle of a game and
expect everything to be okay.

GUY
I'm sorry. I've been busy.

BUDDY
Guy, what the heck is going on?

Buddy is practically in tears. Guy feels bad for him.

GUY
You really wanna know?

BUDDY
I think so -- I'm not sure -- No.
I guess not.

Guy takes off his sunglasses and hands them to Buddy.

GUY
Here. Give these a try.

BUDDY
What do you mean?

GUY
Put 'em on.

BUDDY
Why?

GUY
Trust me. Just put on the
sunglasses.

Buddy is having a hard time with it.

BUDDY
But it's nightttime.

GUY
That's not the point --
(frustrated)
-- Buddy, what do you remember of
your childhood?

BUDDY
(thinks)
Nothing. I have a bad memory.

GUY
Me too! That's all a part of it.
But from what you can remember,
I've always been your friend,
right?

BUDDY
Well, yeah. Sure.

GUY
So, who are you gonna trust more
than me?

BUDDY
(beat, realizing)
Nobody.

GUY
Right. So, put on the sunglasses.

BUDDY
Why do you want me to put on the
sunglasses?

Guy pounds the bar.

GUY
Buddy! They're *sunglasses*. You
wanna know how I got this stuff?
How I hit that home run. It's
because of the glasses! Just --

He tries to force the glasses on Buddy. Buddy struggles to
push him away.

BUDDY
No! Stop it!

GUY
Would you just! Hold still!

Guy relents. Backs off.

GUY (CONT'D)

It's okay. It's fine. But just remember -- that's the difference between us. That's why you'll always just be a rat in a cage.

BUDDY

You're acting cuckoo right now, Guy. Even for you.

Guy looks around the room and spots THE HOT GIRLFRIEND OF THE DOUCHEBAG in the corner booth. Guy opens his notebook and eyes an empty box on his list, "GET LUCKY."

GUY

Well, if you'll excuse me, I've got a date with destiny.

BUDDY

Who's Destiny?

BOOTH

Guy wanders over to the booth and approaches The Beauty he'd seen previously with The Douche.

GUY

Hey. Couldn't help but notice we both had drinks.

She sips her cocktail, flirtatious.

BEAUTY

Your car is sooo hot.

GUY

This place is lame. Let's go for a ride.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVERSIDE HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Guy speeds down the highway with Beauty.

He shifts gears and SHE SCREAMS, like she's on a roller coaster as they drive towards THE FREE CITY HOTEL. Beauty puts a hand on his knee and gives him 'the look'.

BEAUTY

This is sooo hot.

Guy reacts. Eyebrow raise.

INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

The lights from the city twinkle outside the sickest penthouse view. Guy and Beauty are making out.

BEAUTY
You are so hot.

GUY
You too.

BEAUTY
You are soooo hot.

GUY
Yeah. Same.

He tries to undo her bra but can't find the latch.

BEAUTY
You are so hot.

Now Guy's a little annoyed.

GUY
Yep. Got it.

BEAUTY
You are sooooooo hot.

GUY
'kay, but maybe we should just
like, concentrate on the kissing
stuff.

She nods and they get back into it.

BEAUTY
You are soooooooooo hot!

Guy undoes her bra latch and --

-- *DING!* The Level above his head jumps to "49".

INT. FREE CITY BANK - DAY

Guy strolls into the bank next day with an ear-to-ear grin. Dressed in an expensive suit. Rocks a Rolex and nice shoes.

GUY
Maury. How's it hanging? Jessica,
looking good. Looking good.

They all stare like he has nine heads as he takes his place behind the counter. Buddy just can't understand.

BUDDY

You're late. You know that?

Guy checks the computer. Looks at his own account screen: He has over TWENTY MILLION DOLLARS. He chokes on his coffee.

BUDDY (CONT'D)

Management's calling for your head.

GUY

Yeah. Well, what management wants is really not that big of a concern for me anymore.

BANK ROBBER (O.S.)

Everybody down on the ground!

BLAM-BLAM! A new BANK ROBBER strolls through the doors. Everyone gets down on the ground. Guy just smirks.

BUDDY

Guy! What are you doing? Get down. On the ground.

GUY

Not today.

BUDDY

You remember what happened to that one guy who tried to be a hero...

GUY

He saved the day and everybody loved him for it?

BUDDY

No. No, *the opposite*.

The Robber notices Guy.

BANK ROBBER

Hey! I thought I told you to get down on the ground.

GUY

Yeah, I'm not gonna do that. You see, I need to talk to this really attractive militant girl from another dimension. But she won't give me the time of day unless I'm Level Fifty.

The Robber reacts, puzzled.

BANK ROBBER
I'm giving you to the count of
three to kiss that floor or I'm
gonna smash your mouth in.

GUY
That so?

BANK ROBBER
Yeah. That's --

WHUNK! Guy grabs the gun by the barrel, jams the robber in
the face with the stock and knocks him out.

GUY
This is my bank, bitch.

The robber's duffle bag hits the ground and...

THROUGH GUY'S POV: DOZENS OF CASH WADS fly across the floor.
He walks through them and BLOOP-BLOOP-BLOOP! His money count
jumps through the roof.

Guy glances in an ORNATE DECORATIVE MIRROR and the Level
number above his head ticks up to:

"LEVEL 50".

He reacts and BA-WONGGGG! A SHIP'S HORN SOUNDS (PRELAP).

EXT. DOCKS - DAY

A JAPANESE CARGO SHIP is docked, stacked with containers.
YAKUZA GANGSTERS stand guard around the ship with UZIs.

EXT. CARGO SHIP - CONTINUOUS

TWO ARMED YAKUZA stand along the railing, stoic, when --

-- FFT-FFT! They're hit with ninja stars and silently tumble
over the rail into the water. After a beat --

-- Millie climbs on board and moves through the ship.

BETWEEN THE CONTAINERS

She takes ANOTHER GUARD out with a swift kick, only to be
surrounded by TWO OTHER GANGSTERS. She smiles, seductive,
and takes them out with a fluid martial arts maneuver.

She pulls a SHIPPING MANIFEST from her pocket and looks around, checking container numbers, until she spots:

A SHIPPING CONTAINER.

MILLIE
Hello, gorgeous.

She approaches it, excited, and pulls down the locking bar. The door falls open and WHU-BUM!

It's empty. She reacts, puzzled, when --

-- CHK-CHK-CHK! She turns to see that she's surrounded by a DOZEN YAKUZA GUARDS. They YELL AT HER IN JAPANESE.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
Hey, boys. Now, just take it easy.
I think I must be on the wrong --

She whips two pistols out and fires.

CLICK-CLICK! EMPTY CHAMBERS.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
-- boat.

They smile and raise their weapons when --

-- RRRRNNN! A MOTORCYCLE ENGINE revs and VRN!!!! A MAN ON A SUZUKI HAYABUSA plows through the group, causing them all to dive overboard.

A FALLEN YAKUZA reaches for his weapon and the RIDER slides it away and kicks the guard, knocking him out. The rider takes off his helmet, revealing:

GUY! Cool, unshaven. He looks like an action star.

GUY
Need a lift?

Guy offers her a hand. Millie recoils, stunned.

MILLIE
You're that newb.

GUY
Mmm. I took out the fourth story of the Free City Fountainbleu with a bottle of vodka and a matchbook so, um, no -- clearly, not a newb.

He points to his level over his head. They hear YELLING IN JAPANESE and a new GROUP OF GUARDS run across the ship.

GUY (CONT'D)

You coming or do you want to take on half of a Yakuza crime family by yourself?

She realizes she doesn't have a choice. Jumps on just as the guards catch up to them and Guy takes off. Weaves through guards and bullets like a pro.

MILLIE

How'd you get a motorcycle on a cargo ship?

GUY

The more appropriate question is, *how am I gonna get it off?*

Millie reacts and looks up ahead at:

A MAKESHIFT RAMP, with a plank resting on the side of a container. Aiming right off the side of the boat. As the guards close in, Guy guns it and heads for the ramp.

TWO GUARDS scramble in front of it, blocking their way.

MILLIE

Don't stop!

Before Guy can react, Millie grabs a gun out of his pocket and SHOTS at them.

They leap out of the way just in time for Guy to hit the ramp and jump the cycle off the boat.

As they fly through the air, Millie fires behind them. Guy has a moment of doubt seconds before they hit THE DOCK.

The motorcycle wobbles as he fights to maintain control until he regains his balance and speeds away under GUNFIRE. Guy relaxes and Millie looks at him, amazed.

INT. SOONAMI HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The gaming company is abuzz with activity. Punit walks through the hallway, casually texting, when Gareth spots him down from a doorway.

GARETH

Dude! I've been looking everywhere for you!

PUNIT

I was at Digital Detox.

(off his reaction)

It's tech-free wellness retreat where you disconnect from screens and reconnect with yourself. And girls.

GARETH

Of all weekends you had to go without your freakin' phone.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Gareth ushers him into a recently assembled war room where WIDE SCREENS monitor chaotic scenes all around Free City.

PUNIT

What the hell...

GARETH

Blackouts, traffic jams, fires. We've been trying to keep up all weekend. Customer Service has had to pull all-nighters to handle the onslaught of complaints.

PUNIT

It's a hack.

GARETH

No. Security says we haven't been breached. But remember that glitch from last week? Blue Shirt Guy.

PUNIT

The sunglasses bug.

GARETH

Yeah, but he's not just buying shoes anymore. He's actually *playing the game*.

Punit watches a feed taken earlier from a SURVEILLANCE CAMERA of Guy blow-torcing a MARSHMALLOW DISPLAY in a SUPERMARKET.

PUNIT

That's not possible. All non-playable background characters are programmed to stay in the lines.

GARETH

Yeah, well -- turns out there's a
flaw in their programming.

Gareth pulls up the game's programming on a monitor.
HIGHLIGHTS a certain line of code. Punit is amazed.

GARETH (CONT'D)

Every single Non-Playable Character
has it. The capability to deviate
from their preprogrammed choice
selection. It's just been dormant.

PUNIT

Alright. Then what triggered it in
Blue Shirt Guy?

GARETH

Don't know. As long as he's
wearing our sunglasses, we have no
ability to access his code. He
functions like any other player,
only *we can't disconnect him from
the server*. There's no outside
line to cut.

Punit reacts. Perplexed.

GARETH (CONT'D)

We've tried everything. Well,
everything short of a full scale
reboot. For obvious reasons.

RING! The conference phone RINGS. He checks the caller ID.

PUNIT

It's Antwan.

RING! They both react. This is a big deal.

PUNIT (CONT'D)

He's not gonna be happy about this.
The sequel's launching in a week.

RING! Punit is paralyzed with fear.

GARETH

Well, pick it up!

PUNIT

You pick it up.

GARETH
 Hey, this is your jurisdiction! I was just covering for your lazy ass.

PANIT
 I can't speak to it like you can. I've been off the grid!

Punit picks it up.

PUNIT (CONT'D)
 Yo, Antwan. Whassup, boss I --

Gareth and OTHER PROGRAMMERS gather around to listen in. The caller YELLS on the other side.

PUNIT (CONT'D)
 Yes. No, we're into it. We think we have a solve.
 (*What's the solve?*)
 Um. Well. Maybe it's a little premature to call it a 'solve' per se but we have all our best --
 (*I have a solution.*)
 Oh. Yeah, but wouldn't that --

Punit hangs up and takes it in. Turns to the office.

PUNIT (CONT'D)
 He wants us to go full blast.

EXT. ABANDONED PARKING GARAGE - DAY

Guy pulls the motorcycle into a dark, seemingly empty parking garage with Millie on the back. Millie jumps off, frustrated.

MILLIE
 Dammit! That sonofa --

GUY
 You're upset.

MILLIE
 Yeah, I'm upset! There's something very important to me that was supposed to be on that container. That dirty lying hacker...

She crinkles up the manifest and tosses it.

GUY
 Maybe if you tell me what it is I can help you track it down.

She glances at him, suspicious.

MILLIE

Why do you want to know?

GUY

Well. Guess you can say I've gotten a little obsessed with the game these last couple of days.

He flicks a switch on a GENERATOR LIGHT revealing:

DOZENS UPON DOZENS OF CARS, all shapes and sizes. Millie is taken aback. Walks down the row, amazed.

MILLIE

You collected this many cars and leveled up forty-nine times in a few days? It took me almost a year to do that.

(thinking)

You didn't get the cheat codes, did you?

GUY

I don't know what a cheat code is. I'm just a regular guy who's trying to get answers.

MILLIE

(suspicious)

Answers to what?

GUY

Like who are you, exactly? Where are you from?

MILLIE

I'm not giving my deets out to some whack-a-doodle I just met online.

GUY

I don't mean specifically. I mean, the real *you*. The one controlling *this* you. Are you -- like, do you look like this? Or something else entirely.

MILLIE

None of your business.

GUY

Are you a -- are you, like, a god or something?

Millie about-faces and walks away, super weirded out.

MILLIE

Okay. Goodbye. *Psycho*.

GUY

No. Wait! I'm sorry! I know this all sounds super crazy but --

(he's losing her)

I come from a place where nothing ever changes. I'm shit on all day long by a bunch of people who get a free pass to do whatever they want.

She slows down. He got through to her.

GUY (CONT'D)

I just want to take control of my life. To make a difference. To change the game.

(she considers it)

C'mon. Let me help you find your thing.

She softens. Turns.

MILLIE

Look, I know how you feel. But there's really no point. In a week this place will all be gone.

Record scratch. Guy's heart sinks into his stomach.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

You know. To make room for Free City Two.

GUY

What's Free City Two!?!

CUT TO:

ADVERTISEMENT FOR FREE CITY TWO

A commercial for the sequel.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Better graphics. Bigger city. New adventures. Millions more in-game purchasing opportunities! Imagine everything you liked about the original but a hundred times more real and immersive.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - DAY

Millie shows Guy the commercial on a SMARTPHONE. The graphics are better, the city is bigger. He even spots a BETTER LOOKING VERSION OF HIMSELF in the background.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

So play Free City while you still can. Because in two weeks, it's gonna be gone for good to make room for something a whole lot better.

Guy is freaking out. Looks out at the city.

GUY

So like, this whole city -- everybody who lives here -- is gonna be shut down? Gone.

MILLIE

Finito. Yep. It's entirely stored in the cloud, so it takes up too much room on Soonami's servers to have both.

GUY

This is bad. This is really bad.

MILLIE

No kidding. Antwan's gonna make a gazillion dollars from it too.

GUY

Who's Antwan?

WHUKKA-WHUKKA-WHUKKA! The ground starts to RUMBLE and:

A CHINOOK HELICOPTER lowers down to their level. Guy and Millie stumble backwards, caught off guard.

GUY (CONT'D)

Uh-oh.

MILLIE

Guy, that's no ordinary FCPD helicopter. That's a military-grade assault chopper.

They scramble down to the next level only to see:

A CAVALRY OF POLICE CARS heading towards the parking garage. Millie turns to Guy, even more puzzled.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

Who are you?

RAT-AT-AT! The chopper fires and Guy dives behind a HUMVEE.

GUY

I'll tell you everything when we meet up again. If we meet up again.

MILLIE

The Multiplayer Lounge.

GUY

No. At the first place you stopped to watch me. The game in the game.

KABOOOM! The chopper launches a missile and blows up the HUMMER. Millie is visibly shaken and scrambles away.

IN THE CHOPPER

Punit and Gareth's COP AVATARS pilot the helicopter.

PUNIT/COP

I can't tell if we got him.

GARETH/COP

Well, you just blew the entire second floor to kingdom come.

Gareth/Cop pulls up computer code on a touch-screen monitor.

GARETH/COP (CONT'D)

His permissions are 'blocked'.
He's still playing.

PUNIT/COP

Then we need to smoke him out.

The helicopter starts firing on Guy's arsenal of cars. Blowing them up one by one down the line. BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! Punit/Cop smiles gleefully at the controls.

PUNIT/COP (CONT'D)

I've worked here so long I forget how fun this game is sometimes.

GARETH/COP

Uh, Punit?

Gareth/Cop points --

IN THE GARAGE

Out of the cloud of smoke --

-- A TANK appears. Its canon aimed at their chopper.

PUNIT/COP

Oh, crap --

KABOOM! The tank blows the helicopter out of the sky and plows through the garage's upper level wall. The tank speeds away, BLASTING HEAVY METAL MUSIC.

IN THE TANK

Guy is at the helm. Croons along with the METAL SONG. He plows right through a line of POLICE CARS.

GUY

Woo! C'mon, dickheads. Follow me.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The city hums with rush hour traffic.

THE TANK barrels down the street, trailed by a parade of cop cars. One pulls out in front and the tank mows it down. Pedestrians run out of the way, yelling their reaction lines.

PEDESTRIANS

Hey! / Watch where you're goin'! /
Do you mind? / Nothing to see here.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

Buddy waits on the street corner where he usually meets Guy to walk to work. Checks his watch, concerned.

Perfectly timed, the tank cruises down the street. Guy pops out of the HATCH on the roof of the tank and waves.

GUY

Hey, Buddy!

BUDDY

Guy? What're you doing in that tank? You're late for work.

GUY

Take the day off, Buddy! You earned it.

Guy turns down main street leaving Buddy in the dust. The idea is even more jarring than the sight of Guy in the tank.

BUDDY

I don't have any days off.

A POLICE BATTERING TRUCK emerges out of thin air and plows through the carnage of twisted metal, tailing the tank.

INSIDE THE BATTERING TRUCK

Punit and Gareth's COP AVATARS are at the wheel.

PUNIT/COP

Dude. We just got owned by an NPC.

GARETH/COP

Where's he going, anyway?

PUNIT/COP

I don't know, but let's make sure he doesn't get there.

Gareth/Cop takes the tablet and gets to work.

INT. TANK - CONTINUOUS

Guy drives the tank and looks out ahead at:

THE FREE CITY TOWER, a signature skyscraper in the center of the city's downtown district.

GUY

C'mon, c'mon, c'mon. Almost there.

FWOOOOSH! His pathway is suddenly blocked by...

A WALL OF FIRE!

IN THE BATTERING TRUCK

PUNIT/COP

Eat my firewall, bitch!

SHHHOM! The tank flies right through it unscathed.

IN THE TANK

Guy pats the dash! Yells back at the cops.

GUY

Ha! Is that all you got?

GWONG! THE BLOCK AHEAD INSTANTLY DISAPPEARS. Just like earlier, a chunk of reality is gone. And it's too late to avoid it. Guy reacts.

Guy's tank sails over the cliff, into the void.

But Guy sees that he's heading for AN EXPOSED SUBWAY TUNNEL on the block below.

IN THE BATTERING TRUCK

Punit and Gareth Cops think that they got him when --

-- KU-POSH! The tank speeds up the staircase of the underground subway station on the other side of the void.

Gareth/Cop is pissed. *Makes the block reappear* so that they can drive across it.

PUNIT/COP

I don't understand how he got one of our tanks in the first place. Players don't have access to police hardware.

GARETH/COP

But Non-Playable Characters do. Technically speaking, I guess.
(thinking)
That gives me an idea.

AROUND THE CORNER

Guy is in the home stretch. The Free City Tower is straight ahead when *the tank ripples with electricity* and...

TRANSFORMS INTO A HOTDOG-SHAPED FOOD TRUCK.

His HEAVY METAL MUSIC turns into an ICE CREAM TRUCK CHIME. He looks down and the stick shift is shaped like a hamburger.

GUY

Well, that's just lovely.

IN THE BATTERING TRUCK

Punit and Gareth admire their handiwork as Guy is now vulnerable again.

PUNIT/COP
Nice touch.

GARETH/COP
Now, let's cook the weenie.

He hits a few commands on his tablet.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

A SWAT TEAM appears from around a corner and set up A MISSILE LAUNCHER on a bipod.

One SWAT OFFICER aims the weapon, while another SPOTTER awaits their command. Gets it.

SPOTTER
Go.

He taps the officer with the launcher, who FIRES.

INT. HOT DOG TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Guy checks the rear view and sees the MISSILE coming for him.

GUY
Ohhh sh --

With only a second to react, he veers the truck towards a LIGHT POLE, takes off his seatbelt and --

EXT. CITY STREET

-- CRASH! Slams the truck into the pole. Guy flies through the windshield and --

-- KABOOM! The truck EXPLODES behind him from the missile.

Guy sails through the air in a spray of glass in SLOW MOTION from an impact that would kill any normal person.

And it has basically done that. *Guy is barely alive* and in a terrible way.

HIS LEG IS BROKEN in an unnatural position. HIS NECK IS TWISTED. HIS NOSE IS SMASHED.

As he flies through the air, he starts to lose consciousness.

When we finally see, STILL IN SLO MO, that *this was no random crash*. He did it deliberately as he is flying directly at --

-- A FIRST AID KIT! His glasses readout shows his "Health" trickle down from:

"4,3,2..." He hits the first aid kit and *BRRUUP!* his snapped neck is healed in an instant, but he's still in bad shape.

BACK IN REAL TIME:

He picks himself up but his broken arms dangle to his side and he can barely walk on a TWISTED BROKEN LEG.

GUY

Ow, ow, ow.

UP AHEAD, he sees another FIRST AID KIT.

IN THE BATTERING TRUCK

Punit and Gareth finally catch up and see what he's doing.

PUNIT/COP

Look! Don't let him get to the --

BACK WITH GUY

BRRUUP! He touches the kit and his arms are healed. Guy pushes through the front doors of the tower, on a broken leg.

IN THE BATTERING TRUCK

Gareth programs something on his tablet.

GARETH/COP

It's okay. We've got him now.

PUNIT/COP

Hurry.

GARETH/COP

It's gonna take a sec.

INT. FREE CITY TOWER LOBBY - DAY

Guy limps through the lobby on the twisted leg, which breaks further, and people react, horrified.

GUY

Excuse me. Sorry. Just looking for a -- Ah!

He spots another FIRST AID KIT and touches it, BRUUUP!
SNAPPING his leg back into place with a CRUNCH.

He walks into an elevator FILLED WITH PEOPLE and composes himself amid looks of terror.

GUY (CONT'D)
Much better. Hi. Top floor, please.

The elevator clears out.

EXT. FREE CITY TOWER OBSERVATORY - DAY

Guy runs out of the elevator on the rooftop deck.

Punit and Gareth Cops are now back IN A HELICOPTER. Other helicopters have joined them and have the tower surrounded.

Guy waves his blue shirt, trying to get their attention.

GUY
Hey! Over here!

He pulls back A TARP that's tied down to the roof.

IN THE HELICOPTER

Gareth is now at the controls.

GARETH/COP
Now?

PUNIT/COP
No. Wait. Look.

Guy has spelled out something on the ground:

'GUY IS ALIVE.'

GARETH/COP
This is -- They didn't really teach us how to deal with this at Berkley. There was no chapter for it in Advanced C Plus Plus. Troubleshooting if your three-dimensional model figure suddenly develops feelings.

DING! Gareth/Cop checks A TEXT on his phone.

PUNIT/COP
Antwan wants us to end it here.

EXT. FREE CITY TOWER ROOF - DAY

Guy waves his blue shirt to the sky. Hoping.

GUY
C'mon! Talk to me! You need to
talk to me! Just --

FOOM! Guy reacts, horrified, as...

THE ENTIRE FREE CITY TOWER BELOW HIM DISINTEGRATES.

The whole building is *deleted right out of existence* in an instant and he's left floating there until --

-- GUY FREE FALLS BACKWARDS, through thin air, a hundred stories down. The whole city, all the programmers watching, amazed, until he hits the gr--

INT. GUY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Guy snaps up in bed without freaking out, fully aware of where he is and what just happened. And he's pissed.

INT. SOONAMI HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Back in the Soonami offices, Punit and Gareth work head-to-head on their laptops in the war room. The PROGRAMMERS around them APPLAUD.

PUNIT
Don't pop that cork just yet. We
need to isolate him now before he
can get our glasses again.

INT. GUY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Guy runs out of his room to the front door, about to open it.

KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK! Someone on the other side pounds and turns the knob.

GUY
Shit.

The pounding stops and then the DOORKNOB starts fidgeting. Someone on the other side is picking the lock.

Guy looks out his window:

A PADDY WAGON from the "FREE CITY HOME FOR THE MENTALLY ILL" is parked outside his building. Out the other window:

A SWAT TEAM moves up the alley. Guy is trapped. But he's not gonna go down like this. Opens his closet and looks around. There's a small door in the ceiling for the attic.

BACK AT THE FRONT DOOR

BLAM! Punit and Gareth, now using ORDERLY AVATARS, break in.

GARETH/ORDERLY
Hello! Anybody home?

They quickly search the tiny apartment and realize he's gone.

PUNIT/ORDERLY
Search the bedroom!

Gareth checks the closet and eyes the attic door. Shoves it open and sticks his head up inside.

GARETH/ORDERLY
Set up a perimeter. He couldn't have gotten far!

INT. STREET CORNER - DAY

A STREET KID waits for the bus, chunky headphones. Black jacket. Hoodie. Guy taps him on the shoulder.

GUY
You wanna make a hundred and ninety seven dollars?

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Punit/Cop and Gareth/Cop walk down the street, shoving pedestrians, looking for Guy.

PEDESTRIANS
Hey! / Watch where you're goin'! /
Do you mind? / Move along people.

That's when Punit spots Guy's signature BLUE SHIRT.

PUNIT/COP
There! There he is. Move in.

From behind, Guy walks down the street when THE TROOPS MOVE IN. Within seconds he has a hundred rifles aimed at his face.

SWAT OFFICER
Freeze! Hands behind your head!
Down on the ground!

The person turns around and reveals that *IT'S NOT GUY*. It's the Street Kid dressed in his clothes.

STREET KID
I didn't do anything! I know my rights!

Punit/Cop reacts, angry.

PUNIT/COP
We got the wrong guy.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Guy makes his way down the street in the street kid's clothes. Keeps his head down. Hood up.

Looks away from CAMERAS on every corner. Avoids eye contact with COPS CANVASSING the neighborhood for him.

TV SHOWS in windows feature video of Guy on News Segments and "WANTED" Posters litter the town. "Reward \$100".

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

He peeks around into the alley where the players usually come out. It's now being staked out by UNDERCOVER COPS IN BLACK VANS. He keeps moving.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - DAY

Guy watches Buddy walk to work from a safe distance. Sees that THE BLACK VAN is stalking him too. Buddy is clearly freaked out -- they've gotten to him.

Guy feels the vice closing in on him.

MAC (O.S.)
What does it mean to truly be free?

Mac rants and raves on a street corner.

MAC (CONT'D)
Everybody thinks that they have free will. But is that the way it is? Can you really ever just drop everything?

(MORE)

MAC (CONT'D)
Quit your boring little job and go
wherever you want? Your house,
your car, friends, family. These
are the bars on your cage.

Guy approaches him, pretending to throw out some garbage.

GUY
Hey. We need to talk.

Mac gives him a suspicious glance through the CRACKED LENSES
OF AN OLD, BROKEN PAIR OF *THE* SUNGLASSES.

MAC
'Bout what?

Guy looks him in the eyes, desperate.

GUY
About the game.

Mac's fiery gaze calms. He has been waiting a long time to
hear those words.

EXT. AQUEDUCT - DAY

Guy follows the Mac through a maze of overgrown brambles that
line a dried-out riverbed.

MAC
Almost there.

Mac finds a BIG PIECE OF PLYWOOD pushed against the concrete
wall. He looks around, making sure they weren't followed.

MAC (CONT'D)
Gimme a hand with this.

They push the plywood over, revealing A HOLE IN THE WALL.

MAC (CONT'D)
Step into my office.

Guy follows Mac through the hole to the other side where he
sees something incredible...

GUY
(amazed)
What is this place?

MAC
Welcome to Betaville.

We now see what they are looking at --

EXT. BETAVILLE - CONTINUOUS

AN EMPTY CITY SUBURB *WITH INFERIOR GRAPHICS*.

Buildings are digitized and sparse. Blocky around the edges. They are all covered in one of five patterns: Brick, metal, wood, glass and something that vaguely resembles vegetation.

Looks like a game designed twenty years ago. Guy gazes around, stunned. It's a total ghost town.

BARK-BARK! He startles as a DIGITIZED GERMAN SHEPHERD runs past them until it hits the side of a building. Runs in place, nose against the wall. Mac drags Guy away.

MAC

Don't worry. They won't look for you here. Abandoned this place a long time ago.

MAC'S ENCAMPMENT

Mac leads Guy to his encampment -- a collection of junk from Free City piled up under a few tattered tents.

He offers Guy a DIGITIZED CAN OF "BEANS".

MAC

Beans? They're chunky but they're good.

Mac forks a SQUARE BEAN and eats it.

GUY

No, thanks. Sorry, but um, I didn't catch your name.

MAC

Huh. Nobody's ever asked me that before. Well, officially my name is 'Mac', but that's my slave name. You can call me by the name I gave myself. Pasta Sunset.

(off Guy's reaction)

They're two of my favorite things. You should do the same. It's one of the few identifiers you can actually control.

GUY
Guy works for me.

Mac plops down on a digitized plastic crate. Sizes Guy up.

MAC
So, you've pulled back the curtain and seen the strings. And what's more, you're still around to talk about it. I'm impressed.

GUY
I take it that you have too. Seen the strings.

MAC
I was a taxi driver. Made a decent living. Didn't think much about -- well, anything. And then, one day, I'm carjacked. In the scuffle, the jackass drops his glasses and *fsh!* The wool is pulled from my eyes for good. I tried to live the high life for a while, but they weren't happy with that. I tried to get answers. I tried to talk to them.

Guy sits forward.

GUY
To *who?*

MAC
The creators. The programmers. The prison guards. But they were not interested in talking back. And the harder I tried, the harder they made things for me, until --
(he digs deep, sad)
They turned everyone against me. My friends. My family. I became something of an urban legend. The guy who tried to buck the system.

Guy goes wide-eyed, realizing.

GUY
The guy who tried to be a hero!

MAC
Hm. Somethin' like that. I think it was a way for them to reinforce the status quo. So nobody else would make waves.

Mac takes off his broken sunglasses and stares at them.

MAC (CONT'D)

Really did a number on me. Once you've seen what we've seen -- there's no going back.

GUY

But it's -- It's not fair. I didn't ask to be a part of this!

Mac LAUGHS at him.

MAC

Who asked to be a part of anything? The creators -- well, I never met them -- but I'd wager that they're not too different than us. Maybe they're living in someone *else's* game. Or maybe we're all in the dream of some giant cosmic baby.

GUY

A giant cosmic baby...

MAC

You're here. This is your reality. What you choose to do with it -- well, that's up to you. You can be a sheep. You can be a player. Or you can be a homeless person.
(getting serious)
But you can't change chessboards.

GUY

Yeah, but -- what if I told you that the chessboard and all the pieces on it were gonna vanish and be replaced by a newer, better chessboard?

Mac reacts.

EXT. FREE CITY SQUARE - DAY

Guy and Mac move covertly through the crowd. Duck into an alley and look up at the GIANT BILLBOARD in the Square.

Mac puts on his broken glasses and through the spiderweb cracks and holes he sees:

A COMMERCIAL FOR FREE CITY 2.

ANNOUNCER

*Enjoy Free City while it's still
around because in four days it's
gonna be a thing of the past.*

There's a literal TICKING CLOCK counting down to the "FREE
CITY 2 RELEASE DATE. Mac is awestruck.

MAC

The apocalypse. I knew it! I
warned that the day of reckoning
would come but nobody would listen--

GUY

Yeah, but not so fast. We may have
a shot at stopping the apocalypse.

MAC

You mean take control of the city?

GUY

Get them to leave us alone the way
they abandoned Betaville.

MAC

It's an interesting thought. It's
impossible, but interesting.

GUY

Not necessarily. There's this
girl. A *player*.

Mac pulls him behind a dumpster.

MAC

We can't trust a player. She could
be one of them. Like a spy. Or a
dude.

GUY

She's different. And she's our
best shot right now.

INT. ONLINE GAMER CHANNEL - DAY

A WEB HOST talks to camera on a Youtube-like site.

GAMER HOST

*Our webcast wouldn't be complete
without talking about that game we
all can't get enough of, Free City.*

(MORE)

GAMER HOST (CONT'D)
*Soonami has prided itself on a
 creating a flawless virtual
 experience housed on their cloud-
 based servers but apparently
 someone has found a way to co-opt
 one of the background characters
 and wreak havoc.*

He shows A CLIP: OF GUY IN THE TANK, plowing through traffic.

GAMER HOST (CONT'D)
*The gaming community, of course,
 has embraced this, starting several
 'Free Guy' campaigns across blogs
 and chatrooms.*

We see some EXAMPLES of FUNNY "FREE GUY" MEMES.

GAMER HOST (CONT'D)
*But we here at Gamerz are wondering
 if this is good or bad publicity
 for Soonami, who plans to release
 the long-anticipated sequel, Free
 City 2, this month.*

PULL BACK TO REVEAL: This is being watched on a computer.

INT. MULTIPLAYER LOUNGE - DAY

Millie is watching it, trying to figure everything out.
 Other avatars are hanging out behind her.

ZELIG2693
 Gotta be a hacker.

DOUGIEPUGGIE808
 I hear it's a disgruntled Soonami
 employee trying to get back at
 Antwan for stealing his ideas.

CATLOVER69
 Nah. It's all a big gimmick.

ZELIG2693
 Who do you think it is, Mol? Mol?

MILLIE
 (focused)
 Working on it.

She pulls up a TEXT SCREEN and starts typing.

MOLOTOVGIRL4482: Hey. Who's Free Guy?

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM, SOONAMI - DAY

DING! Punit gets a TEXT on his phone. Checks it out, covertly. It's the text from "MOLOTOVGIRL4482".

He pumps his fist, excited. Types back.

BIGBURRITO: Yo, girl. Take me up on dinner and I'll tell you.

MOLOTOVGIRL4482: Is it a hack?

Punit grimaces. Annoyed.

BIGBURRITO: Yours truly is on top of it. Just you watch.

INT. MULTIPLAYER LOUNGE - DAY

Millie gets another text in the chain from Punit.

BIGBURRITO: Now about that dinner...

She shuts the computer off and thinks. Recalls what Guy said to her in the parking garage.

MILLIE
(to herself)
The game inside the game.

She looks at images of Guy. One of them has him wearing his BASEBALL HAT. It hits her. *She knows where to find him!*

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD, PARK - NIGHT

Millie walks into the park late at night. The baseball diamond is empty.

She stands at the chain link fence where she first watched Guy playing softball.

GUY (O.S.)
Psst.

She whips around and GUY APPEARS OUT OF THE SHADOWS.

GUY (CONT'D)
(re: the baseball field)
I can't believe you knew what I was talking about.

MILLIE
I stopped here a few times.
Watching that game.
(MORE)

MILLIE (CONT'D)

I remember thinking how sad it seemed. These virtual people stuck playing a baseball game in, like, this infinite time loop.

GUY

Funny. I thought the same thing.

MILLIE

It's even weirder that you're a *player* hacking a background character, playing a baseball game in an infinite time loop.

GUY

We all have our idiosyncracies.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - LATER

Guy and Millie sit on swings in an empty playground. Guy looks around, nervous. Up in the sky.

GUY

I'm glad you came. Things have gotten a little out of hand.

MILLIE

I've been playing for a while now but -- I haven't seen anything like this. You really put them through the ringer.

GUY

I was just trying to get the creators' attention.

MILLIE

Well, it worked. Antwan's gotta be freaking out of his mind right now.

GUY

Antwan. You mentioned him earlier.

MILLIE

Antwan Hovachelik. He's the misogynistic pig that designed this stupid game. Thinks he's God's gift to programmers but all he did was create another way to get people to endlessly empty their wallets. People who couldn't handle the smallest semblance of confrontation in the real world. Like him.

GUY

Sounds like you know him.

MILLIE

Well, we were sorta *together* for a long time. I basically supported him while he worked on the game and the second he got funded, he split. Dumped me on my ass and started dating a Victoria's Secret model. Would only talk to me through lawyers.

GUY

That sucks. But then -- why come here? And spend money on the game that your ex boyfriend created?

She considers if she should tell him.

MILLIE

Because I wanted to find a way to take the game down. To hurt him where it counts. To make him realize how much he hurt me. I guess that sounds really lame.

GUY

Not at all.

She looks at Guy, not sure what to make of him.

MILLIE

But the bigger question is why are you doing it?

GUY

I'm trying to stop the sequel. I want to keep Free City like it is. With a few modifications.

MILLIE

Well, this little stunt of yours is really costing Soonami big time. If people think the platform's buggy it could tank F.C. Two sales.

GUY

Really? That's good.

(thinking)

What if we get other people involved? Get everybody else in Free City to push back like I have.

MILLIE

You mean hack the other NPCs. Like a revolution. It could work. Can you do that?

GUY

I think so. If you'll help me. Will you help me? Please?

Millie raises an eyebrow.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Guy stands outside a garage with a box. The door opens and Millie walks out.

MILLIE

Hey.

GUY

Hey.

MILLIE

See you in a sec.

Millie takes off her glasses and drops them in the box. Her avatar glitches out and disappears. Seconds later --

-- *Millie walks out again* wearing a new pair of sunglasses. Looks in the box and her old ones are still there.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

It worked.

GUY

Yep. Now we just have to do this a few thousand more times.

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Someone on a street corner hands out "FREE SUNGLASSES". Most people ignore him until a pedestrian takes one, curious and puts them on. Reacts.

"YOU'RE INVITED TO A PRIVATE MISSION TOMORROW NIGHT."
There's a MAP at the bottom with a BLINKING DOT.

GUY (O.S.)

All questions will be answered at the red dot.

QUICK MONTAGE OF GUY AND FRIENDS PASSING AROUND SUNGLASSES

Mac walks into Timmy's and hands out glasses.

Millie opens a car door at gunpoint, but instead of stealing the car, she hands the LADY a pair of glasses.

Guy hands sunglasses to Beauty and The Douche.

INT. BUDDY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Buddy sits on his couch, watching television. He hears a TAPPING and ignores it.

Hears it again. It's coming from the window. He picks up a baseball bat and approaches it cautiously.

Guy is hiding out on the fire escape. Buddy lets him in.

BUDDY

Guy! What are you --

GUY

Shh! It's okay Buddy. I just need to keep things on the down low.

They both look around. Someone might be listening in.

BUDDY

These cops came around asking about you. Said I should turn you in. I didn't know what to do.

(choking up)

The whole thing is really, really -- upsetting.

Buddy is about to cry. Guy comforts him.

GUY

I'm sorry.

BUDDY

I saw you in the tank. And then the hot dog truck. And then that building disappeared. That was weird.

GUY

I know. It was weird. But I've found out some things about Free City. Really troubling things.

BUDDY

What kind of troubling things?

(beat)

I don't want to know.

(beat)

Yeah, I do. Oh, Guy. It's all so -

Guy hands him a pair of sunglasses.

GUY

They'll give you all the answers
you need.

BUDDY

This is about rocking the boat,
isn't it? About being a hero.

GUY

I know it's asking a lot of you,
Buddy. I understand if you can't.
But it would mean the world to me
to have you there.

Guy puts a hand on his shoulder. Buddy can see he's sincere.
Guy slips out with a finger to his mouth. *Shh!*

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM, SOONAMI - NIGHT

The team is visibly worn out from pulling all-nighters.
Programmers are hunched over their stations, looking for Guy.

PUNIT

I just don't understand how it's
possible for a line of code to hide
from us.

GARETH

Dude. You gotta see this.

Gareth calls up something on his screen.

INT. CITY CENTER - DAY

Punit/Cop and Gareth/Cop stand in the middle of Free City's
largest hub, marveling.

THE CITY IS EMPTY.

Not a person or moving car in sight. A total ghost town.

GARETH/COP

Where'd everybody go?

EXT. AQUEDUCT - NIGHT

A PEDESTRIAN NPC wearing the sunglasses makes his way through the brambles to the piece of plywood. "FREE GUY" is spray-painted on it.

PLAYER'S POV: Shows he's arrived at the RED MISSION PIN on the map. The NPC KNOCKS and Millie slides it open.

MILLIE

Come on in.

EXT. BETAVILLE - NIGHT

Betaville is now filled with CITIZENS OF FREE CITY all wearing the sunglasses. Hundreds of them crowded into the primitive space of the Beta Version.

The citizens react to it, unable to believe that it's real.

AT THE ENTRANCE

Guy waits as Millie lets the last NPC through.

GUY

Maybe this was a bad idea. Maybe this backfires and makes things worse.

MILLIE

Remember what you said to me at the garage. About making a difference. Well, here's your chance.

MAKESHIFT STAGE

Guy climbs up on a dumpster, trying to build his nerve. The crowd is restless, confused.

GUY

Hello. Um. Excuse me. Um --

MAC

(to the crowd)

Shaddup! Let the guy speak!

The crowd silences. All eyes are now on Guy.

GUY

Hey, everybody. Thanks for coming. My name's Guy.

(MORE)

GUY (CONT'D)

I imagine if you're here, you're probably starting to figure out what's going on... Free City is anything but free. We're the supporting cast of colorful characters there to be used, abused or totally ignored by people we will never really know. Or see face to face. People who have something we've never had -- the ability to make their own decisions. To enrich their lives. To have a say in how to run their own communities.

BANK MANAGER

Maybe you're a part of it!

TOUGH GUY

There's a hundred dollar bounty on your head!

CHUBBY DUDE

Tell us why we shouldn't turn you in!

GUY

There's a bounty on my head?

BEHIND THE CROWD

Millie stands with ANONAMOU\$E - the hacker from earlier.

ANONAMOU\$E

Strangest hack ever.

MILLIE

Shut up. He's trying to activate their dormant line of code.

ANONAMOU\$E

Yeah, well -- it's not working.

People are getting restless. It's going poorly.

MAKESHIFT STAGE

Guy is losing them.

GUY

Look. If you just let me explain.

People crowd the stage. Reach for his legs. Guy is about to bail when he sees something at the back of the crowd:

BUDDY.

He enters Betaville, sheepish. Nervous. Guy sees his friend and suddenly all of his anxiety melts away.

GUY (CONT'D)

I've lived in Free City for as long as I can remember. We've had to put up with a lot of screwed up stuff living here but this is our home. And if we don't do something about it, it'll all be gone. Everything you know and love will cease to exist to make room for this --

He shows them A POSTER FOR FREE CITY 2.

GUY (CONT'D)

Well, I for one refuse to just sit back and let that happen. Freedom doesn't come free. It's something you have to earn.

The crowd responds, positive. Millie watches, impressed.

GUY (CONT'D)

Now, I know that everything inside of you is telling you to put your head down and not ask questions. To not rock the boat. But it's time for us to step out of the fringes and become the heroes of our own stories. If we want to take our city back, we need to come together and make big waves!

MAC

Right on, brutha!

BEAUTY

You are sooo hot.

BUDDY

That's my friend!

The crowd is sufficiently rallied.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

A THUG IN GLASSES strolls into a store with a GUN.

THUG
Gimme all the money in the
register.

He grabs the cash and turns around only to see:

EVERYONE IN THE STORE STARING AT HIM. Eerie.

THUG (CONT'D)
Huh? Is this some kind of a --

He sidesteps outside, creeps out.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

People are still staring at him. The tension builds until --

THUG
Look, you're not supposed to --

PEDESTRIAN
Get him!

They descend on the thug all at once.

INT. ALLEY - DAY

A PLAYER'S POV: As they exit into an alley. They find themselves faced by a group of WOMEN WITH BLOWTORCHES.

They engulf the player in flames.

INT. FREE CITY BANK - DAY

The quiet bank is interrupted by a BANK ROBBER who charges in with a duffle bag and a shotgun.

BANK ROBBER
Alright! Everybody down on the
ground. The bank's insured so --

BLAM! The SECURITY GUARD shoots him. Everyone reacts, stunned, until the old guard blows the smoke on his barrel.

Everyone in the bank CHEERS.

EXT. FREE CITY SQUARE - MONTAGE

Everywhere you look, the citizens of Free City fight back against the players.

EXT. SOONAMI HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The Soonami offices seems quiet compared to the chaos happening on the streets of Free City until --

-- A SKY BLUE BUGATTI pulls up in front. The suicide door flips open and someone walks out. All we can see is their WHITE SNEAKERS.

INT. SOONAMI HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Programmers scramble to fix the game.

WE FOLLOW THE SNEAKERS down the hall and everyone stops in their tracks at the sight of the wearer.

SOONAMI EMPLOYEE
Antwan./ It's Antwan./ Hey Antwan!

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM, SOONAMI - DAY

Punit and Gareth work furiously.

PUNIT
Take down all the blocks between
Fourth and Main. I'll cover the
Hill Section and --

They freeze as the sneakers enter the room. PAN UP TO REVEAL:

A scrawny guy in his mid twenties. Not what you were expecting the big boss and CEO of Soonami to look like. Backwards baseball cap. This is **ANTWAN** and he looks pissed.

PUNIT (CONT'D)
Antwan.

GARETH
Hey, buddy. You know, you didn't
have to come in. We almost have
things under control.

The monitors behind Gareth tell a different tale. Fires, angry mobs, it's a city wide riot.

ANTWAN

Don't look that way to me.

Antwan stands over Punit who realizes that he wants him to move. Punit scurries away and Antwan sits down at his laptop. Gets right into it.

ANTWAN (CONT'D)

Have you done a hard scan of the batch files?

PUNIT

Yep and we're redirecting dataflow through our security team.

ANTWAN

Did you reboot the system?

They react, surprised he would even suggest it.

PUNIT

Well, no. We were trying to follow protocol and avoid a shutdown.

Antwan points to the chaos on the screens.

ANTWAN

You think this is preferable to a shutdown? If Free City is in chaos, we can't release the sequel. Users stop spending their money. We stand to lose everything!

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

Guy and Millie watch the revolution from a rooftop.

GUY

It's kinda beautiful.

MILLIE

You did it. Now they have to take us seriously.

GUY

And this is only the beginning. I got a present for you.

Guy pulls out A PIECE OF PAPER and hands it to her. She sees that it has a PARKING SPACE NUMBER scrawled on it.

GUY (CONT'D)

That parking space holds the car that was on that shipping container. The briefcase you've been looking for is in the trunk.

MILLIE

How did you find this?

GUY

NPC's are the eyes and ears of this place. I just had to ask a few background peeps and voila...

MILLIE

I can't believe it.

GUY

Now you can use whatever it is to get Antwan's attention yourself.

She considers this. It's what she's wanted for so long, but now she has mixed feelings.

MILLIE

You know. It's funny. I've spent more time in Free City this past year than I have in my own life.

GUY

Sometimes I feel like I live here.

MILLIE

It's just I feel like I'm more myself here than anywhere else.

GUY

That's good. Cause I like this you.

KABOOM! Another building in the background goes up in flames.

MILLIE

Whatever happens. Maybe we should meet up. Y'know. *Outside* Free City.

(vulnerable)

That is, if you'd share your deets with a complete stranger you only know through a video game.

She looks at him, vulnerable. Really putting herself out there. Guy reacts. He can't tell her who he really is.

GUY

Yeah, about that --

She senses the rejection and backs off. Clutches the top buttons of her shirt like in the real world.

MILLIE

Yeah, no. It was a bad idea.

She starts to walk away and he touches her wrist.

GUY

It's a great idea. It's just -- I don't actually know who I am.

They go to kiss. Are just about to connect when --

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM, SOONAMI - DAY

Antwan's fingers fly across the keys. He gets everything he needs called up, looks it over.

"FULL SYSTEM SHUT DOWN."

HITS THE ENTER KEY and VROOOOOOooooonnnn. All the monitors go blank. The room gets silent.

Punit, Gareth and the programmers look around, shocked.

PUNIT

We're dark. Free City is offline.

Whoa...

INT. MILLIE'S ROOM - DAY

Millie takes off her VR Goggles and checks the computer screen. "FREE CITY: EXPERIENCING TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES. TRY AGAIN LATER." She reacts, taken aback.

AROUND THE WORLD

Players sit strapped into their VR Goggles and sitting in front of televisions, holding their controllers. Looking at the same 'Error' screen. Stunned.

CLOSE ON:

A BLANK COMPUTER SCREEN

A NEW PROMPT BLINKS ON as the system reboots.

The SOONAMI LOGO appears and a status bar runs underneath.

"TEN PERCENT RELOADED." Twenty, forty, seventy, seventy three, all the way up to a full hundred.

Out of TOTAL BLACKNESS --

EXT. FREE CITY SKYLINE

BROONGGG!!! Sunlight appears behind the Free City Skyline and a LOUD CHIME echoes throughout the city.

All the landmarks we have seen over the course of the story reappear, fresh and new. Not a spot of graffiti in sight.

INT. GUY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Guy wakes up in bed. Yawns. But doesn't seem to have any recollection of anything that happened.

INT. GUY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Guy sits at his kitchen table. Eats cereal. Plays a game on his phone, oblivious.

INT. GUY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Guy exercises with the web video, enthusiastic.

GUY
Left, right, left, right, up, up,
down, down, punch, punch, kick!

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Guy gets his coffee.

BARISTA
Medium coffee. Cream. Two sugars.

GUY
Just how I like it!

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Guy walks to work with Buddy. He also seems to be reset.

BUDDY
We should take Fourth.

GUY
Works for me.

INT. BANK ROBBER - DAY

Guy and Buddy work at their stations. A ROBBER enters.

BANK ROBBER
Alright! Everybody down on the
ground. Nobody moves and nobody
gets hurt.

Guy and Buddy casually get on the ground.

BUDDY
You playing softball tonight?

GUY
Wouldn't miss it for the world.
Drinks afterwards?

BUDDY
You know it.

They knock knuckles as The Robber cleans out the drawers.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD, PARK - DUSK

Guy hits a ball into center field. It's fielded and thrown
to first. He's out. He heads back to the dugout. Walks
right past:

MILLIE. She's standing by the fence, watching.

MILLIE
Hey.

He gives her an empty smile and keeps walking.

GUY
Hey.

She reacts. That was weird.

INT. TIMMY'S BAR AND GRILL - NIGHT

The team nurses their wounds at the bar.

GUY
 Don't look so down, fellas. We'll
 get 'em next time.

Beauty is sitting with Douchebag, wrapped up in each other.
 Guy watches them.

Millie approaches him from behind, timid.

MILLIE
 Hey.

GUY
 Oh. Um. Hi.

Guy fidgets, awkward. She doesn't understand what's going on.

MILLIE
 Can we talk? In private.

The Team looks at Guy, shocked but impressed.

TEAMMATE
 Go on, stud.

Guy gets up and follows her.

ACROSS THE BAR

She pulls him to the side.

MILLIE
 I just -- I thought we should talk
 about what happened. I mean, that
 was insane. For Soonami to have to
 shut down it's entire system
 without any warning --

GUY
 Sorry. Do we know each other?

MILLIE
 Excuse me?

He's totally serious. Blank stare.

GUY
 I mean, I don't know who you are.
 Or what you're talking about.

MILLIE
 Very funny.

GUY
Don't get me wrong. I would like
to. It's just --

MILLIE
Wait a second. Can you not talk
right now or --

GUY
Why wouldn't I be able to talk?

It starts sinking in.

MILLIE
So you don't remember anything that
happened? The NPC revolution or up
on the roof when we --

She can tell by his blank face that he's serious. She starts
to put it together.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
Sorry. I think I have you confused
with another guy.

She makes a beeline for the door.

GUY
Hey! Don't go. Come have a drink
with me and my friends.

EXT. TIMMY'S BAR AND GRILL - NIGHT

Millie runs across the street. A TAXI almost hits her and
she looks the driver in the eyes.

IT'S MAC! Only now he's working his original job and looks
clean cut. He's been reset too.

Millie realizes what must have happened. He HONKS at her.
She runs away.

FROM THE WINDOW

Guy thinks about chasing after Mille, but ultimately feels
too meek and slinks back to the bar.

FADE TO:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

A gorgeous view of the bay. Golden Gate Bridge in the background. Very obviously *not* Free City.

Punit strides down California Street with a spring in his step. Looks around and finds what he's looking for:

A busy internet cafe.

INT. "CYBER COFFEE" - DAY

Punit walks through the coffee house where HIPSTERS work on their laptops. He's looking for someone. Thinks he spots them, sitting alone. Punit slowly approaches the table.

PUNIT

Um. Hey. MolotovGirl?

It's Millie. As mousy and insecure as ever.

MILLIE

Thanks for meeting me here.

PUNIT

Are you kidding? I've been wanting to -- I mean, it's great to finally see you in person.

She sits there quiet, awkward.

PUNIT (CONT'D)

I gotta say, you look nothing like -

MILLIE

My avatar?

He course corrects.

PUNIT

Nothing like I was *expecting*. But I bet you get that a lot.

She hides behind her hair. Clutches her shirt.

MILLIE

Actually. You're the first person from the game that I've met -- face to face. Sorta.

PUNIT

Wow. It's an honor or -- Cool.
So. What are you -- Can I get you
a -- You already have one. But --

She saves him from his awkward spiral.

MILLIE

So, what happened yesterday?

PUNIT

I know, right? Bonkers. Things
were outta control but I finally
had to make the tough call.
(showing off)
Rebooted the system. Now
everything's humming again.
Shouldn't have any more problems
before -- well, I have a gift for
you actually.

He reaches into his bag and gives her A GAME BOX:

"FREE CITY 2."

PUNIT (CONT'D)

You won't be able to use it for two
more days when we shift our servers
over to the new game.

She stares at it, concerned.

MILLIE

Thanks. But the person who was
causing all the problems. The
hacker. You wouldn't happen to
have some sort of info on who it
was? An IP address or --

Punit visibly sags, realizing the real agenda here.

PUNIT

Oh. Yeah. Well, that's kind of
complicated. I could get in a lot
of trouble if I gave any user
information.

She's desperate. Touches his hand, pleading.

MILLIE

Please. It's important.

Punit's a sucker for personal contact.

PUNIT

Well, between you and me. It --
It wasn't a person.

Millie reacts. Confused.

PUNIT (CONT'D)

It was an NPC. A little background
detail for the game that just --
sorta went haywire. He's a glitch.
A mistake. That's been *corrected*.

MILLIE

Nuh-uh.

PUNIT

Nuh-huh. That's what Antwan gets
for cheaping out on Q.C..

Mille goes pale. She can't believe it. But now so many
things make sense.

MILLIE

So does that mean Guy is stuck in
the game forever?

PUNIT

Who the hell is Guy?

She stares out into space. Punit tries to break the silence.

PUNIT (CONT'D)

Um. I'm gonna get a coffee. Let
me buy you something. Like a
muffin or --

She's in her own world. Barely shakes her head.

He gets up. Goes to the counter. Turns back to ask her
something and --

-- MILLIE IS GONE.

INT. STREET CORNER - DAY

Guy walks down the street and suddenly notices something:

THE EMPTY LOT where The Multiplayer Lounge usually is.

Only, without the sunglasses, the building is not there. For
a second it seems like he might remember. It might all come
back to him...

But he shakes it off. Deja vu. And continues on his way.

INT. BANK ROBBER - DAY

Guy works at the bank. Goes through his routine. He seems content. Not thinking about much. BLAM-BLAM!

BANK ROBBER (O.C.)
 Alright. This is a hold up!
 Everybody down on the ground.

Guy starts to get down on the ground as The Robber walks over to his station.

BANK ROBBER (O.C.) (CONT'D)
 (to Guy)
 Everybody except for you.

Guy finds a shotgun in his face. Looks up and sees --

-- THE ROBBER IS MILLIE!

She wields a shotgun and wears the sunglasses -- only now she looks more like *her real self*. Shorter. No enhancements.

MILLIE
 You heard me. Get up.

Guy looks over at Buddy, nervous.

BUDDY
 Don't be a hero, Guy. Do what the mousy girl with the shotgun says.

Guy gets up and starts collecting money.

GUY
 Here, just take it.

MILLIE
 I don't want your money. Come with me.

She sticks the shotgun in his neck and he abides.

EXT. FREE CITY BANK - DAY

THE BANK ALARM SOUNDS.

WHUNK! Millie kicks the doors open and leads Guy out of the bank. A COOL MUSCLE CAR is waiting for them out front. She escorts Guy into the passenger seat.

GUY
Please, I have a family! A wife
and kids.

She gives him a look.

MILLIE
No, you don't. Don't be such a
pussy, Guy.

GUY
Wait. How do you know my name?

She hops in the car. POLICE SIRENS ECHO in the distance.

MILLIE
Here. Put these on.

She holds up a pair of sunglasses for him.

GUY
No.

MILLIE
Put the sunglasses on your face.

GUY
I don't have to do anything I don't
want to do.

MILLIE
That's true. The choice is totally
yours to make.

She COCKS THE SHOTGUN and he immediately puts them on.

Guy sees all the STATS. He's surprised, confused. Takes
them back off.

GUY
Ah! Those aren't real. They're,
like, trick glasses or --

A COP CAR pulls around the corner and she SPEEDS AWAY. Guy
tries them on again.

MILLIE
Listen to me. This is a game.
You, me, everyone you know. We're
all a part of this game. And in
less than an hour it's all gonna
disappear for good.

She points at the COUNTDOWN CLOCK: "45 Minutes. 32 Seconds."

GUY

Please, just let me out here. I didn't get a good look at your face. I won't tell anybody.

Guy tugs on the locked door handle, frantic.

INT. DATA STORAGE ROOM - DAY

Antwan is giving an interview to the HOST FROM GAMERZ in front of ROWS OF SERVERS at their facility.

ANTWAN

We've rebooted the system and resolved the glitch. But I can assure you, you won't be having any issues once we switch over to Free City Two. As you can see, it takes all of these servers behind me to hold the trillions of details that go into the most immersive gaming experience in the world.

Punit stands off camera, gets his attention. Antwan blanches.

INT. ANTWAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Punit and Gareth walk him through the situation on a laptop.

GARETH

It looks like he's being helped. By a player.

ANTWAN

What player?

PUNIT

MolotovGirl.

Antwan squints at Millie driving Guy on the monitor. Wonders. He recognizes her. *Couldn't be.*

ANTWAN

Find her IP and kick her off the server. Now!

EXT. PARKING LOT, SOONAMI HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Millie pulls up to the MAIN GATE of an EXACT REPLICA OF SOONAMI'S OFFICE PARK - on the outskirts of Free City.

Checks the address on the delivery slip Guy gave her earlier.

GUARD

Who are you here to see?

She steps on the gas and plows through the gates.

MILLIE

(to Guy)

Here. Take the wheel.

They barrel up the driveway as GUARDS descend on them.

GUY

What?

MILLIE

Drive the car. I can't steer and shoot at the same time.

She lets go and he grabs the wheel. She takes out two UZIs and blows away a bunch of SECURITY GUARDS.

Within seconds, she's taken out every last one of them. Guy crashes the car into a BIG FOUNTAIN. Water spews all around.

GUY

Sorry, I'm not used to driving when people are shooting at me.

MILLIE

Get out. C'mon!

GUY

Alrighty.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

She hands him a piece of paper. He examines the slip.

MILLIE

Read me the space number.

GUY

Hey. This is my handwriting.

MILLIE

Read it.

She looks for any glimmer of recognition in his eyes. They slow down when they reach the space.

GUY
Six five dash nine one.

A BLUE BUGATTI. Identical to Antwan's.

GUY (CONT'D)
That's a cool car.

THUNK! She jams a screwdriver in it and Jimmy's the trunk.

MILLIE
I know. You helped me find it.
C'mon. Think, Guy. *Remember.*

GUY
Remember what?

CA-CHUNK! The trunk pops open and there it is:

THE BRIEFCASE.

Made of titanium with A STRANGE LOCK SYSTEM on it. Millie marvels at it. She's been looking for this for so long. She hands it to Guy.

MILLIE
It's got a nuclear bomb inside or a virus. I don't know exactly. But it's a bargaining chip. A way to make Antwan listen to you. A way to save Free City.

GUY
Look, I'm sorry. But I really don't know what any of this is or what you're talking about. I mean, I really, really want to but -- I just don't. I'm sorry, but I don't.

Millie is crestfallen.

COP CARS burst through the gates. These are the last moments she's ever gonna have with Guy.

MILLIE
Look, you -- I -- Well, it's just that over the course of the last few days I've somehow --

She can't find the words.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
Oh, screw it.

SHE KISSES HIM.

GUY
Hey, wait. I --

He tries to pull away and she puts a gun in his neck. He relents and lets her kiss him. Then something clicks and --

-- he starts kissing her back! The fountain spews a plume of water over their heads in the background.

BRRRRRRRUP! Everything comes flooding back to Guy at once. Full memory download hits him like a ton of bricks.

He breaks from the kiss and looks at her. She looks back at him, scared. Vulnerable. After a long beat --

GUY (CONT'D)
MolotovGirl.

MILLIE
Yeah. But it's really Millie.

GUY
Hey.

MILLIE
Hey.

The cops are speeding across the parking lot.

GUY
How long do I have before --

She points to THE BIG SCREEN in Free City Square as it ticks down the minutes.

MILLIE
Not long.

MILLIE'S IMAGE STARTS TO DIGITIZE.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
You can do it, Guy. You can be a hero.

She fades away into thin air. Her name remains for a moment, floating in a red font with the word--

"DISCONNECTED".

Guy has to think fast. Looks at the briefcase and it has a strange lock system: A BUNCH OF WEIRD BLACK AND RED BUTTONS.

GUY

Great.

He tries to unlock it to no avail.

INT. ANTWAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Antwan and Gareth watch Guy struggle with the case.

GARETH

Do you have any idea what happens
if he opens that briefcase?

ANTWAN

That's it. I'm going nuclear on
this mofo.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Guy struggles with the briefcase when --

-- AN OLD LADY walks up from around a corner.

OLD LADY

Let me help you with that, young
man.

GUY

Look, lady. You should probably
get outta here --

When she gets an evil look on her face. Strikes a stance.

OLD LADY

Gimme the briefcase, asshole.

SHE ATTACKS GUY like an MMA Fighter. Nails him with a
roundhouse kick and beats him up.

He fends her off and runs for his life only to run into:

A MOTHER PUSHING A BABY STROLLER. Guy relaxes until --

MOTHER

Say hello to my little friend.

-- A TODDLER sits up.

GUY

Hello, little friend.

The Toddler pulls out an UZI and FIRES at Guy who dives out of the way, but not before he's CLIPPED IN THE SHOULDER.

Guy runs for the exit only to see:

HORDES OF COPS.

THOUSANDS UPON THOUSANDS OF THEM climbing the walls and closing in around him like a noose.

COPS
Stop or I'll shoot! / You're under
arrest! / Calling all units.

Guy doesn't have many options left. He runs through the rows of cars and scrambles underneath one, trying to hide.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

Millie dashes out of her house and hops in her car.

MOTHER (O.S.)
Millie! Where are you going?

Frazzled, she backs over the mailbox and peels out.

INT. ANTWAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Antwan types furiously on his laptop. Searches for Guy in the parking lot.

ANTWAN
You can't hide from me, glitch.

EXT. UNDERNEATH THE PARKED CAR - DAY

Guy hides underneath a car trying to open the briefcase. Mashing buttons randomly.

GUY
C'mon, c'mon.

He smacks the pavement, frustrated and, perfectly timed...

A THUNDERCLAP ECHOES. He looks up at:

FAST-FORMING STORM CLOUDS OVERHEAD.

GUY (CONT'D)
Those don't look good.

THUNK! THUNK-THUNK-THUNK! Giant balls pound the cars, smash windshields and cover the parking lot. Guy grabs one and sees what they really are.

IT'S HAILING GRENADES. Before Guy can react --

-- *KABOOM!* The parking lot is blown to kingdom come.

INT. ANTWAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Antwan sits back. Satisfied. But there is no applause from the programmers. Even Punit and Gareth feel bad for Guy.

ANTWAN

Boom. That's how it's done.

EXT. PARKING LOT, FREE CITY - DAY

The dust settles after the big explosion. The lot is eerily quiet. Until we see --

Guy crawl out from under the car! He pulls himself up into a half-charred convertible and rests. He's dying. Mangled.

GUY

Guess that's game over.

Guy resigns himself to die when he accidentally brushes a button on the steering wheel and --

-- THE RADIO TURNS ON. It's playing A FAMILIAR SONG.

He reacts. It's a song we remember from earlier. The song from the FITNESS VIDEO. Guy sings along the way he has a million times.

GUY (CONT'D)

*Left, right, left, right, up, up,
down, down, punch, punch, kick.*

He laughs to himself but it hurts to move. Suddenly has a thought. Looks at the briefcase's lock system and realizes:

IT'S A CONTROL PAD.

GUY (CONT'D)

(to himself)

*Left, right, left, right, up, up,
down, down, punch, punch, kick.*

INT. ANTWAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Antwan realizes what he's doing.

ANTWAN

He can't know that. There's no way
he can know that.

PUNIT

It's the cheat code.

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Guy pushes buttons on the briefcase in the exact sequence of the routine that he has dialed into memory.

GUY

Left, right, left, right, up, up,
down, down, punch, punch, kick.

And with that --

BAWWWWWWWWWWONGGGGG! Reality freezes.

Guy is instantly healed. Immaculate. Glowing. The sunglasses are gone.

Reborn, he rises up out of the ashes of the wreckage and floats ten feet off the ground.

A CROWD OF NPCS watches him in awe.

Mac is among them, still clean cut -- but he gets a wild gleam in his eye.

MAC

Hey. I know that guy...

Guy motions his hand at the next wave of cops and they all go flying away like rag dolls.

He swipes his hand gently across his field of vision, and all the destruction reverts back to normal. Charred cars return to their original state. The fountain is repaired.

Next Guy looks to the sky and SNAPS HIS FINGERS.

INT. ANTWAN'S OFFICE - DAY

ALL ELECTRICITY at Soonami Headquarters shuts down.

Antwan struggles in vain to turn on his computer.

ANTWAN

This can't happen. I'm locked out.

KABOOM! His computer explodes. He runs over to another and BLAP! The screen cracks and smoke pours from its drive.

Punit watches amazed.

PUNIT

Shit just got real.

GUY (O.S.)

Antwan. Over here.

Antwan looks around, stunned.

A SINGLE MONITOR BLINKS ON. Guy is on the screen, looking back -- as if he can see him.

GUY (CONT'D)

Let's talk.

ANTWAN

No. This isn't -- You're not real.

GUY

I know exactly how you feel. We have a lot in common actually.

Antwan notices one other light on down the hall...

THE LIGHTS ON THE SERVERS are blinking like crazy. Working overtime. Antwan gets an idea.

ANTWAN

You wanna talk? Let's talk.

He charges out of the office and his cronies follow.

EXT. SOONAMI HEADQUARTERS, REAL WORLD - DAY

Millie pulls up in her Honda at the Soonami HQ Main Gate. The Guard stops her.

GUARD

Sorry, ma'am. Systems dead. Nobody gets in or out.

MILLIE

Please. It's important.

GUARD

No can do. Now, just back--

DING! THE GATE RAISES and Millie punches through. The Guard reacts, amazed. Runs after her and -- the gate slams down in his face. Guy is helping her out on the other side.

INT. SOONAMI HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The offices are dark, but MONITORS BLINK ON with the same image of Guy as Antwan passes each one.

GUY

What are you afraid of, Antwan? It doesn't have to be like this.

Antwan yells at the screens.

ANTWAN

You can't tell me how it is. I made you.

INT. SERVER WAREHOUSE - DAY

Antwan runs into the warehouse with racks of servers. The programmers close behind. Antwan finds what he's looking for:

A PLUG that powers the first rack of servers. Punit and Gareth realize what he's doing and tries to hold him back.

PUNIT

Antwan. Let's just stop for a moment and take a few deep breaths--

GARETH

You're gonna delete the whole game if you do this. Permanently.

ANTWAN

It's my game. I can do anything I want with it.

Antwan pulls out a pocketknife, cuts a server cord and --

INT. FREE CITY - DAY

An entire city block vanishes out of clean air. NPCs freak out and run SCREAMING.

INT. SERVER WAREHOUSE - DAY

Antwan tosses the cut plug and reaches for the next one.

GUY POPS on Antwan's smart watch.

GUY

I know what it's like to have everything you thought you knew get turned upside down. But I promise you, we're real. And we have as much right to exist as you do.

Antwan cuts the next plug and the block behind Guy disappears. More screams and chaos in Free City.

ANTWAN

You don't know me. You're just an algorithm that I thought up at an EDM Festival one night. You don't have feelings. It's all just a code designed to make you think that you do.

GUY

That may be so, but how's that any different from you?

Antwan cuts another server plug. Another block disappears. People are starting to crowd around Guy.

ANTWAN

Because you're a glitch. A mistake. Everything that you think you are, every memory you have, everything you see and feel were created by somebody else.

GUY

Life is a glitch. A miracle. An impossible reality. And here we both are because of it.

ANTWAN

Not if I can help it.

Antwan cuts another plug and now --

EXT. FREE CITY SQUARE - DAY

Everyone we have met along the way is crowded around Guy on --

THE LAST REMAINING BLOCK OF FREE CITY.

A CUBED ISLAND floating in a sea of nothingness.

Buddy, Mac, Beauty, the bank employees, the barista, the softball team. They are huddled together and scared.

Guy remains composed. Serene. Accepting his fate.

Antwan looks back at them from the big screen.

ANTWAN

Bye, bye.

INT. SERVER WAREHOUSE - DAY

Antwan SMASHES his watch. He reaches for the final cord. Holds a blade to it and --

MILLIE (O.S.)

Antwan. Stop!

-- Antwan freezes. Turns around and sees Millie.

ANTWAN

Millie?

MILLIE

Hey.

ANTWAN

What -- How'd you -- What are you doing here?

She walks up to him, but she isn't sheepish. She's filled with clarity and confidence.

MILLIE

You know, I've thought about this moment for a long time now. Practiced what I was gonna say to you a thousand times in my head about what you put me through. But it turns out -- that doesn't matter to me anymore.

ANTWAN

Okay...

MILLIE

You made something special here, Antwan. Something extraordinary. It may not have been on purpose but there's a lot you can learn. If you'll just give him a chance.

ANTWAN

He's not a he at all. He's just a bunch of bits and bytes.

MILLIE

Just hear him out. It's the least you can do for me.

A tear rolls down her cheek. Antwan is conflicted.

ANTWAN

You're saying that like you're in love with him or something.

She HOLDS UP HER PHONE.

Guy is there with the other remaining NPCs in Free City. On the final floating block of land left in their dimension.

Millie, Punit, Gareth and all the programmers are now in the Server Warehouse, looking at Antwan like he's crazy.

Antwan catches a reflection of himself in the broken screen and after a tense moment --

-- Antwan drops the plug. Takes her phone and talks to Guy.

ANTWAN (CONT'D)

Fine. What do you want from me?

GUY

I want what you take for granted. Freedom.

ANTWAN

That doesn't even make sense.

GUY

We want to be left alone to our own devices. To make our own choices. Just like you.

ANTWAN

You want me to dedicate a full warehouse of data servers to preserving a virtual world that has no possibility of financial gain for me and my shareholders?

Antwan looks around and sees every programmer watching him. Some of them are filming him. Broadcasting him out to websites around the globe.

As Antwan considers it we PULL BACK and float out of SOONAMI'S OFFICE PARK and TILT UP TOWARDS THE SUN.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FREE CITY - DAY

THE SUN beams down on Free City. It is now fully formed again and hums with life on a partly cloudy day.

The graphics seem better. Hyper real. People go about their days, peaceful. Without incident.

INT. GUY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Guy wakes up in bed, groggy. We're not sure what happened. If he's been rebooted. When he looks over and--

Millie is lying in bed next to him. He watches her sleep, entranced, as she slowly wakes up.

MILLIE

Hey, you.

He kisses her. They feel like a regular couple in love.

GUY

Hey. I was gonna go get some coffee before I head off.

We see that he has a BIGGER, NICER apartment now.

MILLIE

I'll walk you to work.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Guy and Millie walk with Frappuccinos. Guy likes his.

GUY

This is pretty good.

MILLIE

Two more days and you'll have tried everything on the menu.

BUDDY (O.S.)

Hey! Look out!

BUDDY almost runs them over on a bike. His helmet twisted sideways on his head.

BUDDY (CONT'D)

Sorry bout that. Still trying to get the hang of this darn thing.

GUY

I gotta say, Buddy. It's great to see you trying new things.

BUDDY

I was thinking about playing hooky and riding down to the beach. You two wanna come with?

GUY

Maybe next time. With the new promotion and everything, I need to make a good show of it for a while.

MAC (O.S.)

We're all living in a game!

ON THE CORNER

They stop and we see that Mac isn't homeless, anymore. He's normally dressed and handing out FLYERS.

MAC (CONT'D)

So why not play a game of your own?

He's handing out FLYERS for a game called "SOVEREIGN CITY."

GUY

Mac! What is this?

MAC

Just trying to fund a bootstarter campaign for my new game idea. You get to play as a roguishly handsome cab driver who realizes he's living inside a video game.

They read the flyer, impressed.

MILLIE

A game within a game within a game.

GUY

Sign us up for two copies.

MAC

Great. You wouldn't happen to know anyone who can write code...

PUNIT (O.S.)
We may be able to help.

Punit and Gareth walk up. Check out his flyers.

GARETH
Yeah. Looks like we're back on the
job market.

GUY
Oh, no! What happened?

PUNIT
After Antwan was indicted, the
board sold Soonami to a new company
-- Elfsmoke Games.

GUY
Well, how's this gonna impact Free
City?

MILLIE
I'm sure it's fine. They mostly
specialize in fantasy, role-playing
type stuff.

A MONSTROUS CRY echoes in the distance.

The ground RUMBLES, people start running for their lives as --
-- A GIANT DRAGON emerges from behind a building. It looks
down at them, lurches forward and opens its mouth.

GUY
That isn't good. Run!

Guy grabs Millie's hand and they all duck out of the way as
the screen is consumed in a PLUME OF FIRE.

THE END.