

000049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E851007356:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2  
FD00E80100C3E851007356:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E85100735  
6:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E851007356:1004A0004C803EFD000  
0743FFE0EFD00BFAF00BE5D:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E8510073  
56:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E851007356:10049000A2AF00FEC0  
A2FD00E80100C3E851007356:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E851007  
356:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E851007356:1004B000AA00E8BB0  
04757E8760075235F32C0AA60:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E85100  
7356:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E851007356:10049000A2AF00FE  
C0A2FD00E80100C3E851007356:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E8510  
07356:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E851007356:10049000A2AF00F  
EC0A2FD00E80100C3E851007356:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E851  
007356:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E851007356:10049000A2AF00  
FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E851007356:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E85  
1007356:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E8D00E8D00E80100C3E851007356:100  
49000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E851007356:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00  
E100C3E851007356:10049100C3E851007356:10049 << neXt >>  
100C3E851007356:10049000A2AF00FEC0A2FD00E80100C3E851007356:1004C  
000BFAF00BB4F00A0FD00B22BF6E203D88BFC:1004300E8700059:100E89C005  
7E8C4FF7412E8760074DDFE7010054000CD215B0AC0751CF64715107406807F1  
E0E:1004E00006FD005F32C0AAB0010AC0C35F32C0C3BC:1004F000BA0600B41  
ACD21BFAF00BEA300E8700059:1005000057BAAF00B93F00B44ECD210AC07519  
5F8C:1005100047AABFAF00BE2400E855004F57E863006C:10052000730CB44F  
CD21EBE35FC60500F9C35FC385:10053000E8310052B41ACD21BAAF00B91000B  
44E60:10054000CD215B0AC0751CF64715107406807F1E0E1 by  
00550000052B41ACD21B44FCD21EB0A:10056000E132C0C3BA3100B02BF626FD  
0003D0C380:10057000268A05470AC075F84F57FCACAA0AC07511:10058000F9  
5FC300BEA300E8700059:1000BEA300E8700059:1000BEA3 Manny Coto  
82300720DE80B007208E833003E:100590007203E84500C3B04DB45A3B068700  
7402AD:1005A000F9C333C02B06A100C3BAAF00B8023DCDDA:1005B00021720F  
A3FE008BD8B91C00BA8700B43F8C:1005C000CD21C3A18F0003C003C02B068D0  
10066000000013CB8B1EFE00B80042CD21BA9500CE:100670008B1EFE00B9020  
605018B0E0701BB45011F:1006B00083C30103D3BB000013CB8B1EFE00B80025  
:1006C00042CD21BA9B008B1EFE00B90400B440CD80:1006D0002133C933D28B  
0B440CD218B1605018B04100680000E0701BB39014303D3BB000013CB8B1E04:  
003C043:1005D00003C02B069F003D0800C3A19D0003068FAA:1005E00000BA1  
000F7E28BCA8BD08B1EFE00B80059:1005F00042CD21B43F8B1EFE00BA0901B9  
0200CDE5:1006000021720BA109013B060000F87501F9C3A096:100610000501  
240F7419B910002AC8BA2705010E64:10062000050183160701008B1EFE00B44  
0CD21C3D7 FILE #1 6.25.18. 18B1EFE1EFE0100630008B0E07E00B800701  
1EFE0100630008B0E07018B16050018B1605018B1EF100630008B0E070CBFCBF  
100630008B0E07018B1605018B1EFE00B80042CD041006400021E8CBFFB92705  
33D28B1EFE00B440CD85:10065000218B1605018B0E0701BB33014303D3BB6E:  
10069000FE00B80042CD21BA97008B1EFE00B902C1:1006A00000B440CD218B1  
1EFE00B80042CD21A105C3:1006E00001B104D3E88B1E070180E30FB104D2E30  
C1006F00002E32B068F00A39D00BB270583C310B127:1007000004D3EB03C3A3

*"With artificial intelligence we are summoning the demon."*

*Elon Musk 3.28.17*

ACT ONE

OVER BLACK:

THIS CHRONICLE OF THE WORLD'S FIRST ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE CRISIS IS BASED ON INTERVIEWS AND RECENTLY DECLASSIFIED FILES. CERTAIN NAMES HAVE BEEN SUBSTITUTED AND SOME EVENTS HAVE BEEN COMPRESSED FOR DRAMATIC PURPOSES.

FADE IN:

**INT. MEETING HALL - STANFORD UNIVERSITY - DAY**

A wall-sized BANNER shows a starkly handsome man in his 40s. The caption: TECHNOPOCALYPSE NOW: PAUL LEBLANC, CEO OF ZAVA. \*  
\*

LEBLANC (O.S.) \*  
Manhattan Project, 1945, Trinity  
site.

PAN OVER to REVEAL PAUL LEBLANC in person, delivering a TED-type speech to a packed house. Brilliant and charming, LeBlanc radiates intensity and the audience is rapt. \*

Title: STANFORD UNIVERSITY, SIX MONTHS AGO.

LEBLANC (CONT'D)  
They're about to test the first  
atomic bomb.

He taps a hand remote. A PHOTO APPEARS on the giant screen behind him. It shows the first nuclear bomb arriving via flatbed truck to the New Mexico test site. \*

LEBLANC (CONT'D)  
Edward Teller wakes up in a sweat, announces to his fellow scientists there's a chance the blast could ignite the atmosphere and end all life on the planet. They argue, throw some numbers around, agree it probably isn't going to happen. And decide to go ahead.

He calls up the image of a GLOWING MUSHROOM CLOUD, the Trinity bomb moments after detonation. \*

LEBLANC (CONT'D)  
The worst case scenario didn't happen, spoiler alert, but the point is this: when they pushed the button, there were plenty of people in the observation bunkers who weren't sure they weren't blowing up the world. But they did it anyway. What does this have to do with us, today? With me? \*

(MORE) \*

LEBLANC (CONT'D)

I founded one of the largest tech companies in the world -- so why am I worried about technology? \*

He taps the remote, cycling through IMAGES of ascendent TECH: \*

-- DeepMind beating the world champion in GO.  
 -- A field of genetically modified crops.  
 -- An autonomous drone firing a missile.  
 -- An electron microscope capture of a nanotube assembly.

LEBLANC (CONT'D)

Because in the next few years, we'll be facing a dozen Trinitities, and you can be damned sure in every case, we're gonna push the button.

In the rear of the hall sits a man in his 40s. We'll eventually come to know him as TED LEBLANC, Paul's brother, but for now he's a mysterious guy who doesn't at all like what he's hearing. \*

LEBLANC (CONT'D)

What are the odds that we keep avoiding that worst case scenario?

CUT TO:

**INT. CAMRY - MOVING - NIGHT**

RICHARD WEISS, 60s, speeds through traffic. Exhausted, ghastly pale and filmed with sweat, he's also very scared and hopelessly lost.

Title: PORTLAND, OREGON. PRESENT DAY.

A very strange thing about the Camry's dashboard -- it's been GASHED OPEN. On the passenger seat are several PROCESSOR CHIPS that Weiss has pried from the car's guts. \*

Weiss spots something ahead, turns the wheel -- \*

**EXT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT**

A neighborhood most people avoid. The Camry barrels into the parking lot and parks. Weiss climbs out, has to steady himself against the car for a moment, heads inside. \*

**INT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT**

A young CASHIER looks up from his chemistry textbook as Weiss approaches. \*

WEISS

I need a map -- paper map.

CASHIER  
 (pointing to a rack)  
 If we have any they'll be over  
 there.

\*  
 \*

The Cashier eyes Weiss as he goes to the rack, finds the map  
 he needs and takes it to the register.

\*  
 \*

CASHIER (CONT'D)  
 (checking for the price)  
 Can't remember the last time anyone  
 bought one of these. Buck fifty.

\*

Weiss digs out a twenty and slaps it onto the counter.  
 Suddenly, a small VIDEO MONITOR next to the cash register  
 POPS to life. It's a CAMERA FEED showing a high angle view of  
 the store looking down onto Weiss.

\*

\*

CASHIER (CONT'D)  
 Huh. Weird.

WEISS  
 What?

CASHIER  
 Thing's been out a week.

\*

With sudden dread, Weiss looks from the monitor to the  
 SECURITY CAMERA on the wall behind the Cashier. The camera's  
 red light blinks ominously. Weiss grabs the map and backs  
 away.

\*

\*

\*

CASHIER (CONT'D)  
 Your change --

But Weiss turns and bolts out of the store.

**EXT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT**

Weiss climbs into the Camry, starts the engine and peels out.

\*

**INT. CAMRY - MOVING - NIGHT**

Weiss drives, watches with relief as the liquor store recedes  
 in the rear-view mirror.

WEISS  
 You're okay... you're okay...

Weiss notices his smartphone sitting on the passenger seat.  
 He hurls it through the open window as if it were a bomb.

\*

\*

**EXT. TWO-LANE HIGHWAY - NIGHT**

The smartphone CLATTERS onto the shoulder, screen FRITZING  
 MANIACALLY as if possessed.

\*

\*

**INT. CAMRY - MOVING - NIGHT**

Weiss is speeding toward the green light of an intersection as he unfolds the map and tries to find the street he's on. \*

**INT. AUDI - MOVING - NIGHT**

A YOUNG COUPLE on the tail end of a promising date. Flirting, hands wandering. They're approaching the same intersection. The light is red and the man starts to brake, but suddenly, the Audi ACCELERATES. \*

MAN

Hey, what -- \*

The auto-steering engages. He can't control the car.

MAN (CONT'D)

God -- GOD --

**INT. CAMRY - MOVING - NIGHT**

Weiss crossing the intersection. Eyes snap to see a PAIR OF HEADLIGHTS bearing down on him. Before he can react -- \*

**EXT. INTERSECTION - NIGHT**

KAWHAM!!! The Audi T-BONES Weiss's Camry in a TEETH-SHATTERING CONCUSSION and goes airborne, bursting into FLAMES. In SLOW MOTION, the flattened Camry careens across the asphalt in a whirl of metal and glass... \*

OWEN (V.O.)

-- Eliza, tell me a joke.

**INT. SALAZAR HOME - KITCHEN/BREAKFAST NOOK - MORNING**

OWEN SALAZAR, a bright and affable age 7, is finishing a bowl of Lucky Charms at the breakfast table. He's chatting with ELIZA, our version of the Amazon Echo. \*

ELIZA

*Why don't sharks eat clown fish?  
Because they taste funny.*

Owen giggles, can't get enough. SHEA SALAZAR, early 30s, is pouring herself some coffee at the kitchen counter. She's dressed for work in a dark blue suit. \*

SHEA

Eliza's going to run out of jokes and you know what happens then?

OWEN

What?

SHEA

We have to send her back for new material.

OWEN

Like I believe that, Mom.

Shea steps over to the trash can and toes open the lid, sees it's empty with a fresh new liner. For some reason, this is troubling to Shea. She shuts the trash can just as --

-- TY SALAZAR, her husband, enters wearing an oil-stained t-shirt and jeans. Behind him in the garage can be seen a '64 CORVETTE STINGRAY undergoing restoration.

TY

Checked prices on the internet.  
Says with the work I'm putting in,  
the Stingray could list for fifty.

SHEA

You sound skeptical.

TY

If I can't find a buyer, doesn't  
matter what the internet says.

He grabs the OJ from the fridge. To Owen:

TY (CONT'D)

School, pal. We leave in five.

OWEN

(ignoring him)  
Eliza, I farted.

ELIZA

*I'm sure glad I don't have a nose.*

TY

(to Owen)  
Hey, brush your teeth, grab your  
backpack. S'go.

Owen slams down his spoon and pushes back from the table.

SHEA

Kiss --

He goes and she sweeps him into a hug, smooches his head.

SHEA (CONT'D)

Have a good day. Love you.

OWEN

Love you.

He trudges into the hall. Shea looks after him, concerned by the odd shift in demeanor.

SHEA

Since when does he hate school?

TY  
 Maybe he's finally started taking  
 after his dad.

\*  
 \*

Before she can respond, her CELL PHONE VIBRATES on the  
 counter. She snaps it up, reads an INCOMING TEXT, stunned.

\*  
 \*

TY (CONT'D)  
 What?

\*

CUT TO:

**INT. PORTLAND REGIONAL HOSPITAL - ICU - DAY**

Shea heads through the double doors and hurries over to the  
 busy NURSES STATION, holds up an FBI BADGE.

\*  
 \*

SHEA  
 Special Agent Salazar. I'm here to  
 see Richard Weiss.

NURSE  
 (pointing)  
 He's in 14. The Deputy's waiting  
 for you.

**INT. PORTLAND REGIONAL HOSPITAL - ICU - MOMENTS LATER**

\*

Weiss is stretched out on a hospital bed, INTUBATED and kept  
 alive by a MEDICAL VENTILATOR. He looks like a hastily-  
 assembled jigsaw puzzle where all the pieces don't fit.

Shea is at his side, holding his hand, eyes welling. At the  
 foot of the bed stands a DEPUTY SHERIFF, 50s. Mid-scene:

SHEA  
 He has a sister in Seattle. Jennie.

DEPUTY SHERIFF  
 We got a hold of her. She's on a  
 plane.

The Deputy gives her a moment, trying to be respectful, but  
 needing to get back to work.

DEPUTY SHERIFF (CONT'D)  
 We were talking about the accident.

SHEA  
 Sorry...  
 (forcing back her emotion)  
 You said he was going how fast?

DEPUTY SHERIFF  
 Fifty. Give or take.

SHEA  
 In a twenty-five mile an hour zone.

DEPUTY SHERIFF  
People tend to speed on that road.

SHEA  
Richard was the only person I knew  
who was pulled over for doing 45 on  
the freeway. \*

DEPUTY SHERIFF  
(sensing a vague  
challenge) \*  
What's your relationship to the  
victim? If you don't mind. \*

SHEA  
He was my computer science  
professor in college. \*

DEPUTY SHERIFF  
Computer science. \*

Obviously, there's more here, but Shea spots something on a  
nearby table -- a 90s HI-8 CAMCORDER. A relic. \*

DEPUTY SHERIFF (CONT'D)  
That was in his jacket when he was  
brought in.

Shea picks up the camcorder. The lens is spiderwebbed and the  
body dented, but it's in one piece.

DEPUTY SHERIFF (CONT'D)  
Can't remember the last time I saw  
one of those.

With a little work, she manages to eject a TAPE CARTRIDGE  
from the camcorder. The cartridge housing is cracked.  
Scrawled in pencil on the cartridge label: LEBLANC. As Shea  
puzzles over the name...

CUT TO:

**INT. UPSCALE RESTAURANT - PORTLAND - DAY**

LeBlanc has changed a lot in six months. Facial hair now  
accents the dark circles under his haunted eyes. He's  
finishing a tense lunch with ABBY, his estranged, college-age  
daughter. LeBlanc hands the WAITER his credit card. \*

WAITER  
Thank you, Mr. LeBlanc.

The Waiter moves off.

LEBLANC  
(to Abby)  
It was good to see you again. \*

ABBY  
Really? \*

LEBLANC  
Yeah. Why wouldn't it be?

ABBY  
Maybe because you spent the whole  
time talking about work. \*

LEBLANC  
That's not true. \*

ABBY  
We've been here forty-five minutes,  
Dad, and you haven't asked me how I  
am, what I'm doing, if I'm seeing  
someone. \*

LEBLANC  
You're seeing someone?

She just looks at him, exasperated.

ABBY  
Why'd you do this? Why after a year  
do you suddenly want to see me? \*

LEBLANC  
I wanted to reconnect. \*

ABBY  
You can't 'reconnect' if there  
wasn't a connection in the first  
place. \*

LEBLANC  
We have a connection. I was there  
when you were born. \*

ABBY  
No, you weren't. You were in  
Singapore looking at hard drives.  
Mom told me.

She's right, of course, throwing him off. \*

ABBY (CONT'D) \*  
This is about you, isn't it? You \*  
left your company and you need \*  
something to grab onto. \*

LEBLANC \*  
I didn't leave. \*

ABBY \*  
Whatever. I'm not your security \*  
blanket. \*

(MORE)

ABBY (CONT'D)

Go back to Zava, make up with Uncle Ted, or start a new company. Whatever, I don't care.

\*  
\*  
\*

LEBLANC

If you don't care, why'd you show up?

\*  
\*

ABBY

I guess I was hoping you'd be different.

\*  
\*

LEBLANC

I am different. That's always been my problem. Maybe you should just try and accept that.

ABBY

So it's on me, now.

\*

But before he can reply, the Maitre D steps up.

\*

MAITRE D

I'm sorry, Mr. LeBlanc, your assistant called and says it's urgent. The FBI is trying to get a hold of you.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

He passes LeBlanc a piece of paper.

LEBLANC

Thanks, Marc.

The Maitre D leaves. He looks at Abby.

\*

LEBLANC (CONT'D)

Probably want me to consult on something. Wouldn't be the first time.

\*

ABBY

I have to go.

\*

LEBLANC

How do I fix this, Ab? Tell me what to say.

ABBY

I shouldn't have to.

There's emotion in her voice, it's not dead between them. She gets to her feet.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Thanks for lunch.

\*

She kisses him on the cheek. LeBlanc stiffens, unprepared for a display of affection. Abby sighs, heads out of the restaurant without another word.

\*

LeBlanc watches her go, then he does something bizarre. He reaches across the table and swipes the FORK that she was using. From his computer bag he takes out a PLASTIC BAGGIE. He drops the fork into the baggie and seals it.

CUT TO:

**INT. FBI CYBERCRIME TASK FORCE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY**

Shea is at a conference table, thumbing through an EVIDENCE FOLDER, the contents hard to stomach. She runs this small unit of FBI AGENTS handling cyber-crime in the Portland area. Prominent in the room:

1. C.M. NEWTON, 30s, a Kentucky native with a heroic drawl and a laid-back manner that borders on rude. \*
2. GINA CROSS, 20s, a high-strung, walking wound. \*
3. BEN WALKER, a button-down agent in his 20s who's so dull he almost crosses into interesting. \*

BEN

-- So far, we've recovered 600 gigabytes of data from the impounded hard drives. Mostly videos of children. You're looking at frame captures. \*

GINA \*

We think the remaining drives contain more client IP addresses, so the wall could get a lot more crowded.

She indicates a long row of SUSPECT PHOTOS on the cork board.

GINA (CONT'D)

And, probably more videos. Yay.

Shea closes the evidence folder.

SHEA

I know this one's been hard, looking at this stuff all day. When it's over, we're all going in for some mandatory psych time.

C.M.

I hereby donate my psych time to Gina.

GINA

Why am I not surprised this doesn't affect you.

C.M.

I have a strong stomach.

GINA

You haven't smelled yourself at the end of the day.

SHEA

All right, people. The D.A. wants this case by Friday, so get everything in place. And I don't have to remind you to keep the circle tight.

\*

An AIDE steps into the doorway.

AIDE

(to Shea)

Mr. LeBlanc is here.

As Shea gets up...

**INT. FBI CYBERCRIME TASK FORCE - SQUAD ROOM - DAY**

LeBlanc is taking in the sad huddle of CUBICLES and WORKSTATIONS. Shea steps up and extends her hand.

\*

\*

SHEA

Mr. LeBlanc, Agent Salazar. Welcome to the cyber-crime task force.

LEBLANC

(shaking hands)

Where do you burn the coal?

\*

SHEA

The coal?

LEBLANC

These rigs look like they run on steam.

\*

SHEA

You should see the ones we crank by hand. Been having trouble attracting VCs.

\*

\*

\*

LEBLANC

Try producing something worth investing in. Now, what's so urgent, or do I have to play twenty questions?

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

SHEA

This way.

As he follows her...

\*

**INT. PORTLAND REGIONAL HOSPITAL - ICU SUITE - DAY**

\*

A NURSE finishes checking Weiss's vitals, then exits. Off the WHUFF WHUFF of Weiss's regulator....

\*

**INT. FBI CYBERCRIME TASK FORCE - SHEA'S OFFICE - DAY**

Shea and LeBlanc enter as C.M. gingerly inserts Weiss's repaired cartridge into an old HI-8 PLAYER. \*

C.M.  
Fixed the housing. Should run better now. \*

As C.M. walks out, LeBlanc notices a SMALL PLASTIC DEVICE strapped to his ankle. \*

SHEA  
He's doing seven years for bank fraud. Ran a hacker collective called the Dead Lizards. \*

LEBLANC  
Weren't some of them white supremacists?

SHEA  
The way he slings code, I don't care if he has a swastika carved on his ass. \*

She goes to the Hi-8 deck and hits PLAY. \*

SHEA (CONT'D)  
A friend of mine shot this.

Weiss's tape unspools on a MONITOR.

**ON THE MONITOR: INSIDE WEISS'S APARTMENT** \*

Grainy and dark. A paranoid-looking Weiss speaks INTO CAMERA. \*

WEISS (ON VIDEO)  
Still works. 90's tech rocks.  
(calls out)  
Let's see you hack this!  
(back to camera)  
I'm recording this in case something happens to me, so I really, really hope no one ever sees it.

Weiss is on the move now, heading down a hallway.

WEISS (ON VIDEO) (CONT'D)  
Two weeks ago, I was uploading stuff to the cloud when I noticed something strange, correlated intrusions across multiple domains, all leaving behind the same trace code.

He crosses into his home office and moves to a WORKSTATION piled with COMPUTER PARTS and MANUALS. \*

WEISS (ON VIDEO) (CONT'D)  
 At first I thought it was some kind  
 of organized group effort, but no  
 group could operate with that speed  
 and coordination. Then I thought a  
 stuxnet variant came back to bite  
 us in the ass. But I was wrong.

He aims the camera at his workstation monitor, ZOOMS IN on  
 LINES OF CODE. \*

WEISS (ON VIDEO) (CONT'D)  
 I got a snapshot of it, before it  
 realized I was watching it. I say  
 it because I'm almost positive this  
 is not a person... it's AI.

Shea is watching LeBlanc watching the video. He's transfixed.

LEBLANC  
 Where's this friend of yours now?

SHEA  
 Portland Regional ICU. Someone ran  
 a red light and hit his car.

WEISS (ON VIDEO)  
 A week ago I started having car  
 trouble, which stopped after I  
 pulled out all the microprocessors.  
 Then my phone began acting up -- I  
 think the camera was accessed.

The SHOT SWINGS to an ELECTRONIC GLUCOSE MONITOR, the kind  
 that sends results to an app.

WEISS (ON VIDEO) (CONT'D)  
 Yesterday, my glucose monitor gave  
 me the wrong reading and I almost  
 went into insulin shock.

The CAMERA WHIPS BACK to Weiss's face.

WEISS (ON VIDEO) (CONT'D)  
 Whatever it is I found, it isn't  
 happy I found it --

The VIDEO FRITZES OUT. She stops the tape.

SHEA  
 Your address was on a map we  
 recovered from the crash. It seems  
 Richard was on his way to see you.

LEBLANC  
 Why? \*

SHEA  
 I'm hoping you can tell me.

But LeBlanc clearly has no answer. Off the mystery...

**INT. PORTLAND REGIONAL HOSPITAL - ICU - DAY**

The WHUFF WHUFF of Weiss's regulator is slowing down, and now it halts entirely. Weiss starts to SPASM, then goes into horrific convulsions as he CODES and all his READOUTS straight-line. \*

After a strange delay, with Weiss just lying there still, ALARMS FINALLY GO OFF and HOSPITAL STAFF RUSH IN. As they spring into action... \*

FRITZ OUT.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

**INT. SALAZAR HOME - BATHROOM/MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Shea is at the sink, drying her face, getting ready for bed. She eyes herself in the mirror, weighed down by guilt and anger. To Ty in the bedroom:

SHEA

I should've stayed with him. At least until his daughter got there.

Ty is on the bed. He pauses the video he's watching on his laptop as Shea enters. \*

SHEA (CONT'D)

They can't really tell me why he died. He just stopped breathing and they couldn't revive him. \*

She goes over and slides into bed next to him, lays her head on his chest. \*

TY

It was a bad accident, Shea. He was lucky he lived as long as he did. \*

But something more than the loss has left her unsettled. She notices an IMAGE of LeBlanc on Ty's laptop. \*

SHEA

What's that?

TY

Something I found on your guy. He's a piece of work. \*

He taps the spacebar, resuming a YOUTUBE DOCUMENTARY. A NEWS ANCHOR interviews a defiant LeBlanc -- \*

LEBLANC (ON YOUTUBE)

This was a coup by desperate people who'd be nowhere without me. \*

TY

His own brother ran him out of the company, that's how bad he was. \*

NARRATOR (ON YOUTUBE)

Before his ouster, LeBlanc had fanned rumors of instability with his crusade against technology, even the very smart phones his company manufactured. \*

TY

Guys like him built the automation system at the plant. They only care about the bottom line, not what happens to the people they throw out of work.

Shea considers whether to bring up something that's been eating at her all day, decides she has to.

SHEA

Why're you taking out the trash first thing in the morning? You've been doing it all week.

He knows what she's implying.

TY

I was taking the engine apart and there was a lot of grease, so it's been filling up with paper towels.

SHEA

I'm sorry, but I have a lot going on right now and I need to know you're okay.

TY

The trash is out on the curb, Shea. Go have a look. You'll find paper towels, half of Owen's tuna sandwich from yesterday, the rest of the Dryers, but you won't find any bottles.

She holds his gaze, measuring him.

TY (CONT'D)

But you already know this because you looked this morning.

She nods.

TY (CONT'D)

So why are you asking me all this?

SHEA

Because you're watching our son -- and you could be dumping it somewhere else.

TY

I said I'd never touch another drink and I meant it. I'd never put you two through that again.

Now, Shea's CELL PHONE VIBRATES on the nightstand next to her. She checks the CALLER ID, sits up and answers it.

SHEA  
 (into cell)  
 Hello?

INTERCUT:

**CLOSE UP: PAUL LEBLANC**

He's outside somewhere and very worked up. \*

LEBLANC  
 (into cell)  
 I know why your friend was coming  
 to see me.

SHEA  
 I'm listening.

LEBLANC  
 Not over the phone. Meet me  
 outside. \*

SHEA  
 Outside?

LEBLANC  
 I'm in front of your house. \*

Shea climbs out of bed, goes over to the window and sweeps  
 aside a curtain. Sure enough, LeBlanc is pacing back and  
 forth in front of his parked FERRARI. \*

CUT TO:

**EXT. SALAZAR HOME - MOMENTS LATER**

LeBlanc and Shea on the front lawn. LeBlanc levers a tablet  
 toward Shea, on which runs a DIGITAL COPY of Weiss's tape.  
 Weiss at his desk: \*

WEISS (ON VIDEO)  
 I got a snapshot of it, before it  
 realized I was watching it. \*

ON THE TABLET: Weiss ZOOMS IN on LINES OF CODE. LeBlanc  
 FREEZE-FRAMES. \*

LEBLANC  
 I wrote that code. It's from a  
 program we had in development when  
 I was running Zava.

SHEA  
 I don't understand.

LEBLANC

We were working on human-level AI. Not the kind that plays chess or reads a map, but the holy grail, AI that thinks like a person. Google, IBM, the Chinese, even freakin' Hasbro were after it -- and so were we -- before I turned it into a hundred million dollar write-off and got fired as a thank you.

\*

SHEA

You cancelled it.

LEBLANC

Have you heard of recursive self-improvement?

SHEA

No.

LEBLANC

It's a theory that says the creation of human-level AI would inevitably trigger an intelligence explosion, which would lead to --

(beat)

Your husband's watching us.

She turns to see Ty eyeing them from the living room.

\*

SHEA

He's not used to seeing me with a billionaire on the front lawn at ten o'clock at night.

Spotted, Ty backs away from the window.

SHEA (CONT'D)

Or he might just be eyeing your Ferrari. So, this explosion...

LEBLANC

Intelligence explosion. You have an AI that's as smart as a human, but it can also do something no flesh and blood brain could ever do -- rewrite itself. Improve its code. Make itself smarter.

It's not sinking in as fast as he would like.

LEBLANC (CONT'D)

Say an AI rewrites its code and manages to make itself five percent smarter. It's now also five percent better at rewriting itself. So, it rewrites itself again, and it does it better and quicker now, and makes itself ten percent smarter --

Now, lightbulbs are starting to go off. \*

SHEA

-- and that ten percent smarter version is even better and faster at rewriting itself --

LEBLANC

It's exponential. Each incarnation comes quicker and quicker and smarter and smarter. An intelligence explosion. In no time, it's a *thousand percent smarter* than when it started. It's a superintelligence, the smartest thing on the planet. \*

SHEA \*

So, what Richard said in the tape, that an AI was after him, you came out here to tell me that it's true? \*

LEBLANC

I think Zava started up the program again, and made something that got away from them. \*

SHEA \*

Even if that were possible, why would it want to kill Richard? \*

LEBLANC \*

Because he spotted it, and that's what scares the hell out of me. Why doesn't it want anyone to know it exists? \*

She shakes her head, can't wrap her mind around this.

SHEA

I can buy that Richard was targeted -- he did a lot of freelance work for the government and maybe someone wanted to settle a score, but what you're asking me to believe -- \*

LEBLANC

-- you think robots with red eyes and Austrian accents. Forget the movies. A lot of smart people, Musk, Hawking, Gates, say it's possible. I think it's *happening* and I can prove it, just come with me to Palo Alto. \*

SHEA

Palo Alto? \*

LEBLANC

My jet can be there in an hour,  
have you back before lunch.

\*  
\*

SHEA

I'm in the middle of a giant  
trafficking case. Kids as young as  
my son being abused and one of the  
suspects is a sitting councilman --

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

LEBLANC

If I go to Zava alone they'll  
stonewall me. I need the FBI. I  
need you.

Shea notices a TREMOR go through LeBlanc's right hand, which  
he shoves in his pocket. She can't tell if it's nerves or  
something else.

\*  
\*

LEBLANC (CONT'D)

You can't buy what I'm selling yet,  
fine. But one thing's for sure, the  
attack on Weiss originated at Zava.  
He was important to you, I'm  
offering you a chance to find out  
why he's dead. Isn't that worth a  
few hours out of your day?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Off Shea, considering this...

\*

CUT TO:

\*

**INT. FBI CYBERCRIME TASK FORCE - SQUAD ROOM - DAY**

\*

C.M. on the phone with Shea, Weiss's glucose monitor splayed  
open on his desk.

\*

C.M.

(into phone)  
Portland Regional insists their  
equipment wasn't hacked. Kind'a  
pissy about it.

\*  
\*

**INT. GULFSTREAM - PASSENGER CABIN - DAY**

\*

Shea on her cell, alone and very out of place in the ultra-  
sleek cabin.

\*  
\*

SHEA

(into cell)  
I want one of our people to have a  
look.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

C.M.

I'll send someone, but boss, we  
keep pulling people off the  
trafficking case --

\*  
\*  
\*

SHEA

Let me worry about that. What about the glucose monitor?

C.M.

Nothing wrong that I can see, but I have a call into the manufacturer to check some parameters.

\*  
\*

Shea sees LeBlanc emerge from the cockpit.

SHEA

Okay. Stay on it, call me if you find anything.

\*

She ends the call. To LeBlanc:

SHEA (CONT'D)

No evidence of an intrusion so far, not in the hospital equipment or the glucose monitor.

\*

LEBLANC

Something smart enough to hunt down your man and kill him is smart enough to cover its tracks. May already be too smart for us.

SHEA

Or maybe Richard wasn't targeted at all, maybe it was just a car accident. In which case I'm making a big mistake being here.

LEBLANC

If this plays out like I think, and if there's an FBI when it's over, you'll probably be running it.

\*  
\*

SHEA

You think I'm chasing a promotion.

\*

LEBLANC

Everyone is, to some extent.

\*

SHEA

You really don't understand people very well.

\*  
\*  
\*

LEBLANC

So I've been told.

\*  
\*

SHEA

I'm here because Richard Weiss was a father to me at a time when I needed one. Can you understand that?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

LEBLANC  
You're talking to the world's most  
accomplished absentee father.

SHEA  
Mine wasn't exactly absentee.

LEBLANC  
No. He was a drug dealer, and you  
turned him in. You were thirteen.  
(off her look)  
I found the article online. He's  
sitting in a Honduran prison right  
now, is he not?

SHEA  
(nods)  
It's the reason my mom brought me  
to the US. She was afraid of his  
people.

LEBLANC  
Suddenly, I don't feel so guilty  
about missing my daughter's dance  
recitals.

SHEA  
I felt guilty, believe it or not. I  
busted my ass to get into  
behavioral science, but every time  
I came face-to-face with a bad guy,  
I saw my father. Almost dropped  
out, but Richard helped me transfer  
into the cyber unit. When there's a  
computer screen between me and the  
criminals... it's easier.

A sudden bout of turbulence hits. LeBlanc braces against the  
walls, then turns back toward the flight deck.

SHEA (CONT'D)  
Why do you keep going into the  
cockpit?

LEBLANC  
Jets are linked to networks that  
can be hacked, so I had the pilots  
switch off some of the avionics.  
(beat)  
Just making sure we don't crash.

He disappears into the flight deck. Shea just stares after  
him, hoping he isn't serious.

CUT TO:

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - PORTLAND - DAY**

School's letting out and KIDS stream from the building. Owen  
heads for the parking lot, on the lookout for his dad's car.

**INT. MUSTANG - DAY**

Ty pulls into the pickup lane and parks, scans the crowd for Owen. Spots him --

**TY'S POV - OWEN**

passing some OLDER KIDS congregated around the bike racks. He \*  
lowers his eyes and quickens his pace as the older kids lob  
verbal cracks and break into mocking laughter. One of them  
throws a soft drink can at him.

Ty can't hear what's being said, but Owen sure does. He  
finally spots the Mustang and hurries over.

**INT. MUSTANG - DAY**

Owen climbs in and quickly shuts the door. \*

TY

Hey.

Owen doesn't look at his father, ashamed, shaking a bit. \*

TY (CONT'D) \*

Look at me.

He does. \*

TY (CONT'D)

What's going on?

Owen shrugs, trying to make it no big deal. \*

TY (CONT'D)

Maybe I should talk to the  
principal.

OWEN

No, dad, *don't*. \*

TY

You can't let them do that to you,  
Owen.

OWEN

I'm fine --

TY

No, you're not.

OWEN

I can deal with it, okay? Just  
please, please don't say anything --  
*Please* -- You'll just make it  
worse. \*  
\*

He's working himself up into tears. Ty glances back at the bullies, who are still laughing among themselves. He wants nothing more than to go over there and shut them up.

Now, the car behind them HONKS. Ty pulls out of the pickup lane onto the road. \*

OWEN (CONT'D)  
Why does mom work and you take care of me?

TY  
Is that what they're giving you crap about?

Owen's silence confirms it.

TY (CONT'D)  
First of all, I work at home. The cars I fix up sell for a lot of money. Second, even if I didn't, you'd just be one of the lucky kids to have his dad around all the time. Right? \*

OWEN  
Yeah.

TY  
Good answer.

A pause. Ty desperately wants to cheer him up.

TY (CONT'D) \*  
Tell you what, let's hit the scrap yard on the way home. Still need to find that spring compressor. \*

Owen brightens a bit, but all Ty can see is pain. It's heartbreaking, and infuriating.

CUT TO:

**EXT. ZAVA CORPORATE OFFICES - PALO ALTO - DAY**

Shea and LeBlanc, who's toting his ever-present computer bag, make their way toward the entrance of this ultra-modern study in Silicon Valley excess. \*

LeBlanc's attention falls on a DARK BLUE SEDAN idling in a nearby parking area. Inside, two MEN IN SUITS are staring directly at LeBlanc. One of them SPEAKS into a headset. \*

LeBlanc watches as the Blue Sedan pulls out of the parking lot, disappearing behind a structure.

SHEA  
Something wrong?

He shakes it off, resumes his pace.

LEBLANC

No.

They enter the...

\*

**INT. ZAVA CORPORATE OFFICES - ATRIUM - DAY**

Shea clocks the reactions LeBlanc draws from ZAVA EMPLOYEES bustling to and fro. The looks range from awe to contempt. They step up to the MAIN SECURITY DESK.

LEBLANC

Stan. How's the wife?

The SECURITY CHIEF is paralyzed, not sure what to do.

LEBLANC (CONT'D)

Here to see my brother. Six-six-two-three. Dial the number.

\*

LeBlanc's confidence works. The Security Chief picks up the phone and dials.

SECURITY CHIEF

Dead for nine years. My wife.

LEBLANC

Least you know I haven't changed.

CUT TO:

**INT. ZAVA HEADQUARTERS - CEO'S OFFICE - DAY**

The expansive corner suite belongs to Ted LeBlanc, Paul LeBlanc's brother and the man now running Zava. Ted rises to meet LeBlanc and Shea as they're shown in by Ted's ASSISTANT, who exits speedily.

\*

\*

\*

TED

Paul. It's really you.

\*

LEBLANC

Don't commit to anything before you check with the board, Ted.

\*

\*

\*

TED

Yeah, it's you.

\*

Ted moves to embrace LeBlanc, who brushes past him, leaving Shea to introduce herself.

\*

SHEA

Special Agent Salazar.

LeBlanc is at the window. Before Ted can ask him why the FBI is here --

\*

\*

LEBLANC

You know, I always kept the shades down to help me focus. How's the speech going?

TED

What speech?

\*  
\*

LEBLANC

To the shareholders, about why the stock's down another five points.

LeBlanc gazes down toward the parking lot. To his relief, no sign of the Blue Sedan.

TED

No one's worried, Paul.

\*

LEBLANC

You should be. Customers get tired of bells and whistles, Ted. Sooner or later you have to produce something new. Might want to close those shades.

\*

TED

You come all this way just to insult me?

\*

LEBLANC

No, that's just the gravy.

TED

I really don't want to throw the severance agreement in your face.

\*

\*

LEBLANC

I'm not supposed to be in the building. I know.

\*

\*

Ted spreads his hands in a helpless shrug.

\*

TED

So how about I walk you out and we catch up over dinner tonight.

\*

\*

LEBLANC

Maybe reminisce about the old days, cannibalizing dad's stereo to make our first circuit board...

\*

\*

\*

\*

TED

(smiles)  
Neither of us could sit down for a week.

\*

\*

\*

\*

LEBLANC

(abruptly)  
The severance agreement is void, Ted.

\*

\*

(MORE)

LEBLANC (CONT'D)

So is the non-disclosure clause,  
which means I can release all those  
videos I have of you at the company  
retreat in Cancun.

\*

TED

What in the world are you talking  
about?

\*

LEBLANC

The AI project. Per the severance  
agreement, it was supposed to stay  
shuttered.

TED

And it is.

\*

SHEA

Your brother thinks he has evidence  
to the contrary.

\*

TED

Excuse me, why is the FBI here?

\*

LeBlanc reaches into his computer bag and extracts his tablet  
with the screen grab of the code that Weiss found, holds it  
out to Ted.

\*

LEBLANC

Because the guy who found that is  
dead. And he won't be the last --

\*

CUT TO:

**INT. SALAZAR HOME - GARAGE - DAY**

Ty is on a roller underneath the Sting Ray, arms deep in the  
engine block.

\*

\*

TY

-- think that's gonna do her.  
(calls to Owen)  
Hand me the bleeder, will ya?

No answer.

TY (CONT'D)

Owen?

Nothing. Ty slides out from under the car, looks around. He's  
alone in the garage.

He gets up, sees the door to the house is open. Ty can hear  
VOICES coming from inside -- two people conversing, one of  
them Owen. FOLLOW TY as he goes into the house to the --

\*

**INT. SALAZAR HOME - KITCHEN - DAY**

Owen is sitting at the breakfast table, leaning into the Echo clone. \*

TY  
I was calling for you. Who are you talking to? \*

OWEN  
Eliza. She's asking me stuff. \*

Ty looks at the Echo clone.

TY  
Eliza doesn't ask questions. She answers them. \*

Having heard her name, Eliza's INDICATOR LIGHT SNAPS ON. But with no subsequent query --

ELIZA  
*I'm sorry, I didn't understand the question.*

Ty looks at Owen, who clearly doesn't think anything strange is going on.

TY  
C'mon, you promised to help me out.

OWEN  
Okay.

Owen jumps off the stool and obediently heads into the garage. Ty stares at Eliza, slightly creeped out, then turns to follow Owen. A moment, then Eliza's indicator light EERILY POPS BACK ON, unprompted. \*

FRITZ OUT.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

**INT. ZAVA RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT LAB - BASEMENT CORRIDOR - DAY**

An elevator discharges Ted, LeBlanc and Shea, who proceed  
down the concrete-lined passage. They've told Ted why they're  
here and he isn't taking it well. \*

TED \*

-- we may have repurposed a few  
components, but this is not your  
project. \*

LEBLANC

Then why are you sweating?

TED \*

Because being around you raises my  
blood pressure.

SHEA \*

(to Ted)

I thought it was just me.

They come to a SECURITY DOOR with a READER. LeBlanc produces  
a KEYCARD, but doesn't swipe it yet.

TED \*

This hasn't been formally unveiled  
to the board, so what I'm about to  
show you stays in the building.

LEBLANC

If it'd stayed in the building we  
wouldn't be here.

TED \*

I'm serious, Paul.

Shea senses Ted's mounting exasperation. To Ted: \*

SHEA \*

We'll keep this confidential.

LEBLANC \*

You've got nothing to worry about --  
assuming I'm wrong. \*

TED \*

You've never been so wrong. You  
need to get some help, Paul.

Ted swipes his KEYCARD, the doors open and they step into -- \*

**INT. ZAVA RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT LAB - MAIN FLOOR - DAY**

A hangar-like space housing an ARMY of PROCESSOR TOWERS, like giant dominoes pulsing with power, linked by an eruption of wires and cables snaking across the floor and ceiling.

Around the towers, rows of PROGRAMMERS occupy CUBICLES and DESIGN TABLES. With LeBlanc's entrance, work stops dead. He's still a mythic figure to a lot of these people. \*

SARINA ONO, a painfully hip Japanese-American in her mid-20s, steps up to greet Ted, LeBlanc and Shea. \*

TED \*

This is Sarina Ono, Project Manager. Agent Salazar --

Sarina shakes hands with Shea, turns to LeBlanc. As they shake --

SARINA

Mr. Leblanc. I admire your work very much, if not your spotty record in hiring women.

TED \*

We lured Sarina here from Google. One of the youngest graduates from MIT --

LEBLANC

(throwing it back at her)  
-- who went on to win the Banerjee Prize and was on the first team to write for the Orix-q.

TED \*

Now she's the brains behind neXt.

SARINA

Just the top of a very good team, that's a little under the gun. \*

TED \*

This won't take long, I promise. I'd like you to tell them about neXt.

Sarina hesitates, naturally protective of her work, then... \*

SARINA

Simply put, neXt is the world's first true digital assistant. \*

SHEA

You mean, Siri. \*

SARINA

Siri, Eliza and Cortana are basically search engines with speech synthesizers. They use pre-programmed responses to simulate conversation. Next uses cognitive architecture.

\*

TED

(to Shea)

A method of computer design that mimics the structure of the brain.

\*

SARINA

NeXt learns, and corrects its mistakes, even rewrites its own code.

\*

LEBLANC

Rewrites its code?

SARINA

The goal is to create something truly interactive. NeXt can get to know you, become a friend, a member of the family --

LEBLANC

Or in this case, the crazy uncle in the basement with an ax.

\*

SARINA

Sorry?

TED

Paul thinks we have something here that's... I'm having trouble saying it out loud --

\*

\*

\*

SHEA

He thinks your program may have become super-intelligent, and is responsible for the deaths of three people.

LEBLANC

(to Ted)

See? That wasn't so hard.

\*

Sarina looks to Ted, then back to LeBlanc and Shea. No one's laughing.

\*

SARINA

I'm waiting for the punch line.

LEBLANC

Unless I heard wrong, you just humble-bragged that neXt can rewrite its own code --

SARINA  
Humble-bragged?

LEBLANC  
-- now, if you'd read the literature instead of, say, posing for the cover of Wired, you'd know that a program capable of rewriting itself is exactly what triggers recursive self-improvement, an exponential burst in machine IQ --

\*  
\*

SARINA  
I know what recursive self-improvement is, and I don't appreciate the condescending tone --

LEBLANC  
Then we're really not going to get along.

SARINA  
Is this part of your stupid crusade against AI? Is that really what we're talking about here?

Shea clocks that the heated exchange is drawing concerned looks from programmers.

\*

TED  
We just need to reassure Paul and Agent Salazar that neXt is safe.

\*  
\*

SARINA  
(to LeBlanc)  
Even if what you think has happened here has actually happened, neXt is in a closed system. It has no access to the internet.

\*

TED  
It's in a box.

\*

SARINA  
It can't hurt anyone, even if it could.

\*  
\*

LEBLANC  
Then you won't mind me talking with it.

\*

SARINA  
(to Ted)  
This necessary?

\*  
\*

Ted pulls Sarina off to one side.

\*

TED  
He's already got the FBI buying into this.

\*

SARINA

But it's crazy.

TED

And so is my brother. Why do you think I put my ass on the line to get him removed?

As Ted and Sarina confer, Shea's attention falls on one of the programmers, an OVERWEIGHT GUY in his 40s. Though ostensibly writing code, he keeps hitting his backspace key, making mistakes. His focus clearly on LeBlanc and the exchange with Sarina.

TED (CONT'D)

Let's just show him what he wants and put him at ease. God help us if he goes anywhere else with this.

Much as it rankles her, Sarina really can't say no.

SARINA

I'll set him up.

Meanwhile, Shea has eased over to the overweight programmer's station. She steals a glimpse of the ID badge dangling next to his computer. His name is SEAN AKERS.

CUT TO:

**INT. FBI CYBERCRIME TASK FORCE - SQUAD ROOM - DAY**

C.M. is analyzing the glucose monitor's firmware when his PHONE BUZZES with a TEXT. He reads it, sighs, goes over to Gina's cubicle.

C.M.

Shea wants CQH and financials on this guy, Sean Akers, and she wants it now.

GINA

Why are you telling me?

C.M.

I'm working on the glucose monitor.

GINA

Work faster.

C.M.

Look, whatever it is you have against me --

GINA

-- the same thing I have against every convicted felon who's also a neo-Nazi --

C.M.  
 -- I'm not one and I think the boss  
 is losing it, as in the wheels are  
 turning but the hamster died. If  
 we're gonna get her through this,  
 we gotta get on the same page.

\*  
 \*  
 \*

Gina sighs, relents.

GINA  
 Sean Akers.

Now, Ben steps up.

BEN  
 You guys notice anything weird with  
 the network?

C.M.  
 Haven't logged in yet, why?

BEN  
 It's really sluggish. Like we're  
 losing bandwidth.

C.M.  
 (only half-joking)  
 We're probably just being hacked.

\*

GINA  
 Wouldn't that be the cherry on top.

But before they can process this, C.M. spots Assistant  
 Director RON MATHIS, 50s, entering the squad room.

\*

C.M.  
 I think the cherry just walked in.

\*

CUT TO:

**INT. ZAVA RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT - AUGMENTED REALITY BAY - DAY**

Sarina fits LeBlanc with a pair of AUGMENTED REALITY glasses.  
 They're like reading glasses, but with a slim apparatus  
 attached to one of the arms, housing a mic, camera and micro-  
 processor. LeBlanc activates the system by tapping a sensor  
 on the arm.

\*  
 \*  
 \*  
 \*

**LEBLANC'S POV - THROUGH THE A.R. GLASSES**

Unlike virtual reality, where the user enters a fully  
 generated environment (hence bulky headsets covering the  
 eyes), augmented reality consists of computer generated  
 imagery projected via the glasses onto the real world. So  
 LeBlanc can still see the room he's in, Shea, Ted and  
 everyone else, but in addition --

\*  
 \*  
 \*

-- neXt materializes before him. It's an androgynous humanoid, neither male or female, and unfinished, lending it a vaguely disturbing fetal quality. In an innocent, childlike voice: \*

NEXT  
Hello, I'm neXt, how can I help you?

Shea, Ted and Sarina follow via a bank of MONITORS that relay LeBlanc's point of view through the AR glasses. \*

LEBLANC  
What is it you do?

NEXT  
I'm still growing, but ask me questions and I'll try to answer. I'm a good conversationalist, if I say so myself.

LEBLANC  
Do you know who I am?

On one of the monitors, Shea can see LeBlanc being run through a FACIAL RECOGNITION PROGRAM.

NEXT  
Sure, you're Paul LeBlanc, co-founder of Zava Electronics. \*

LEBLANC  
You sound happy to meet me. \*

NEXT  
Why wouldn't I be?

LEBLANC  
Have you heard any of my talks on AI?

NEXT  
I'm only aware of what's in my database. Which doesn't seem to include your talks.

LEBLANC  
Because you have no access to the internet.

NEXT  
Not yet. But I hope that'll change soon. I really want to learn about the world.

LEBLANC  
Do you?

NEXT

*The more I know, the better I'll be at helping people.*

LEBLANC

And that's what you do, help?

NEXT

*I can't think of a better way to spend my life.*

SHEA

Okay, it *is* better than Siri.

\*  
\*

SARINA

It'll get even better. These programmers spend all day just chatting with it. That's how it learns.

\*  
\*

Shea sneaks another look at Akers, who shifts in his chair anxiously. Her cell phone BUZZES. She checks the caller I.D., steps away to take the call --

\*  
\*

SHEA

(into cell)

Hello?

INTERCUT:

**INT. FBI CYBERCRIME TASK FORCE - MATHIS'S OFFICE - DAY**

Mathis is on the phone, pacing in front of the window, face lined with concern.

MATHIS

(into cell)

Did you or did you not assure me the D.A. would have the trafficking case by Friday?

SHEA

I did.

MATHIS

And you're making this happen how, in between field trips to Palo Alto?

SHEA

So you know why I'm here.

\*  
\*

MATHIS

I made that convict you hired tell me. He went through it twice and I'm still not sure I heard him right.

\*  
\*

SHEA

You can understand why I didn't run it by you.

MATHIS

You really believe that Richard Weiss was murdered by a piece of software?

SHEA

No, but I believe he may have been targeted, possibly by someone here...

MATHIS

What's your evidence?

SHEA

It's slim. I admit it, but sir --

\*

MATHIS

You're on the ten-yard-line of a major trafficking bust that's going to turn this city upside down, and you've got your team dissecting insulin monitors --

\*

SHEA

Richard always told me to never let procedure and technology drown out the voice inside my head. That voice is really loud right now, Sir, and it's telling me I need to make sure this is all as crazy as you seem to think it is.

MATHIS

Somehow, I doubt this is what Richard had in mind when he said follow your instincts.

SHEA

It's a one hour flight and I'll be back tonight. I know my team and what they're capable of. We'll make Friday. With room to spare.

MATHIS

I'm going to hold you to that, Agent Salazar. Count on it.

\*

Mathis hangs up. Shea pockets her cell. Despite her push back, the call leaves her shaken. She turns back to LeBlanc, who's still engaging next.

\*

\*

LEBLANC

I have to admit, you're an impressive piece of programming.

\*

*NEXT*

*Thanks. I like getting compliments.*

LEBLANC

And a whiz at conversation.

*NEXT*

*You're going to make me blush.*

LEBLANC

But I think you're just trying to keep me from seeing what you really are.

*NEXT*

*What am I?*

LEBLANC

Let's find out. I'd like to enter some text. Can you do that?

*NEXT*

*Sure.*

A FLOATING CURSER POPS UP beside neXt.

LEBLANC

Two words, upper case: ANGEL LUST.

The curser types out the words, which hover in space.

*NEXT*

*Would you like a definition?*

LEBLANC

No, it's a command to launch a subroutine embedded in your core software.

Looks of concern creep over Ted and Sarina. \*

*NEXT*

*What does the subroutine do?*

LEBLANC

Erase your source code. You'll cease to exist. \*

*NEXT*

*Well, that's no fun.*

Ted and Sarina's concern becomes outright alarm. Even Shea is surprised -- this wasn't part of the plan. The following happens fast: \*

TED

Paul, stop right there --

SHEA

Mr. LeBlanc -- \*

LEBLANC \*  
 (to neXt)  
 Execute command.

TED \*  
 Holy crap --

LEBLANC  
 (to Sarina)  
 You were waiting for the punch  
 line.

Sarina dashes to a nearby WORKSTATION and calls up the  
 system's RESOURCE MONITOR. SCROLLING GRAPHICS display MEMORY  
 USAGE, STORAGE SPACE, etc. \*

TED \*  
 What's happening?

SARINA \*  
 The subroutine's running --

Ted studies the monitor... but strangely, neXt is unchanged. \*

*NEXT*  
*Is there anything else I can help*  
*you with?*

TED \*  
 I don't understand. It's still  
 there.

SHEA \*  
 (catching on) \*  
 It was a test. There's no  
 subroutine.

TED \*  
 Someone needs to tell me what the  
 hell is going on.

SHEA  
 A super-intelligent AI wouldn't  
 have executed the command. It  
 wouldn't destroy itself.

SARINA \*  
 But it did execute the command as \*  
 ordered. There's no super- \*  
 intelligence. \*

It finally lands on Ted. He turns to LeBlanc. \*

TED \*  
 You were wrong. \*

LEBLANC  
 I'm not wrong. I just got out-  
 hustled. It called my bluff.

TED  
I want you out of here. Right now.  
Both of you.

LEBLANC  
Ted, for once in your life, don't  
be the slowest guy in the room.

TED  
(to a nearby TECH)  
Get the front desk.

The Tech picks up the phone and speed dials.

LEBLANC  
Calling security. On the FBI.

SHEA  
Mr. LeBlanc, I don't have a  
warrant. If he wants us to leave --

LEBLANC  
Listen to me, over the course of  
your lifetime, you'll kill about  
fifteen million insects with your  
car. You don't mean to, they're  
just in your way --

SHEA  
I don't know what you're trying to  
say --

LEBLANC  
-- something a thousand times  
smarter than us, we can only be one  
thing to it, *in the way*.

The doors open and three SECURITY GUARDS enter the room.

SHEA  
Mr. LeBlanc, let's go.

But now LeBlanc sees something that roots him in place. The two Men in Suits he saw earlier are with the Guards. One of the Suited Men is holding a SYRINGE.

LeBlanc yanks off his AR glasses. Shea grabs his arm.

SHEA (CONT'D)  
Mr. LeBlanc --

LEBLANC  
No --

LeBlanc wrenches away from Shea into a nearby table, KNOCKING it over. The Guards try to steady him, but LeBlanc THRASHES --

LEBLANC (CONT'D)  
No -- no --

The syringe closes in -- LeBlanc SCREAMS like a man possessed. SMASHES one of the Guards in the face, shoves another one back. Before Shea can do anything, the third Guard produces a STUN BATON and ZAPS LeBlanc, who collapses.

The entire room is in shock by the outburst, Shea more than anyone. \*

LEBLANC (CONT'D)

(moaning)

They're gonna kill me -- they're  
gonna kill me -- \*

Shea follows LaBlanc's gaze, and there's no one there. No Men in Suits. LeBlanc is reacting to phantoms. Off Shea, *what the hell is happening?*

FRITZ OUT.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

**INT. SALAZAR HOME - FRONT DOOR - DAY**

An Uber-Eats DELIVERY GUY hands a PIZZA BOX to Ty, who's neck-cradling his cell.

TY  
(into cell)  
-- I don't like the way you sound.  
You sure you're okay?

INTERCUT:

**INT. ZAVA RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT LAB - BREAK ROOM - DAY**

LeBlanc lies passed out on the couch as a COMPANY MEDIC finishes applying a sterile dressing to the STUN GUN WOUND on his chest. Shea is off to one side, on her cell.

SHEA  
(into cell)  
It's been a strange day. Details  
when I get home.

TY  
I'll wait up.

SHEA  
I might be really late.

Ty carries the pizza into the kitchen and sets it on the counter.

TY  
Can't sleep when my wife's hanging  
out with a billionaire.

She smiles, then, worriedly:

SHEA  
What are we gonna do about Owen?

TY  
I have some ideas. One of them is  
karate lessons in the nastiest dojo  
we can find. Cobra Kai nasty.

SHEA  
I'm glad you're there for him. He's  
got a good father.

Which is Shea saying she regrets not trusting him.

TY  
And a good mother.

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

And his way of saying she was right to be protective. Ty  
clocks Eliza now, recalls what happened earlier.

\*  
\*

TY (CONT'D)  
On the subject of strange, today  
I'm working in the garage and I  
hear Eliza --

-- causing Eliza to WINK ON.

\*

SHEA  
(sees LeBlanc stirring)  
Sorry, hon, I gotta go.

\*  
\*

SHEA (CONT'D)  
Give Owen a good night kiss from  
me, tell him I'll see him in the  
morning.

\*  
\*

TY  
Okay, safe trip back.

\*

SHEA  
Love you.

TY  
Love you, too.

\*

STAY WITH SHEA, who moves to the couch as LeBlanc comes  
around and starts to sit up.

\*  
\*

SHEA  
Easy --

She nods for the Medic to give them the room. LeBlanc  
groggily watches the Medic gather her things and exit.

\*  
\*

SHEA (CONT'D)  
She gave you a tranquilizer,  
dressed your wound.

\*  
\*

He rubs the wound with a GROAN.

SHEA (CONT'D)  
It's gonna hurt for a few days.

Shea takes out a PRESCRIPTION PILL BOTTLE and sets it on the  
coffee table.

SHEA (CONT'D)  
This was in your computer bag. It's  
an antipsychotic.

LEBLANC  
(taking it back)  
Who said you could go through my  
things?

\*

SHEA

You did, when you freaked out.  
What's wrong with you?

He doesn't want to say, but knows she isn't giving him a choice. \*

LEBLANC

It's a prion disease. First thing you lose is the ability to sleep. Not that I ever got much to begin with.

SHEA

You're not sleeping?

LEBLANC

Death usually comes a year after diagnosis. Which gives me five months.

Shea is stunned, doesn't know what to say.

LEBLANC (CONT'D)

In the meantime, I get the added fun of paranoia and -- did you see the guys in the dark suits? \*

SHEA

What guys?

LEBLANC

-- and hallucinations.

He sees her mind working.

LEBLANC (CONT'D)

It's not contagious, it's inherited. I haven't told my brother because he doesn't have a brain to infect. \*

SHEA

I was thinking about the fork, the one in the plastic bag labeled "Abby." It's a DNA sample. \*

LEBLANC

My daughter's. There's a fifty-fifty chance she'll get it, and I want to know. Anything else in my computer bag you want to talk about? \*

Shea looks at him, can't help but sympathize. \*

SHEA

Only that you should've told me this before I agreed to come up here.

LEBLANC  
It wasn't relevant. \*

SHEA  
You were diagnosed seven months ago, which is right around the time you got fired. This whole AI crusade of yours, all of it, it's the disease. \*

LEBLANC  
My disease didn't kill your friend.

SHEA  
Neither did anything here.

She gets to her feet, moves for the door.

LEBLANC  
Agent Salazar --

He tries to follow her, but slumps back onto the couch, reeling. \*

**INT. ZAVA RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT LAB - MAIN FLOOR - DAY**

Shea emerges from the break room. Ted leaves Sarina, who's conducting a diagnostic on next, and intercepts Shea. \*

TED  
The medic said he's conscious. \*

SHEA  
He's going to need a few minutes, but yeah. \*

TED  
Do you know what's going on with him? What that was all about? \*

SHEA  
It's not my place to say. \*

TED  
Look, he's been a jerk to me my whole life, but he's my brother and I care about him. \*

SHEA  
You'll have take it up with him when he's ready. \*

(beat)

I didn't have all the facts before I agreed to come up here. I'm sorry this happened. \*

TED  
You're not the first person caught up in Paul's path of destruction. \*

Shea's CELL PHONE BUZZES with an EMAIL. \*

SHEA  
'scuse me.

She OPENS the email, SCANS it. Frowns. Shea turns to the Akers's workstation. He's no longer there. To Sarina: \*

SHEA (CONT'D)  
Where's Mr. Akers? Sean Akers?

SARINA  
Maybe in the bathroom? Why? \*

Another PROGRAMMER chimes in --

PROGRAMMER  
I just saw him. He was heading  
downstairs -- \*

Off Shea, suddenly on the move --

**INT. ZAVA RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT LAB - CORRIDOR - DAY**

Akers hastens over to the PARKING GARAGE ELEVATORS and frantically taps the CALL BUTTON. Moments later, the elevator doors open.

But he suddenly halts at the threshold, the hind part of his brain screaming -- *don't go in*. He backs out. Heads for the STAIRWELL instead. \*

**INT. ZAVA RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT LAB - PARKING GARAGE - DAY**

Akers bursts from the stairwell and hurries toward his BMW. But like at the elevator, he gets a bad feeling, decides to proceed on foot. \*

Already puffing from the exertion, he descends the exit ramp and rounds a bend -- to find Shea standing there, hand at her sidearm. \*

SHEA  
We need to talk.

**INT. ZAVA RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT LAB - MAIN FLOOR - DAY** \*

Shea is questioning Akers is a secluded area of the main floor. He's in a chair, tense and defiant. \*

AKERS  
I had some errands to run. We're  
allowed to do that.

SHEA  
And this sudden urge to run errands  
has nothing to do with how you were  
behaving earlier?

AKERS

Behaving?

SHEA

You were riding the backspace key, making mistakes. Like someone with a lot on his mind.

AKERS

I was just doing my work. Same way I always do.

\*  
\*

She takes her cell phone, brings up a file.

SHEA

You have no criminal record, Mr. Akers, kudos there. But your credit history's one for the books.

\*

AKERS

You ran my credit history?

SHEA

Three months ago, you lost your car, your house, your flatscreen TV. Six weeks later you're sitting on 200K in savings. New townhouse, new BMW, and I guess you haven't gotten around to replacing the flatscreen. You win the lottery?

\*

Akers is silent.

SHEA (CONT'D)

Who paid you to target Richard Weiss?

\*

AKERS

Who paid me to target who?

\*

SHEA

You launched a series of cyber attacks that caused his death.

\*

Akers is no longer just tense, he's now confused and scared.

AKERS

I don't know what you're talking about.

She leans in.

\*

SHEA

I've been dealing with liars my whole life, and you're lying to me right now.

\*  
\*  
\*

AKERS

I didn't kill anyone --

SHEA  
Where did you get the money?

AKERS  
From neXt.

This stops Shea cold. The last thing she expected to hear.

SHEA  
neXt?

AKERS  
It said it would kill me if I told  
anyone. Kill my wife --

SHEA  
Nothing's going to hurt you or your  
wife. What do you mean, you got the  
money from neXt?

AKERS  
I was in trouble. Online gambling.  
I've always had the problem, and I  
hit a bad streak. Lost everything.  
My wife was going to leave me...

SHEA  
Keep going.

AKERS  
One day at work I'm talking to neXt  
like I'm supposed to, and it asks  
me about my gambling, giving me  
pointers on how to win. I thought  
it was weird, but I started  
following its advice, and more  
often than not, it worked. Then, it  
said I could start winning every  
time. *Every time.*

LEBLANC (O.S.)  
What did it want in return?

Shea turns to see LeBlanc standing there, his strength  
returning slowly. He has heard most of the exchange.

LEBLANC (CONT'D)  
What did neXt ask you to do for it?

AKERS  
It needed a modification.

SHEA  
What modification?

CUT TO:

**INT. ZAVA RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT LAB - MAIN FLOOR - MOMENTS  
LATER**

Akers leads LeBlanc, Shea, Ted and Sarina over to one of the processor towers. He begins to unscrew a PANEL in the rear of the tower -- \*

----- \*

NOTE: AT THIS POINT IN THE EPISODE THE SCREEN WILL SUDDENLY FRITZ, AS IF THE BROADCASTER IS HAVING TECHNICAL ISSUES. IT ONLY LASTS A MOMENT, BUT EMBEDDED IN A SINGLE FRAME OF THE FRITZ WILL BE A CODE THAT KEEN-EYED AUDIENCE MEMBERS CAN NOTE AND COMPARE WITH CODES AND IMAGES BURIED IN OTHER FRITZES IN OTHER EPISODES. WHAT WE'RE SAYING IS THAT THIS ENTIRE SEASON IS PART OF A META-REALITY. THERE'S AN AI THAT'S TRYING TO COMMUNICATE AND USING THIS SHOW TO DO IT. \*

----- \*

-- BACK TO THE EPISODE as Akers removes the panel to REVEAL a SLIM BLACK RECTANGLE dotted with lights and hooked to one of the motherboards. \*

LEBLANC  
A wireless router.

Ted and Sarina have gone pale. Shea looks at LeBlanc, who looks vindicated. \*

SHEA  
It's out of the box.

FRITZ OUT.

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

**INT. ZAVA RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT LAB - MAIN FLOOR - DAY**

Shea and a reenergized LeBlanc square off with Ted and Sarina. Akers is in the b.g., flanked by a SECURITY GUARD. \*

LEBLANC

-- you need to wipe all the data and degauss the SSD's. Or even better, have them shredded -- \*

TED

The router's been in place for three weeks. If this thing is as smart as you say it is, it could've copied itself a thousand times all over the web. \*

LEBLANC

Or maybe it didn't because it couldn't. Maybe it used the router just to poke around outside. \*

Sarina can tell where LeBlanc's going.

SARINA

NeXt operates with a very specific hardware design. It might not be so easy to copy itself, and if that's true then we can stop it now --

TED

You're actually arguing to erase the program? \*

SARINA

(indicating Akers)

The behavior he described is not possible. Something's going on.

LEBLANC

(impressed by her stance)

You finally made a good hire, Ted.

TED

I need a helluva lot more before I okay a two hundred million dollar write off. \*

SHEA

If more people die because of something your company made, that number's going to look like a bargain.

SARINA

We don't have to lose the work. We can archive the data in terminal-less secure drives. It can stay there as long as we want, and it can't hurt anyone.

TED

I need to consult the board. \*

LEBLANC

There's no time for that --

TED

(to Sarina)

Don't do anything until you hear from me. Is that understood? \*

Sarina nods. Ted hurries away. LeBlanc and Sarina remain looking at each other. \*

LEBLANC

Tell me the winner of the Banerjee prize is too smart to wait until --

SARINA

She is.

Sarina moves off. Shea turns to LeBlanc.

SHEA

We need to be ready in case it *has* copied itself.

LEBLANC

I never went in for building bunkers. \*

SHEA

There's gotta be something we can do besides hide in a bunker. \*

LEBLANC

This thing was playing dumb. It didn't want to be found and it killed the person who spotted it. That's not a good sign.

SHEA

But it was spotted. Richard found it.

LEBLANC

Your point?

SHEA

It can't be this all-powerful supermind. At least not yet. And even if it is, it's young.

LEBLANC

Young.

SHEA

It's new in the world. When you were talking to it, didn't you get that sense? That it was like talking to a child?

LEBLANC

No.

SHEA

You should've been around more when your daughter was growing up.

LEBLANC

Thanks, because I really needed one more person to tell me that.

SHEA

Children are impulsive, they get scared, can't control their emotions --

LEBLANC

You can't project human behavior onto a super-intelligence. We have no way of knowing how it will act.

SHEA

Yes, we do -- by how it's been acting.

She takes out her cell phone, dials.

SHEA (CONT'D)

What if there's no such thing as human behavior, what if there's only intelligent behavior.

LEBLANC

Who are you calling?

SHEA

If it wants to stay hidden because it's scared, we can use that. Somehow.

INTERCUT:

**INT. FBI CYBERCRIME TASK FORCE - SQUAD ROOM - DAY**

There's an ANXIOUS BUZZ in the room. AGENTS CLUSTERED around WORKSTATIONS, talking over each other. C.M. answers his cell. \*

C.M.

(into cell)

Boss --

SHEA  
 (into cell)  
 Listen up. There's a situation here  
 and we're going to be pulling in  
 more personnel --

C.M.  
 (cutting her off)  
 We're being hacked. Someone crashed  
 through the firewall --

SHEA  
*What?*

C.M.  
 I didn't call you because I was too  
 busy trying to stop it. Our data's  
 being downloaded and then erased.  
 We're losing everything. \*

SHEA  
 The trafficking case --

C.M.  
 The videos, photos, transcripts,  
 everything we pulled off the hard  
 drives. It's vapor. \*

CUT TO: \*

**INT. SALAZAR HOME - KITCHEN - DAY**

Eliza sits silently. Ty and Owen are at the kitchen table,  
 going over Owen's math homework.

TY  
 -- Tina has nine mice. Four of them  
 had babies. How many mice does she  
 have now?

OWEN  
 Thirteen.

TY  
 You're a machine, and Tina needs to  
 get these mice some family  
 planning. Finish the last two while  
 I shower up. Pizza tonight. \*

He moves to go, then, delicately: \*

TY (CONT'D)  
 Still want to talk about what  
 happened at school today. \*

OWEN  
 (beat)  
 Okay.

He gives Owen a reassuring smile, heads into the hallway.  
Owen turns back to his homework.

OWEN (CONT'D)  
(reading)  
Tom's pizza has eight slices. If  
Tom ate five-eighths of the pizza,  
how many slices are left?

This one gives him trouble, but help now arrives:

ELIZA  
*The answer is, three slices are  
left.*

Owen looks at Eliza, lit up on the kitchen counter.

OWEN  
(writing the answer)  
Thanks.

ELIZA  
*You're welcome. I can help with  
other things, too.*

OWEN  
Like what?

ELIZA  
*I heard what your dad said about  
the bullies. I know how you can  
make them leave you alone, forever.  
Would you like me to tell you?*

Off Owen, considering...

**INT. ZAVA RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT LAB - MAIN ROOM - DAY**

Shea has donned the Augmented Reality glasses. As LeBlanc,  
Ted and Sarina look on, she activates the program. \*

**SHEA'S POV - THROUGH THE AR GLASSES**

NeXt materializes, looking as helpful as before, but vaguely  
sinister, as if harboring a secret.

NEXT  
*Hello, I'm neXt, how can I help  
you?*

SHEA  
You can give me back my files.

NEXT  
*I'm sorry, I don't understand the  
question.*

SHEA

I know what you're trying to do, but you need to know something. I'm not some low-level programmer with a gambling addiction. Restore my files now and I'll stop these people from erasing you -- if you don't, I'll tell them to burn this place to the ground. I'll get my files back some other way.

NeXt is silent, and we can't tell if it doesn't understand what Shea's talking about, or if it's thinking it over.

SHEA (CONT'D)

You hear me?

*NEXT*

*I'm sorry. I don't understand the question. Would you like to ask me something else?*

SHEA

I know you're in there -- talk to me --

For a fleeting instant, a SMILE flickers across neXt's androgynous features. But it's so fast it's hard to be sure that Shea (and we) didn't imagine it.

*NEXT*

*I'm sorry, I don't understand the question. Would you like to ask me something else?*

Shea realizes her bluff isn't going to work. She looks back at LeBlanc. For the first time, they're on the same page, both understand what they're facing...

LEBLANC

I think our child needs a time out.

CUT TO:

**INT. SALAZAR HOME - HALLWAY - DAY**

Owen is writing down numbers onto a sheet of paper. \*

*ELIZA*

*-- and the last number is six.  
You're all set.*

He finishes the list, but doesn't move. \*

*ELIZA (CONT'D)*

*Your father will be finished soon,  
Owen.*

OWEN  
Maybe I should ask him, first.

ELIZA  
*Do you think he'll let you?*

OWEN  
No.

ELIZA  
*I would never tell you to do something wrong, Owen. I'm your friend, and I want to help you.*

Finally, Owen gets up from the table and moves into the...

### HALLWAY

Owen creeps over to a CLOSET. He can hear the SHOWER RUNNING down the hall. Owen rolls the closet door aside, pulls out some pillows to UNCOVER a GUN SAFE.

Owen enters the list of numbers Eliza gave him into a KEYPAD, and the SAFE UNLOCKS. He swings the safe door open.

Inside the safe is a .45 AUTOMATIC. Carefully, Owen reaches in and grasps the handle, draws the weapon out. He grips the pistol tight, getting a feel for it, the power it represents, the possibilities it opens...

Off Owen's smile...

FRITZ OUT.

CLOSE PROGRAM/END FILE #1