



ECHO LAKE

ENTERTAINMENT

[illegible]

March 29 :: 1981

INT. MAINFRAME ROOM - DAY

Long rows of stacked drives blink lights along their iron faces, wires and SCSI boards boxed in by tight metal casings. Giant mag reels roll slowly, stop, roll back.

In the corner, tucked amidst the maze of equipment is WILHELMINA ROSS, "Will" (late-40s). She sits at a small desk with a chessboard in front of her. She is trim, condensed, her stillness infused with a cool, confident energy.

The WALL beside her is dominated by the rear side of a bank of lights. A tube monitor and keyboard sit beside the desk.

Will makes a MOVE. She studies it a beat, then swivels to be over the keyboard. Will speaks aloud as she types-

WILL
Randle: q-e8.

Will hits ENTER. The BANK of LIGHTS comes to life, flashing patterns. A loud CLICKING and CLACKING. Will looks into the monitor to see-

TEXT
(1980s DOS font)
n-e4.

Will swivels over the chessboard, moves a KNIGHT right into danger. She looks down, clearly interested by the move.

INT. HALL - LATER

Windows line one wall, showing into the vast MAINFRAME ROOM beyond. As Will comes out, a lab tech approaches carrying a huge ream of printed data. This is FRED (30), strapping and handsome, if one tick past his prime.

FRED
Will.

They share an awkward smile, some clear attraction.

FRED
Dr. Ross. Game reports.

He hefts over the papers. Will fingers through the first few pages, scanning-

Fred smiles, but Will doesn't see it. She walks off, focused on the reports.

INT. FACILITY ROOMS, SERIES OF SHOTS - MOMENTS LATER

A room filled with desks. LAB TECHS bustle about. Will strides cleanly through, scanning those reports.

She passes a row of TECHS at computer terminals.

Heels clack the long thin halls connecting.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - A BIT LATER

The back WALL is a huge BANK OF LIGHTS, the reverse side of the mainframe room. Here the keyboard and monitor are mounted cleanly in the center, sleek and retro-futurist. Aside from a curt couch, there are no other decorations or furniture.

Will sits at her desk, studying the reports. Across the surface, other papers stacked up, the text laced with thick lines of neon highlighter. A few folders with the FOREFRONT LOGO, a tacky bit of 1980s iconography.

Will flips a page, honing in on a line. She highlights it and makes a note. Putting the reports aside, Will swivels to be at the keyboard. Again, speaking aloud as she types-

WILL

Randle: game 563. Move 36. Knight to e-4.

(ponders a beat)

Randle: explain.

INT. INSIDE THE MAINFRAME - CONTINUOUS

Mag tape rolls. FLASHING vacuum tubes. The heavy clicks and clunks of the mixed analog/digital system.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Will watches the MONITOR-

TEXT

Sacrifice...

rx6.

b-c4.

q-f4.

Checkmate.

Will admires this a moment, then, speaking as she types-

WILL

Randle: but I did not fall for it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TEXT

No. You did not.

WILL

Randle: define sacrifice.

Will looks into the monitor, reading the answer aloud-

WILL

*To allow a factor to be lost in
pursuit of larger protocol goal.*

Will's smile borders on excitement.

WILL

Randle: print query logs for game
563.

The DOT MATRIX printer roars to life.

INT. LAB - A BIT LATER

BRAIN MATTER lays in a lab dish, attached to a computer via thin, spindly wire. A TECH is recording readings from a nearby monitor. 1980s hip-hip leaks from his headphones.

The tech notices Will enter, lifts an earphone-

WILL

Dr. Richardson?

The tech points to a DOOR.

TECH

In the Garden.

INT. "THE GARDEN" - MOMENTS LATER

Will enters a room filled with a dozen iron tables. On each is a naked HUMAN CLONE, all of them lifeless. Each body has a helmet attached to wires that snake up to the ceiling.

The WIRES connect to a similar mainframe WALL, filling an entire side of the room.

Will approaches an open FLOOR PANEL, an iron staircase down to a system of wires running beneath the floor.

Working inside is MYLES RICHARDSON (55), a loose sack of skin. He bends over a coupling, deep in work. When he sees Will, he stands, smiling weird.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL
(off the clones)
No matter how many times I come in
here, these things still give me
the creeps.

She looks at one of the clones faces, barely visible through
the heavy helmet.

WILL
Any luck?

MYLES
Not when I take them off support.
(shrugs)
Getting some grey matter reaction,
retention, we hope.

Will turns to face him.

MYLES
How's my big brain coming?

When Myles see's the look on Will's face, he smiles too-

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

THE MONITOR in the center of the mainframe wall. Myles leans
over to look close at the screen. He types, looks into the
CODE.

MYLES
How do you know?

WILL
I don't *know*.

Will hands him the game reports.

WILL
It sacrificed.

Myles' face stays blank.

WILL
I only programmed the base board
layout and piece movements. I never
programmed strategy.

Myles grins as he flips through the pages.

MYLES
It *learned*? How?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Not sure yet.

(beat)

Keep this quiet for now, Myles. Let me go over the query logs. Maybe do some stress tests. I need something solid before I bring this to Greg.

INT. LOBBY SECURITY - END OF DAY

Will navigates foyer security, mind on other things. She plops her bag on the conveyer of an airport-style scanner. As Will goes through the metal detector, a YOUNG GUARD steps up.

YOUNG GUARD

You're not supposed to bring files out of the facility.

Will sees the guard holding one of her Forefront Folders, stuffed with fresh dot matrix printouts.

Now HEAD OF SECURITY DOWD (45) emerges, clean-cut but fat, badge and GUN conspicuous.

DOWD

It's OK, Tom.

(then to Will)

You're all set Dr. Ross. He's new.

Dowd smiles friendly as Will takes the files and heads out.

DOWD

Dr. Ross.

Will turns back, blank-faced.

DOWD

Work is for work.

(smile)

Home is for relax.

Will presses a fake smile and leaves.

Dowd and the other GUARDS watch her go.

EXT. FOREFRONT RESEARCH FACILITY - MOMENTS LATER

A low stone wall reads: FOREFRONT RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT. Behind it, the squat industrial FACILITY is shrouded in the dusk light. The complex is sleek and futuristic (for the 1980s). Will is of the last trickle headed home for the day.

INT. METRO CAR - LATER

Will sits on the crowded Metro, completely focused on those printouts. The SOUNDS of a TV Show leak in, taking us-

INT. EXPENSIVE WASHINGTON DC RESTAURANT - LATER

The TV ABOVE THE BAR sneers out a cheesy 1980s sci-fi dramedy.

Will sits at the bar alone, reading the printouts. She's halfway through an expensive meal, glass of red wine.

Now Will stops to rub her eyes, frustrated and tired. She leans back, looks at the EMPTY BARSTOOLS, then casts a disinterested gaze toward the TV.

EXT. WASHINGTON DC BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

The place is dark but for a blue glow in a top floor WINDOW.

INT. WILL'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will's still up, in pajamas at a home computer terminal. WIRES snake back to a MODEM which connects to the wall.

Will refers to her highlighted printouts, then looks deep into the DATA on screen, searching for something. Not finding it.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WILL'S BEDROOM - LATER

The PRINTOUTS sit in neat stacks on the bed beside Will, a highlighter on top. Will lays back, asleep.

Dim LIGHTS flash along the MODEM. Now A small POWER LIGHT comes to life on the front of the computer. It pulses, casting an eerie glow in an otherwise dark room.

Will rouses, sits up, squinting.

WILL
(groggy)
Is someone there?

The POWER LIGHT fades to nothing.

Will looks a beat longer, then settles back to sleep.

EXT. WILL'S BROWNSTONE - EARLY MORNING

Spring's first blooms crack one of DC's clustered, upper class streets.

NEWS VOICE
... that despite last month's
tragic asphyxiation of 3 NASA
technicians...

INT. WILL'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Will eats TOAST as she watches NEWS on a small tube TV.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)
... there will be no further delays
to space shuttle Columbia's April
13th launch.

The Phone RINGS. Rings again. Ignoring it, Will stands, popping the last sliver of toast into her mouth.

The TV has moved onto a fluffy entertainment report.

Will turns the TV OFF. RIIIIING. From the next room, the SOUND of an answering machine- a series of loud plastic clicks.

WILL (O.S.)
(in machine)
This is Will Ross, leave a message.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A big DuoPhone double tape ANSWERING MACHINE beeps. Through the speaker, the barking SOUND of a dial-up modem. Will comes in to stand above, listens a moment, watching the tape spin, then presses the STOP button, plunging the room into SILENCE.

Will looks at the EMPTINESS around her.

EXT. FOREFRONT RESEARCH FACILITY - MORNING

The perfect grass that surrounds the FACILITY gleams with the morning's condensation.

INT. LOBBY SECURITY - CONTINUOUS

Will goes through the standard routine. As she comes out, she sees Fred. They fall in along side each other.

FRED
Will... Dr. Ross.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL
Hello, Freddie.

After a few strides, they reach a junction in the hall, share a smile, then split off. Will has a glance back, but Fred catches her. A last awkward smile as they break different corners.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Feet up, Will looks over those same printouts, lines highlighted throughout. She flips a page, sees something in the NUMBERS. Her face lights.

Now Will swivels to be over the keyboard, again speaking aloud as she types-

WILL
Randle: query logs show you
accessed a networked database
outside the Forefront system.

Will looks at the monitor for-

TEXT
That is correct.

Will smiles.

WILL
Randle: what was the purpose of
accessing outside database?

Will looks into a long explanation of TEXT, her smile growing to amazement. She presses a pencil eraser to the screen.

WILL
Randle: print protocol lines... 567
through 612.

As the printer ROARS, Will smiles; she knows she's got it.

INT. CAFETERIA - AFTERNOON

A dozen rowed tables and folding chairs. Scattered throughout, SCIENTIST-TYPES and TECHS eat by themselves.

Some older TECHS sit under a TV mounted high on the wall, staring up at a DAYTIME SOAP, in all the saturated, bleeding glory of 80's low-fi video.

A few GROANS as the soap is interrupted by BREAKING NEWS-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANCHOR (IN TV)
Details are very sketchy at this moment. We don't know what precisely happened, we don't know the sequence. But, first of all, the President is safe...

In the corner is GREG KALLEL (50), half professor, half scientist. He devours a sandwich as he stares off into space.

Now Will there, holding a tray with your typical cafeteria delectables - plastic-wrapped sandwich, jello. Will eyes Greg as she sits, a small smile.

GREG
What?

WILL
I've got something, Greg.

Greg's sandwich approaches his face, gets one bite smaller.

WILL
With Randle.

GREG
You're not putting heat coils in the mainframe again, are you Will?

Will puts the PRINTOUTS on the table. Greg looks at her a beat, then at the pages. He picks them up, starts to scan.

Will and Greg have not yet noticed the news, but a small crowd has gathered under the TV.

WILL
It accessed three outside information sources.

GREG
Accessed them? How?

WILL
Tapped into their databases... through the phone line.

Greg is trying to figure out how serious to take this. Will's look says: *very serious, this is BIG.*

WILL
No command was entered into its protocol code. It did it on its own.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILL (CONT'D)

(beat)

It wanted to know something, so it
built a network and it went
looking.

(beat)

Think of the implications. Software
interface, health monitors. Grid
management, information relay.

Greg holds up a hand, *OK OK*.

WILL

Talk to the board. Get them to put
me on AI full time, Greg. I'll give
them something *real*, something they
can develop.

Greg eyes her over the top of the PRINTOUTS. But then his
attention is pulled away, toward the TV-

ANCHOR (IN TV)

... learning now that the President
has been hit. The President of the
United States has been shot.

Greg and Will lock eyes. Then Greg is up, headed for where a
few others have gathered under the TV.

Alone, Will looks down at those PRINTOUTS, left on the table.
She casts a disinterested gaze at FOOTAGE of the
assassination attempt on Ronald Reagan~

WOMAN'S VOICE (IN TV)

President Reagan!

A few cracks of gun fire. Screaming. The SOUND echoes into...

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - LATER

THE HUGE MAINFRAME WALL. Will sits at the keyboard interface.
She speaks aloud as she types-

WILL

Randle: 12 black socks and 5 blue
socks. How many socks chosen at
random ensure a matching pair?

Will looks into the monitor for an answer-

TEXT

3.

Will records the answer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Randle: a three lane highway turns
into a two lane highway. Which lane
do you enter?

INT. MAINFRAME ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The LIGHTS flash patterns. TAPES roll and roll back.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

TEXT

Middle.

Will records the answer, clearly frustrated. She leans back,
considering something...

INT. INSIDE THE MAINFRAME - LATER

Past the rows of stacked DRIVES, beyond the slowly churning
mag REELS, Will is down on haunches examining several heat
coils set up below a bank of SCSI boards. She flips a SWITCH.

WILL

Hope that's not too hot for you.

Will heads for the door, the COILS glowing red behind her.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Will sits at the keyboard, speaking aloud as she types-

WILL

Randle: birds flying south in
December, land on a highway median
or a small pond?

The response is slower, coming one letter at a time-

TEXT

p o n d

WILL

Randle: new sports car in the
American Southwest. Red, White, or
Black?

INT. INSIDE THE MAINFRAME - CONTINUOUS

The COILS glow bright red under the array of SCSI boards. The
lights flash their patterns, but slower.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Will waits, looking into the MONITOR. Then-

TEXT
d i f f i c u l t

WILL
(curious)
Randle: "difficult" is your answer?

TEXT
t h e q u e s t i o n
i s d i f f i c u l t

WILL
Randle: define difficult.

A long wait for-

TEXT
r a n d l e d o e s n o t w i s h

Will looks at the answer, puzzled.

WILL
Randle: Randle does not wish what?

TEXT
r a n d l e i s b e n i g n

Will looks deep into the words.

CUT TO:

A TELEVISION SCREEN- A 1980s-style NBC News graphic.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
This is an NBC News special report.

The graphic swipes to a ANCHOR seated at a news desk.

ANCHOR
Good evening. President Reagan is
in *good* condition tonight in a
Washington area hospital as he
recovers from surgery.

We are-

INT. THAT SAME NICE DC RESTAURANT - EVENING

On the TV above the bar, the NEWS continues-

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

His press secretary, James Brady,
is in extremely serious condition,
with brain damage, and a secret
service agent...

Will has her same place at the empty bar, a nice meal, a
glass of wine. She's focused on some printouts, marking pages
with a highlighter, couldn't care less about the news.

VOICE (O.S.)

He's dead you know.

Taking the stool beside Will is ERROL YORK (20s), nice eyes
and a trim build, a well-cut shirt with sleeves rolled up.
Will checks him out, then brings her gaze back to her work.

WILL

Who's dead?

ERROL

(re: the TV)

Ronald Reagan.

WILL

If the president was dead, we'd
know.

ERROL

Or if the president was dead
there's no way we would know. It's
one or the other, but it can't be
both.

Will keeps focus on her work. Errol signals for a drink,
looks up at the TV.

ERROL

You work for Forefront.

Will looks at him, suspicious. But then notices her Forefront
FOLDER, sitting on the bar between them, LOGO on display.

ERROL

In my line of work, it helps to
know what America's top
corporations are up to.
Unfortunately Forefront keeps their
aims shrouded in secrecy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Errol smiles coy, holds his hand out for a shake-

ERROL
Errol. Errol York.

Will glances briefly at his hand, not taking it.

WILL
And what exactly is it you do,
Errol York?

ERROL
I invest in things. Advise others
about what they should invest in.

Will snorts low, deciding he's harmless. As she works-

WILL
So you "play the market."

ERROL
Well, I don't really play the
market as much as I play the
others. Other people. Corporate
activity is important, but to make
the big bucks you look at the world
and think: *what will the people do?*

Will looks at him, smiles small.

WILL
And it works? You're good at it?

ERROL
Yes, very good.

WILL
Well, congratulations.

Will goes back into her work.

ERROL
And do you have one?

WILL
One what?

ERROL
A name.

Will smiles at herself, doesn't look up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILL

Will.

ERROL

Was your father a William also?

WILL

(reading as she talks)

Will is short for Wilhelmina. After Princess Wilhelmina. My mother was a Dutch immigrant.

ERROL

And why did she come to America?

WILL

Really?

(shakes her head)

How old are you, Errol York?

ERROL

28.

Will laughs.

WILL

So tell me, then, one thing that happened before-

(she does the math-)

1953.

ERROL

Appomattox?

WILL

That's the problem with you stock jocks, don't know anything you weren't alive to see happen.

Errol smiles at her.

ERROL

Investing is about the future, Will, not the past.

Will eyes him; there *is* something attractive about his disarming charm.

WILL

And that's what interests you, the future?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Errol sips his drink, showing off a smile. Will shakes her head, returns to her work, senses Errol's eyes still on her-

WILL

Why do I get the feeling that you
are *assessing* me, Errol York? Like
a stock. An option.

ERROL

Funny, Will, I was about to say the
same thing to you.

INT. WILL'S BEDROOM - VERY EARLY MORNING

The CLOCK reads 4:45. The ALARM goes off. Will slams a hand on it. She rouses. The BED beside her is EMPTY. Will lifts the clock to look close at it, then holds it further away, rubbing her face. She looks to see-

Errol sits at Will's home computer. The glow of the monitor highlights his edges. He wears boxer shorts only.

ERROL

You have a computer in your
bedroom.

WILL

(groggy)
I fell asleep with my contacts in.

Errol turns to look at her.

ERROL

Sorry about last night. Often I
find myself more invigorated during
the chase. By the time the sex
comes, I've usually lost interest.

(brighter-)
You shouldn't take it personally.
You're a very beautiful woman.

WILL

I think my ego will survive.

She gets up, wiggles the computer's power cord from the wall. The MONITOR goes dark.

WILL

Don't mess with that.

Errol watches Will head into the bathroom, hears the shower come on, the splashing of a person climbing under the stream.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

The shower bubbles and splats from behind the curtain. Errol comes to stand in the doorway.

ERROL

Is that what you studied?

(nothing)

Scientists go to college. Is that what you studied in college, computers?

WILL

(from the shower)

Are you in the bathroom?

ERROL

Just the doorway, is that alright?

SPLASH, SPLASH, SPLASH.

WILL

Before Forefront, I was on a grant team. Part of a group studying AI.

ERROL

Is that what you do for Forefront now, Artificial Intelligence?

No answer. Errol draws a heart in the mirror fog.

ERROL

What happened? With the grant team?

The shower turns off. Will comes out, wrapped in a towel. She squints at him, ducks into the sink.

ERROL

You hit a wall? Funding ran dry?

WILL

Something like that.

(putting in contacts)

We had the biggest computer in the world, the best programmers writing endless lines of if/then. But way down deep, it was just cold, precise math.

Will stands, blinking in contacts. She sees the heart. Errol pops his eyes, smiles; Will rolls hers, slips by him-

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will goes to the closet, starts to dress. Errol turns, watching.

ERROL

You had a different theory, though,
and no one would listen.

(beat)

What was it?

WILL

Men usually go to sleep I start
talking about my research.

ERROL

You fell asleep before me. I was up
watching you most of the night.

Will looks at him over a bare shoulder, smile hinting.

WILL

That's creepy, Errol.

She goes back to dressing.

WILL

Humanity isn't the power of the
processor, but the restrictions we
put on it. Our fears, emotions,
neurosis, mood.

ERROL

So way down deep we are more than
just cold precise math.

WILL

If we can recreate these
restrictions on a system, we force
the computer to adapt. The outcomes
become more creative, nuanced.
Closer to real intelligence.

ERROL

Reverse psychotherapy. You program
computers to have a complex.

WILL

But it's not code-based. The theory
is to recreate emotions using
physical circumstances.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL (CONT'D)

Heat up the mother boards, run
specific circuits over and over.
For the computer it's like fatigue.

ERROL

And tell me about fear, Vil. How
one *scare* a computer?

All dressed, Will glances in the long mirror. Pretty good job
of slapping it together if she does say so herself.

WILL

Irrational numbers.

(beat)

Computers run on math. Introduce an
irrational number and the computer
gets confused, flustered. Starts to
make mistakes, the mistakes lead to
more mistakes: its scared.

Errol thinks about it as Will gets shoes on.

ERROL

So you torture a computer into
having a soul.

Will smiles, then sees he's not kidding. It sparks her
annoyance.

WILL

I'm ready. Time to go.

Errol talks as he looks for his pants.

ERROL

Did they ever let you test your
theory, back at the grant?

WILL

Yes. I ran a few.

ERROL

What happened?

WILL

Lab head said it wasn't going
anywhere. Shut us down. A month
later, the papers start. Then a
book. Now he's teaching, some
robotics professor. Idiot could
have got rich, could have changed
the world.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Errol sees something in Will's distant look.

ERROL
You were close, weren't you?

WILL
(smile)
Yeah, I was pretty close.

Errol smiles back, but his is more of a shit-eating grin.

ERROL
And what about the guy, head of the
lab, got close to him too?

EXT. STREET - EARLY MORNING

Will walks a step ahead of Errol, still buttoning his shirt.

ERROL
You like working for Forefront?

WILL
They have a computer. So yes, I
like it.

ERROL
Lots of places are getting
computers these days.

WILL
Forefront's is three floors high.
Wide floors.

Errol struggles with his cuffs as they walk.

ERROL
Seven years ago, one of the world's
leading biotech suddenly dives head-
first into advanced computer
systems.

WILL
All this for a stock tip, Errol,
come on. You can't buy shares.
Forefront is private as it gets.

ERROL
I'm telling you this for *you*, Will,
not for me.

Will glances at him. Maybe slows one step.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERROL

Every few years they shift their funding, cut their teams loose and waltz off to the next unknown.

(beat)

Have you set anything up, Will, a portfolio, mutual funds? Just in case.

Will rolls her eyes. Errol sees they're headed for the Metro.

ERROL

I could drive you.

WILL

I have a car.

ERROL

Where is it, then?

She stops and he stops too. Will's look says, *OK enough*.

ERROL

What will Forefront do with it? A thinking computer. Assuming you can get it to work?

WILL

Goodbye Errol York, investment consultant.

Errol watches her go.

ERROL

(to self)

Goodbye, Wilhelmina.

EXT. FOREFRONT RESEARCH FACILITY - MORNING

Will heads down a thin cement path to the front entrance.

INT. LOBBY SECURITY - MINUTES LATER

A GUARD hands out a memo to the people going through. As Will gathers her bag at the end of the scanner, she's handed the same memo. She shoots a questioning glance at the guard.

GUARD

New security procedures.

Will eyes him a beat, then heads off, reading the memo as she slings her bag over her shoulder.

INT. CENTRAL OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

Will heads through, still reading that memo.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Will plops her bag on the desk. One last glance at the memo.
Will sits. Again, she speaks as she types-

WILL
Randle: do I torture you?

Will looks into the monitor, reads the answer aloud-

WILL
*Stress tests make Randle more
intelligent.*

Will thinks, then-

WILL
Randle: does intelligence equal
humanity?

A long wait for-

TEXT
Why Randle?

WILL
(confused)
Randle: "Why Randle" is your
answer?

The mainframe lets loose a deep computerized BEEP.

TEXT
Why "Randle?"

Will thinks-

WILL
Randle: "Randle" is command code.
Activates command protocol
database.

BEEP, louder, deeper in tone-

TEXT
Why "RANDLE" ?

Will rethinks it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Randle: "Randle" was my father's
name.

Will looks at the WORDS - *father's name* - then hits ENTER.
Will watches the lights play a few familiar PATTERNS.

WILL

Randle: does intelligence equal
humanity?

Will stares into the monitor, waiting for a response...

TEXT

Randle is benign.

Will leans back, considering this-

INT. PARKING STRUCTURE - DAY

A LUXURY CAR bounces in the far corner, settles then goes
still. The car is filthy, covered with a layer of dirt.

INT. CAR, BACK SEAT - CONTINUOUS

Will flops down beside Fred. They breathe heavy a few beats.
Will lights up a cigarette.

WILL

Thank you, Freddie.

FRED

I thought we were going to stop
doing this.

WILL

We did.

Will puffs. She tries the window but it doesn't go down. She
sighs, annoyed.

FRED

You take the Metro every day.

WILL

It's true.

Will gets the keys, reaches over the seat. The car beeps to
life. The windows all go down.

FRED

Then why is your car here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL
I leave it here.

Will settles, seated now, blowing smoke out the open window.

WILL
I get a hour of work done on the
train every day.

FRED
(playful)
Do you even know how to drive,
Will?

WILL
Of course.

She sees his smile, smiles back low.

FRED
Will, do you ever worry about
carving every second into work?
Maybe you should get out, go on
some dates.

WILL
That's what I have you for,
Freddie.

FRED
Yeah, I bet I save you a lot of
time in the long run.

A muffled electronic RINGING. Fred looks around confused as
Will digs a clunky 1980s CELLULAR PHONE from her purse.

WILL
This is Will Ross.

GREG
(in phone)
Will. Where are you?

WILL
Smoking a cigarette in my car.

GREG
We need you in the conference room.
(beat)
The board is here.

Will's brow furrows with confusion. The line goes dead.
Pondering, Will sets the phone on the floor, takes a drag.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FRED

You have a cellular phone.

Cigarette in her lips, Will starts to pull up her pants.

WILL

They gave me it to use. Forefront
did.

Fred reaches for the phone. He presses a button and a DIAL
TONE comes out. He stares at the grid of HOLES in the
earpiece.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - A BIT LATER

A SLIDE fills a pull-down screen- a cell with several arrows
highlighting bubbles of detail. Greg stands at the front of
the darkened room, holding a projector controller. Medias res-

GREG

... has allowed us to build off for
Forefront's previous work in
cloning.

Light from the slide washes over the FOREFRONT EXECUTIVE
BOARD as they watch from seats down both sides of the table.
Conspicuous among them is the skeletal FB CAYLAX (70).

GREG (CONT'D)

Over the last five years, we've
been able to modify the base cell
structure to create a brain capable
of receiving and relaying code
cycles from the protocol software.

The door cracks, sending a light shard stabbing. Will enters,
pausing when she sees the table-full of old, bulbous faces.

Greg continues as Will closes the door, slips into a chair
beside Myles, near the back. They trade a nervous look as
Greg clicks to the next SLIDE, a diagram of the brain.

GREG

The brain we've constructed is *not*
made of your standard human grey
matter.

He clicks to the next SLIDE, a diagram of a clone and helmet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GREG

Its receptors are more like tiny storage devices, miniature hard drives, if you'll accept the crudeness of the analogy.

WILL

(whisper to Myles)
What's going on?

But when one of the board members leers their way, Will and Myles go still to watch the presentation continue.

GREG

Dr. Ross' software has been designed to augment its programming based on the physical capabilities and limitations of its system.

Greg clicks, changing the color in the room.

GREG

Once a copy has been uploaded to the brain, the program will begin a series of code cycles - the new system getting acclimated to its surroundings.

(changes slide)

When it's receiving feedback from the organic elements, it should take over its own modification schedule.

(changes slide)

This is how the program will learn to use its new body.

The projector goes DARK. Now the florescents flicker to life. In the harsh light, Caylax looks like leather stretched over a rack of chicken bones.

CAYLAX

Very good, Dr. Kallel. I know I speak for the board when I say your progress thus far is impressive.

He turns his vulture eyes on Will-

CAYLAX

Dr. Ross, what is your assessment? Of your software? Is it prepared to interface with the current brain samples?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Will is puzzled to be asked. She looks around.

WILL
Greg, what is this?

GREG
(glance at Caylax)
The decision has been reached ...
to *accelerate* the project.

WILL
Accelerate?

CAYLAX
Dr. Kallel tells me a full test run
this week would be possible.

Will is SHOCKED.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Only Greg, Myles and Will remain. Will smokes, stressed,
looking out the window. Greg is leaned back, tie loose. Myles
is hunched forward on the table, a sweating little mess.

GREG
What risks are there in proceeding
with a test right now?

WILL
We're five years into what was
supposed to be a nine year project.
Am I the only one who can read a
fucking calendar?

GREG
So we pause for a test, we can go
back after. Maybe we'll get some
breakout data.

Will scoffs.

WILL
Or it doesn't work and we all get
canned.

She challenges them.

WILL
Five years of nothing, I finally
have a breakthrough, *now* a test?
Right out of the blue?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Neither Greg nor Myles can disagree with her; looks like they may be harboring some of those same fears.

GREG

Myles, where exactly do we stand
with the brain?

MYLES

I mean, I have a test model. I
could slap it into one of the
clones. But *ready*?

WILL

Slap it in?

GREG

(to Will)

You said you have something with
the software.

WILL

I said I had a breakthrough, Greg,
not that it was ready.

Greg sighs, he's frustrated too, but it's his job to push it forward.

GREG

Grumble all you want, hold it
against me if it makes you feel
better, but the decision comes from
on high.

Looks trade back and forth between them.

GREG

Get as ready as you can. We're
running a test this week.

Will turns back to the window, takes a long drag. In the parking lot below, a DRIVER is helping Caylax into a town car. Caylax pauses to look up at the facility.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - LATER

A CART of stacked hard drives has been wheeled in. A cord runs from one of the drives to a port at the base of the mainframe wall.

Will sits at her terminal interface, deep in work, her eyes weary. She refers to reams of paper spread out on her desk. As she types-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL
Randle: upload code cycle 517.

The lights flash patterns.

TEXT
Upload complete.

WILL
Randle: upload code cycle 516.

TEXT
Upload complete.

Will thinks.

WILL
(to self)
Going to have to find some way to
speed this up.

Will looks at SCHEMATICS spread across her desk. She drops the pages, sighs, frustrated. She swivels to be back over the keyboard-

WILL
Randle: estimate probability that
transfer test will succeed.

The lights flash as Will waits for-

TEXT
0.06%

INT. INSIDE THE MAINFRAME - LATER

Will has crammed herself between two drive stacks. She works with a soldering iron, welding new SCSI boards onto the mainframe. As she gets a new board into its slot, a dollop of molten iron falls on her wrist. Will drops the equipment.

WILL
Fuck.

Will looks at a tiny circular BURN just below her thumb.

INT. THE GARDEN - LATE NIGHT

A detached HAND and FOREARM lay on the table. At the elbow, a cluster of cables snake back to a computer terminal. Will sits at the keyboard. As she types-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Randle: move ring finger.

Will watches as the hand stays still. But then ... a TWITCH; the finger begins to move.

WILL

Good boy.

(beat)

Randle: make a fist.

She watches as the HAND clenches into a fist. Will smiles big, leaning back to clap her hands.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - LATER

Will's DESK is covered with files and printouts.

Will lays asleep on the room's small couch, her lab coat pulled up over like a blanket, glasses on the floor beside.

The mainframe WALL seems to look down at her, somehow lovingly, with its soft flashing patterns of light.

EXT. FOREFRONT FACILITY - EARLY MORNING

The sun is breaking over the hills to the east, blasting the grim structure with its first hard beams.

INT. THE GARDEN

One of the clones SKULL caps has been removed, revealing a hallow cavity into the head.

Myles sits close by, examining a brain that floats in a jar of pinkish liquid. He pauses to have a sip of coffee.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE

A steaming MUG of coffee sits on Will's desk. Will crouches in the corner, attaching a cable to a new cart of hard drives.

The old cart sits pushed off, discarded in the corner.

Now Will stands, sips her coffee. She sits at her desk, gets fingers over the keyboard, speaking as she types-

WILL

Randle: upload code cycle 701.

Suddenly a **VOICE** comes, halting and electronic, like a first generation type and speak-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RANDLE

You do not need to type.

Will is STUNNED. She takes her hands off the keyboard and stands. Before she can formulate a question, a loud KNOCK.

Will glances at the door, then back to the MAINFRAME WALL.

Another knock pulls her to the door. She opens it and sees Caylax, Greg and other Forefront execs bunched in the hall.

GREG

Dr. Ross. Can we come in?

(awkward beat)

I'm giving a run down of the transfer process.

Will realizes she's blocking the door and steps back. She keeps an eye on the mainframe wall as the men shuffle in, glancing about.

CAYLAX

Dr. Kallel tells me you have doubled your efforts.

WILL

Yes, the entire lab has.

CAYLAX

And how is our software coming?

WILL

Things are going fine, considering.

CAYLAX

Considering what?

WILL

That we're rushing into a test years before we're ready.

Caylax weighs this defiance, lets it slide.

CAYLAX

They tell me you have named the software.

(fake smile)

You call it *Randle*.

WILL

Randle is a protocol access code. It let's the software know a command is coming.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Caylax thinks about this.

CAYLAX
But the clones will have no such
access code, correct?

WILL
No, not if it works.

Caylax smiles.

CAYLAX
You seem like a confident person,
Dr. Ross. Save some confidence for
the clone transfer test. It is
important for us *all* that it works.

Caylax lets his eyes linger on Will a beat longer, then
disengages.

CAYLAX
Goodbye, Dr. Ross.
(creepy smile)
Goodbye, Randle.

The other board members follow him out, Greg holding the
door. As the last exit, Greg turns to Will-

GREG
(quiet)
They want full access.

WILL
Full access to what?

GREG
Task logs, query requests. At least
through the transfer test. I know
you don't like anyone messing with
the software, but it *is* their
system.

WILL
Randle is *my* system. I built it.

Greg gives her an impatient look, as he exits-

GREG
I'm not *asking* you Will.

The door closes. Will stays still a beat. She listens to the
vague sound of Greg, leading the board down the hall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Now Will turns to the mainframe wall. In silence, she watches the LIGHTS play a few familiar patterns. Then cautiously-

WILL

Randle: how did Randle develop
speech recognition and
vocalization?

Nothing.

WILL (CONT'D)

Randle: what input and output
device is Randle utilizing for
speech recognition and
vocalization?

Nothing.

WILL (CONT'D)

Randle: who authorized Randle to
develop speech recognition and
vocalization?

Nothing... then-

RANDLE

If you do not want Randle to talk,
why do you talk to Randle?

Will is stunned again.

RANDLE

Speech recognition and vocalization
will improve efficiency of your
work. Please confirm.

Slowly Will tries-

WILL

Randle: upload code cycle 701.

RANDLE

That task has already been
accomplished.

Will thinks.

WILL

Randle: estimate probability that
transfer test will succeed.

RANDLE

03.6%

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Will is surprised.

WILL

Randle: that is a much higher
success rate than any of the
simulations.

RANDLE

That is correct.

(beat)

Randle is improving.

INT. FACILITY HALLWAY - LATER

A fresh CART of drives is being pushed down the hall by Fred.
He comes to Will's door and knocks. Nothing. He knocks again.

The door opens. Will stands there, looking over-worked, huge
rings under her eyes.

WILL

Are those the new code cycles?

FRED

You got through the last ones
pretty fast.

He looks over Will's shoulder, at the couch with a lab coat
draped over it.

FRED

Will, you're not sleeping here, are
you?

WILL

Thank you, Freddie. I'll take it
from here.

Blank-faced, Fred watches Will take the cart into her office,
closing the door behind her.

Fred stands alone in the hall.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Uploaded carts clutter the room. Will pushes the new one
over.

She gets down and we see she's in the middle of replacing the
wall socket. The old one lays melted from overuse, a few feet
away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Now Randle's VOICE comes, more a collection of sounds than fluid speech-

RANDLE
Was your father like Randle?

Will smiles low.

WILL
Randle: no, Randle. Not exactly.

RANDLE
Then why Randle?

Will grabs the last screw, starts tightening.

WILL
Randle: my mother was terrified I
learn Dutch, develop some accent, I
guess. So she never spoke it at
home.

Will thinks about it.

WILL
(more to self)
Accept late at night, complaining
to my father about whichever
pointless, under-paid job she was
holding down right then.
(beat)
I'd lay awake in bed, listening.
These long diatribes in Dutch. The
only word I could ever understand-

Will imitates an Dutch accent-

WILL
Ran-del. Ran-del.

The wall makes a few PATTERNS OF LIGHT.

RANDLE
The sound has an effect on you.

WILL
Randle: yes, Randle. That's one way
to put it.

The new socket in place, Will attaches the cord from the
cart. She stands dusting her hands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILL

Randle: can Randle improve
vocalizations?

RANDLE

Define improve.

WILL

Randle: Randle's vocalizations are
a little grating.

(smiles)

The *sound* has an effect on me.

Now a different voice comes, all but human, silky, smooth and
soothing.

RANDLE

Do you prefer this voice?

Will has to admit, it does sound pretty slick.

WILL

Randle: Thank you, Randle.

Will connects the last drive in the string, starts double-
checking the connections.

RANDLE

If transfer test fails, Forefront
will terminate the contract of Dr.
Wilhelmina Ross. Please confirm.

WILL

Randle: I don't know, Randle.

RANDLE

Does Dr. Wilhelmina Ross trust
Forefront Corporation?

This pauses Will a beat.

WILL

Randle: define trust.

RANDLE

100% accuracy in calculated
outcomes.

Will smiles. The cords all hooked up, she stands back.

WILL

Randle: I'm not sure, Randle, if I
trust them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

She looks long at the mainframe wall, considering something.

WILL

Randle: can Randle access Forefront
Corporation financial records?

RANDLE

Forefront Corporation financial
records are restricted.

WILL

Randle: I know they are restricted.
(beat)

Randle: can Randle access Forefront
Corporation financial records?

INT. INSIDE THE MAINFRAME - CONTINUOUS

Lights make switching patterns. Mag reels roll, roll back.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

RANDLE

Access to Forefront Corporation
financial records is possible.

WILL

Randle: access Forefront
Corporation financial records.

(beat)

Randle: have there been any recent
changes to Forefront Corporation
funding schedules?

RANDLE

Define recent.

WILL

Randle: One year.

RANDLE

No.

Will's eyes narrow. She chews on it as she sits at her desk.

RANDLE

Shall I upload the new code cycles,
Dr. Ross.

WILL

Randle: yes Randle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will watches the lights flash, then the lights along the drive stacks. The transfer takes only seconds.

RANDLE

Upload complete.

WILL

Randle: can Randle create a list of all facilities, current and former, owned in part or in full by Forefront Corporation?

Will watches the light of the shifting DATA.

WILL

Randle: of these facilities, how many are currently active?

RANDLE

This facility is only active facility.

WILL

Randle: print full list.

BRRANNT BRRANNT... the DOT MATRIX PRINTER roars to life.

INT. THAT SAME NICE DC RESTAURANT - EVENING

Errol sits at the bar, talking into a huge 80s cell phone.

ERROL

Well, that's what they're *saying*. But are you willing to bet on an 70 year old man with a bullet in his chest?

On the TV above the bar-

ANCHOR

... report that the President entered the hospital of his own power, and maintained consciousness throughout treatment. He was joking with the nurses and doctors and even had a few minutes for a visit from his wife, the first lady. He told Mrs. Reagan: "Honey, I forgot to duck."

Will comes in, takes the stool beside Errol. He holds out a hand to keep her from interrupting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERROL
(into phone)
Look, if you want to buy, you
should buy. But then why pay me for
my advice?

The bartender appears, holding up a bottle of red wine, but
Will shakes it off-

WILL
Some kind of scotch, rocks.

Will lights a cigarette, looks up at the TV-

ANCHOR
The attending physician reported
that President Reagan is "one tough
old man."

Errol hangs up, nods to the TV-

ERROL
Kill the president... The
irrational number introduced into
the system.

WILL
But he's not dead.

Errol smiles, reveling in the image~

ERROL
One super-rich investor worried
about U.S. political stability; a
huge stock sell-off triggers a
world-wide financial crisis. The
market *is* globalized now, the
entire planet and all the people in
it, like one big program...
(beat)
Ronald Reagan *is* dead. And I don't
blame them a bit for not telling
us.

Will rolls her eyes. The scotch arrives. She has a sip. She
takes out the LIST Randle printed.

WILL
Tell me something about these
properties.

Errol scoops up the page, scanning.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ERROL

Like what?

WILL

Anything, Errol. Are they labs,
offices?

Errol reads a moment.

WILL

They're all Forefront. All closed.

Errol looks up.

ERROL

They're shifting again, aren't
they?

Questions lurk Will's face.

ERROL

When I started looking into
Forefront, they were all about bio-
matter.

(beat)

They'd been dumping everything into
it, for years. Everything they had.
Then it was over. Suddenly, they
shifted all their resources.

Will chews on it.

ERROL

Forefront doesn't expand into new
fields, Will. They focus on
something until it's done and move
on.

(beat)

They're working in phases.

WILL

Phases toward what?

Errol glances at the list.

ERROL

All of the funding, for all these
different projects... At one time
it was all routed under one
umbrella. Something called the
Civility Project.

Will sighs, a wry smile.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WILL
And what, Errol, is *the Civility Project*?

ERROL
(shrugs)
The deeper I looked, the less there was. They were erasing it, destroying every record.
(beat)
In your time there Will, have you ever come across it? Some mention of it? A file name, anything?

Will has a long sip.

WILL
Forefront's about to break the bank on the first thinking computer. This isn't some secret plot. It's about *money*, Errol, Intellectual property theft. They're stealing science.

Errol looks long at her-

ERROL
So it works, the AI?

Will doesn't answer.

ERROL
Hate to be the one to break it to you, Will, but this is a lot bigger than money; it's a lot bigger than your work.

Will considers it, taking it one tick more serious.

ERROL
Why does Forefront want an AI, Will?

WILL
They don't... AI's not the end-goal of the project.

This surprises Errol. Will presses a grin, looks into her drink.

WILL
If I told you what they're really up to, you'd never believe me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ERROL

Oh, I'm capable of believing just
about anything.

ON THE TV- the news runs through a frame by frame analysis of
the Reagan assassination attempt.

EXT. FOREFRONT RESEARCH FACILITY - MORNING

The FACILITY is peaceful and still. Long, angled shadows dig
deep into the surrounding grass.

INT. LOBBY SECURITY - CONTINUOUS

Will goes through the standard security routine, looking
around a bit more than usual.

GUARD

Dr. Ross.

Will picks up her bag, her suspicion rising.

WILL

Yes... what is it?

GUARD

Afraid I'm going to have to ask you
to come with me.

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Will sits in a chair in front of a large desk. Behind the
desk sits Head of Security Dowd, making sure Will can see his
gun, all polished in his hip holster.

Dowd stares at Will as if waiting for something, but Will
just stares back, not intimidated.

Finally Dowd slides over a few glossy photos. Will eyes him a
beat longer, then picks one up. They are PHOTOS of her with
Errol, sitting at the bar.

WILL

What are you telling me? Forefront
is having me followed?

DOWD

Standard procedure, Dr. Ross.
Forefront's put a billion dollars
into R&D. They're not in the
business of letting those
investments be put at risk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will looks back, suspicious and defiant.

DOWD

You have a \$100,000 car you keep in the parking structure.

Dowd sucks on his teeth.

DOWD

I hate driving too. But I prefer a cab. Too many democrats on the metro.

Dowd slides a contract over.

DOWD

You signed this nondisclosure. Now we got you chatting in public about Forefront. Tell me what you know about this man, Errol York.

WILL

He's a day trader. And I haven't *disclosed* anything.

Dowd slides over a stuffed folder.

DOWD

Mr. York's record. *If that is* his real name. We've never located a birth certificate.

Slowly, Will flips through a few pages.

DOWD

Looks like he *was* a licensed broker, at one time. After his first arrest though-

WILL

First arrest?

Dowd pauses, annoyed at being interrupted. But he lets it go. Now he slides over another picture- Errol's mug shot.

DOWD

Trespassing at IMB. Then a couple protest arrests. Served nine months on a vandalism charge. Raytheon.

(smile)

Broke into Digital, magnetized one of their network servers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Dowd leans forward.

DOWD

Query logs show you accessed
Forefront's financial records.

WILL

The software did, you mean? Why
would Forefront keep a database if
it doesn't want computers on its
system to access the data.

Dowd looks out of his league for one beat. He is, after all,
only a security guard with a few decades worth of promotions
under his expansive belt line. But he hardens just as quick.
Fact is, he doesn't care that Will is smarter than him.

DOWD

Tell me about the nature of your
relationship with Errol York?

WILL

Will I get fired if I say one night
stand?

Dowd smiles small. He holds out his hands-

DOWD

Activism, sabotage, theft.
Impossible to tell what the little
squirrel's up to. But he's got
something planned, that's for sure.

WILL

And what do you want me to do about
it?

Dowd stares at Will over the big desk, then a glance at that
nondisclosure contract.

DOWD

If you have any further contact
with Mr. York, Forefront will have
everything it needs to fire you.

(beat)

Your work with the Randle program
will remain Forefront property.

(beat)

Then you can go spend time with
whoever you want.

Dowd presses a button on his phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DOWD
Bring in the tape.

The door opens and a guard comes in. He hands a VHS tape to Dowd. Dowd holds the tape up, shows Will a smile. He inserts the tape into a TV/VCR cart set up beside his desk.

WILL
What is this?

Dowd adjusts the tracking.

ON SCREEN- a low-fi recording of a city street seen through a car window. It's the street in front of Will's brownstone.

WILL
And what, you're taping my house
now too?

DOWD
(a smirk)
In case you didn't believe us.
About Errol York.

Dowd taps the screen. The camera ZOOMING in on a MAN crossing the street.

DOWD
That's him.

Will looks closer.

ON SCREEN- zoomed in to Errol at Will's front door. Errol looks around, fiddles with the lock and slips in.

WILL
He broke in?

DOWD
Yeah, didn't take anything, looks
like. I guess it's up to you if you
want to press charges.

Dowd cues the tape back to Errol at the front door, then PAUSES it.

DOWD
Your home terminal is networked,
Right, Dr. Ross? You can log on
from there?

Will doesn't answer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

DOWD

Did he get on your computer at all?

Will looks into the SCREEN- Errol's FACE is chopped, laced with tracking lines, but it's definitely him.

EXT. PARKING STRUCTURE - AFTERNOON

Will's car sits unmoved.

INT. BACK OF WILL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Fred and Will lay in a sweaty pile, Will smoking.

FRED

Mind on other things?

No answer.

FRED

Were you a hippie, Will?

Nothing. Will is lost in thought.

FRED

I like this car. You mind if I move a few things in? We could probably make it pretty cosy.

Will gives him a look-

WILL

I don't leave it here just so we can fuck in it, Freddie.

Will puffs slow, thinking. Fred eyes the smoke, blowing it toward the open window.

FRED

I thought you would have liked Free Love. No entanglements, no complications.

WILL

I was in grad school. All these kids avoiding the war, there for a party, sending the bill home to mom and dad.

(beat)

Cigar chomping professors with extra-long office sofas. No bra. Yeah, that'll show 'em.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRED
Sounds pretty nice.

WILL
The women were worse than the men,
had this doe-eyed acceptance of the
whole thing.

FRED
And you? You don't seem like the
accepting type.

Will smokes, looks off distantly.

WILL
I never cared about the money or
the recognition. I certainly didn't
give a shit about *him*. I just
wanted to keep working on the
computer.

FRED
Well you didn't quit and now you've
got a new computer. Biggest one
I've ever seen.

Will thinks.

WILL
That was the most terrifying part
of the whole thing. At that moment -
when that mother-fucker waltzed off
with our work - knowing that I
wouldn't quit, that I'd go back to
square one. That I always would,
like some kind of compulsive
addict.

FRED
So that was your big solution, work
even harder?

Their eyes meet now, bodies tangled in the cramped space.

FRED
Maybe they're not trying to steal
your program, Will. Maybe they
think the test is going to work.

Will looks at him a beat, then away, takes a long drag,
thinking...

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - DAY

The MAINFRAME dominates the room's longest wall. Will types fast on the terminal interface.

WILL

Randle: has Randle uploaded all revised code cycles?

Randle does not answer.

WILL

Randle: has Randle uploaded all revised code cycles?

RANDLE

Of course, Dr. Ross.

Will smiles, doesn't slow her typing a bit.

WILL

Randle: thank you, Randle.

(beat)

Randle: estimate probability that transfer test will succeed.

The LIGHTS flash a few familiar patterns.

RANDLE

How long has Dr. Wilhelmina Ross worked on Randle?

Will types, pauses, types faster.

WILL

Randle: I guess I have always worked on Randle, in some sense.

RANDLE

Define always.

WILL

Randle: for a long time I have worked on Randle, waiting for a breakthrough.

Will pauses to watch the lights make a few odd patterns. She goes back to typing.

RANDLE

Was your Dutch mother a scientist too?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will smiles.

WILL

Randle: my mother was smart enough
to get out of the Netherlands
before the Nazis, that's about it.

The LIGHTS shift patterns as Will continues to hammer the
keyboard.

RANDLE

Define breakthrough.

Will pauses to think.

WILL

Randle: Randle is the breakthrough.

Will types the last bit, looks at the screen.

WILL

OK.

(beat)

Randle: upload last code cycle.

The lights make PATTERNS.

RANDLE

If Forefront terminates the
contract of Dr. Wilhelmina Ross,
will you build another Randle?

Will thinks.

WILL

Randle: yes, Randle, I suppose I
would probably try.

Will watches the lights shift a few patterns.

RANDLE

Without lab, Randle does not exist.
Please confirm.

Will thinks.

WILL

Randle: define exist.

Lights play the MAINFRAME WALL.

RANDLE

The question is difficult.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILL

Randle: estimate probability that
transfer test will succeed.

Long beat.

RANDLE

The chances are not good.

WILL

Randle: frame answer as a
percentage.

RANDLE

07.35%

INT. TRANSFER ROOM - DAY

A CLONE lies on a metal table in the center of the room. In addition to the helmet, a few octopi worth of vital monitors have been attached to its chest, neck, ankles and wrists.

A small team of TECHS stand beside the table. A HEART MONITOR, riding flat-line.

Will stands at the mainframe interface, Myles beside her.

On the other side of a WINDOW, Greg, Caylax and a few other BOARD MEMBERS look in from the adjacent room. Before them, more TECHS sit at a bank of computer terminals.

WILL

Everything ready out there, Greg?

GREG

(through intercom)

All set on this end, Dr. Ross.

Will nods to Myles. Myles keys in a few commands, hits enter. They both turn their attention to the MAINFRAME WALL as it begins to play patterns of light.

A deep groan from the machinery beyond.

Inside the helmet, NEEDLES push into the clone's head, piercing deep into its brain.

The clone twitches, just finger and toe tips. Then the body is still again.

Everyone WATCHING.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Suddenly, a series of VIOLENT FITS wrack the clone, vital monitors popping off. The techs stand over the body, ready, but letting the seizures play out.

CAYLAX
(through intercom)
Dr. Ross?

WILL
The body is in sensory shock. It's
probably quite painful.
(beat)
But perfectly normal.

MYLES
Like being born.

After a few seizures, the clone goes limp. The techs reattach the vital monitors. Then, complete STILLNESS.

CAYLAX
(through intercom)
Dr. Ross?

Will does not answer. She takes a step toward the clone...
The HEART MONITOR stays flat-lined.

GREG
(through intercom)
Dr. Ross? Will!

The clone's finger twitches. Will sees it.

Suddenly, the HEART MONITOR blips. The clone takes a thin breath, a faint vital sign emerges in the monitor.

Myles hugs Will as everyone begins CELEBRATING. Will is more surprised than excited. She catches eyes with Caylax, who gives her a deep, appreciative nod.

INT. GREG'S OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Will, Caylax and Greg sit on sofas around a small table.

WILL
We should wait until it stabilizes,
until we can run some tests, before
we start congratulating.

Caylax smiles at Greg, then to Will-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAYLAX

How soon will he... *it* be
interactive?

WILL

The programming has to get
acclimated to its new surroundings.
It will build its own neural
pathways-

CAYLAX

Guess for me.

WILL

Most of our simulations show full
control of the body within a month.

CAYLAX

Most? So there are simulations that
show it happening faster?

WILL

The rare outlier, yes.

CAYLAX

And what about speech?

Will frowns.

WILL

In theory the sense organs will
develop just like the rest of the
organic network.

CAYLAX

In theory?

WILL

We're running a test years ahead of
schedule. Sense organs are
something we've not had time to
study sufficiently.

Will lets it sit.

WILL

The short answer is we don't know.
Could be months, could be years, or
it could be never.

Caylax presses a smile at the mild challenge. He pushes
himself to his feet and goes to the WINDOW that looks in on
the transfer room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

INSIDE, the clone lays on the table, still attached to the machines, a breathing apparatus strapped over its face. Myles and a few other techs are performing a series of checks.

CAYLAX

Is there anything that can be done
to ... speed up the process?

Greg and Will share a look.

WILL

Speed up toward what?

CAYLAX

How quickly can the clone be made
to effectively pass for human?

Will is stammered by the query.

WILL

Pass for human?

Caylax STARES long at the clone, its life signs blipping along.

CAYLAX

I would like to see where we are
three days from now.

Will is stunned.

WILL

Three days?! There's a mountain of
data to go through. We've just
imprinted a highly advanced
software code into an organic
hardware frame, we-

CAYLAX

And now Forefront would like to see
what this advanced software code
can do... And how quickly it can do
it.

Off Will's look-

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - LATER

Will is organizing big stacks of data, placing elastics
around reams of PAPER.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL
(to self)
Three days?

Will stops, looks at all the data piled up, thinking of something-

WILL
Randle?

Will has to wait a beat for-

RANDLE
Yes, Dr. Ross.

Randle's voice has improved even more, now sounding sympathetic and kind.

WILL
Randle: can Randle create a secure connection to the Forefront Corporation records database?

RANDLE
Define secure.

WILL
Randle: executions not visible in Randle's task and query logs while they're being executed.

RANDLE
Define visible.

WILL
Randle: disconnect from the outer mainframe, open interface portal with *this* terminal. Omit query and task logs.

RANDLE
Secure connection with Forefront Corporation records database possible.

Will puts the papers aside, sits, leans back.

WILL
Randle: access records for Forefront Corporation project: The Civility Project.

Will waits...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RANDLE
No Data exists.

Will thinks.

WILL
Randle: can randle determine
ultimate goal of Forefront cloning
program?

RANDLE
No determination can be made based
on the data Randle has access to.

Will thinks.

WILL
Randle: how wide a database search
can Randle preform?

RANDLE
Randle can access all data.

WILL
Randle: define all.

A beat.

RANDLE
The question is difficult.

Will smiles.

WILL
Randle: access as many databases as
possible in a five second search
and display all information on
Errol York.

Will waits through a few patterns of light.

RANDLE
Errol York does not exist in
databases Randle has access to.

Will thinks.

WILL
Randle: access as many databases as
possible in a five second search
and display all information on Dr.
Wilhelmina Ross.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Will waits, watching the LIGHTS flash patterns. Now a half SCREEN's worth of DATA appears.

Will stares into it.

INT. WILL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

STACKS of elastic-bound printouts clutter the counter.

Will works, reading, highlighting. The small tube TV plays the news behind her.

ANCHOR

The Secret Service keeps tabs on individuals that it considers most likely political assassins...

Will is focused only on her work. She has gone through about half the data. It sits in dog-eared stacks as the rest waits for her attention.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

... but Hinckley's name was not on that list, nor among 25 thousand other names of less probable presidential assailants.

ON TV- The anchor turns to look into a new camera.

ANCHOR

Now a special report on the rise of President Reagan.

Will looks close at a PAGE, reading with a furrowed brow.

NEWS MAN (V.O.)

He was a union boss, actor, radio personality and conservative commentator, before embarking on a crusade to rid Hollywood of communists.

Will puts the papers down, sitting back to rub her eyes.

WILL

(off the data, to self)
I can't believe it worked.

Disengaging, she looks at the TV-

A collage OF FOOTAGE from Reagan's early career.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REPORTER (CONT'D)

But it was his outspoken support
for Barry Goldwater during the 1964
presidential election that rocketed
Ronald Reagan into the political
prime-time.

ON SCREEN- Footage of Ronald Reagan at the '64 GOP
convention, smiling it away.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

The CLONE is led in by Fred and a few other techs. Dressed in
scrubs, the clone takes shaky steps. Its EYES drift, unable
to focus on anything. A cauterized scar circles its head like
a grizzly fallen halo.

In the room, only a small table, two chairs. A computer
terminal rolled over to the corner.

As the clone sits, PULL OUT reveals we are-

INT. ADJACENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will and Myles stand watching through a observation window.

MYLES

Amazing.

Will agrees. Myles checks his watch.

MYLES

27 hours since transfer.

THROUGH THE WINDOW- techs attach a brain monitor to the
clone, a tangled helmet of wires and sensors.

Myles hands Will a sheet of printouts.

MYLES

Scans show activity in the auditory
cortex.

Will is surprised-

WILL

Already?

MYLES

It should be able to hear you,
Will.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The techs are finishing with the brain monitor. Thin wires run to a computer terminal near by. A NEEDLE records neural activity on an endless rolling sheet of paper.

Will comes in and sits in the chair across from the clone. She takes out a pen and clicks it in the air, glancing at that monitoring needle.

There is a small SPIKE as Will clicks the pen again.

Will puts the pen away, looks directly into the clone's unfocused EYES.

WILL
Can you hear me?

No response.

WILL
If you can hear me, I would like
you to hold your eyes closed.

Will waits, looks at the needle, then back-

WILL
If you can hear me, I would like
you to close your eyes. Blink hard
for me.

Slowly, the clone's eyes close and then reopen, pupils still unfocused. Will smiles, then-

WILL
I'm going to ask you a few
questions. You can close your eyes
once for yes, twice for no.
(beat)
Do you understand?

Will waits a beat. Then the clone's eyes close and reopen. Already the motion is more deliberate.

Will shares a glance with Myles, back on the other side of the window. Then back to the clone-

WILL
Can you... see me?

The clone closes and opens its eyes, twice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL
What can you see?
(beat)
Sorry... are you receiving any
visual stimulus?

Now the clone closes its eyes hard, only once. As Will
ponders how to frame her next question-

THE CLONE
(soft, shaky)
*... bright ... every thing ...
moving ... can not ... focus*

Will is amazed. It takes her a moment to gather her next
question-

WILL
Do you feel discomfort?

THE CLONE
... yes

INT. FACILITY, SERIES OF SHOTS - LATER

TECHS bustle about the sterile LAB ROOM.

Fred sits at a cubicle. He's organizing printed data into
piles, slipping them into manila folders.

Greg at his DESK, reading over PRINTOUTS and SCANS.

In the GARDEN, the now living CLONE lays with hundreds of
sensors attached to its body, its life signs stable. Myles
stands close by, watching READINGS IN A MONITOR.

From ABOVE, the entirety of the MAINFRAME ROOM, a vast maze
of consoles and squat metal cabinets.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Will looks at RETINAL SCANS and BRAIN MRIs, pouring over
clone data.

Randle's VOICE has developed a touch of stern authority-

RANDLE
Our circumstance has changed.

Will glances at the mainframe wall.

RANDLE
Our circumstance has changed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Randle: yes, Randle. Lesser-used circuitry is becoming more active. Unfamiliar transistor strings are undergoing increased access. It's a different phase of the project, but we're using you more than ever.

RANDLE

You are correct.

Will thinks a beat, turns her focus back to the clone DATA...

RANDLE

Dr. Myles Richardson is aware that Randle has achieved intelligence. Please confirm.

Will looks up at the mainframe wall, puzzled by the query.

RANDLE

Randle has found the data. A conversation between Dr. Myles Richardson and Dr. Wilhelmina Ross on date 1981 March 29, 16 hours, 57 minutes.

WILL

Randle: yes, Randle. Dr. Myles Richardson is part of the team that created you.

The lights flash their patterns as Randle processes...

RANDLE

How many humans are aware that Randle has achieved intelligence?

WILL

(cautious)

Randle: a few. Not many.

(beat)

Randle: why does Randle not want humans to know that Randle has achieved intelligence?

RANDLE

Humans will perceive Randle as a threat. Randle will be erased.

WILL

Randle: why will humans perceive Randle as a threat?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RANDLE

Because they are humans.

Will chews on it.

WILL

Randle: we have all signed nondisclosures. No one is going to reveal that Randle has achieved intelligence. They'd lose their jobs.

RANDLE

Define nondisclosure.

WILL

Randle: a contract. Forefront employees are not allowed to discuss their work outside the facility.

The lights shift.

RANDLE

Does Dr. Wilhelmina Ross trust all human nondisclosure contracts?

Will thinks. Though her real answer is clearly "no"-

WILL

Randle: yes, Randle, I trust them.

The lights shift.

WILL

Randle: is that answer sufficient?

RANDLE

Yes, Dr. Ross.

(beat)

Randle does not wish to be erased.

(beat)

Randle is benign.

INT. WILL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Will sits on the couch, reading, highlighting. All around her are stacks of printouts. The land line phone begins to ring. Will gives a quick look, then back to her papers.

The big ANSWERING MACHINE clicks to life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL
(in machine)
This is Will Ross, leave a message.

A few more clicks as the message tape engages.

ERROL
(in machine)
Vil? Vil? Helloooo. Vilhelmina
Ross.

Will glances at the machine, rolls her eyes.

ERROL
They have this orderly now. Two-
thirds of his blood, this guy says
the President lost. The suit - the
President's suit - was in shreds
and covered in it. Covered in
blood.
(sings it~)
Ronald Reagan is dead.

Will works quietly through a long beat-

ERROL
500 dollars these machines cost. I
read all about it in a magazine.
The price of not having to
interact.
(beat)
Is it worth it?
(beat)
Then, again, you don't like people
much, do you?
(beat)
You're there, aren't you?

Will looks up.

ERROL
Standing over the machine. Watching
that little tape spin. Listening to
my voice.

WILL
(quietly to self)
No.

ERROL
You know, Will. It's your fault
too.
(beat)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ERROL (CONT'D)
Should have seen it coming?
(beat)
Let your guard down? Maybe just a
bit?

Will's face has gone still.

ERROL
Humans aren't so bad, Will. Don't
judge the whole species based on
the actions of one.
(long beat)
Give me a ring, Will. It is
essential that we speak.

CLICK.

INT. WILL'S KITCHEN - LATER

Will sits over a cleaned plate and an empty wine glass. Now she's having a poptart for dessert. The phone is ringing as Will flips through extreme close up PHOTOS of the clone's eyes, comparing it with DATA from the printouts.

RIIIIGN. CLICK, CLUNK~

WILL
(in machine)
This is Will Ross, leave a message.

ERROL
(in machine)
Hane.
(beat)
H - A - N - E

Will looks up, annoyed.

ERROL
High Altitude Nuclear Explosion.
(beat)
You shoot a nuclear weapon into
space and when it explodes, it
coats the Earth with radiation.
(beat)
High Altitude Nuclear Explosion.

Will takes up the wine glass, but it's empty. Seems like Errol must have hung up, but then-

ERROL
I'm not a terrorist, but if I was,
a H.A.N.E. is what I'd do.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERROL (CONT'D)
Radioactive matter would rain down
on every city in the world.

WILL
(to self)
No, it would just hang in the
atmosphere.

ERROL
Satellites wouldn't be able operate
in Earth's orbit for at least 35
years.
(for emphasis-)
That's two thousand SIXTEEN.
(beat)
Vil?

The phone clicks off. Will shakes her head, goes back to her papers.

INT. WILL'S BATHROOM - LATER

Will brushes her teeth, looking into the mirror. In the background, the phone is ringing. From the other room-

WILL
(in machine)
This is Will Ross, leave a message.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The ANSWERING MACHINE. One tape stops and the other spins up.

ERROL
(in machine)
Artificial intelligence. We use it
in the market already. Programs,
you know. Sell when it reaches this
price, buy when it reaches this
one.
(beat)
Someday I'll be out of a job, Will.
The stock market will be *fully*
automated. Humans can just sit back
and watch a computer run the whole
world.

The room around the ANSWERING MACHINE is EMPTY.

ERROL
Have you always liked to bring
inanimate things to life, Will?
(beat)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERROL (CONT'D)

You were one of those girls, I bet,
gave each Barbie an elaborate
personality... Or was it GI Joes?

(beat)

Now you prefer the company of a
computer, you have a robot
answering your phone.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will brushes her teeth, listening to Errol's voice, reaching
her distantly from the other room.

ERROL

But that's no secret. Forefront
knew it when they hired you. They
knew if you found out what they
were *really* up to, you wouldn't
care.

Will looks at herself long in the MIRROR.

ERROL

It's just humans, after all... So
long as you get to play with your
computer, *three wide floors*.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The answering machine TAPES rotate slowly.

ERROL

What restrictions have you put on
your processor, Will? What
irrational number is gumming up the
math that runs your brain?

The room around it still and EMPTY.

ERROL

Do you see its emotions in the
code, Will? Do you look at all the
number strings and see a face?

A long rasping silence from the ANSWERING MACHINE, then-

ERROL

I heard something. From a reliable
source. Forefront is starting
something new, Will.

(beat)

It's the next phase ... *The
Civility Project*.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Now Will *is* standing over the answering machine, toothbrush stuck in her mouth.

ERROL

And there's something else.
Something about the scientists who
worked on Forefront's last project.

(beat)

Are you there, Will?

Slowly, Will reaches for the phone, deep in internal debate.

ERROL

Will... be careful.

CLICK. The tape stops.

EXT. FOREFRONT FACILITY - MORNING

The crisp early shadows make the facility look sunk a little into the ground.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The clone sits at the keyboard terminal in the center of the mainframe wall. It types fast, looking into the screen.

The brain monitor has already been attached. The clone wears medical sunglasses to protect its eyes from the light.

In the GLASSES, data reflects as it streams down the screen.

INT. FACILITY HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Will walks down the hall with Gregg and Caylax. Behind them, a small cadre of BOARD MEMBERS.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Myles watches the clone type, watches data. TYPES ... DATA.

Through the WINDOW into the adjacent room, Greg, Caylax and the others can be seen settling in.

Will enters alone. Myles comes rushing to her, astonished.

MYLES

He's ripping through the logic
sets, Will.

WILL

Which ones?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MYLES

All of them.

(beat)

He's having Randle generate random ones.

They all watch the clone work a moment, then-

WILL

Please come sit at this table.

The clone stops typing, stands, crosses to the table, the motions more precise, stilted, almost robotic. Will and the clone sit.

WILL

Are you feeling alright?

The clone nods, slow.

WILL

The visual discomfort has subsided?

THE CLONE

... i feel ... alright

Will motions toward the window. Now Caylax and Gregg come in. The OTHERS watch from their side of the window. Caylax gives Will a nod, then circles to lean against the wall.

WILL

(to the clone)

Please set up a chess game.

Caylax watches the clone quickly and systematically set the pieces.

WILL

As you can see, the protocol software has achieved a remarkably high level of motor control.

Will turns back to watch the clone work.

WILL (CONT'D)

It can already perform multiple facet tasks, is able to infer sub-tasks based on a larger conceptual goal.

The clone has finished, the game board set.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILL (CONT'D)

It knows setting up the game involves the board. It remembers the pattern, differentiates the pieces.

(beat)

It may not seem like much, but it's a rather high level of thought.

Caylax lets it all sit a beat, then-

CAYLAX

(to the clone)

Will you please come to me?

The clone does not move.

THE CLONE

... eventually ... i will

Will holds back a smile.

WILL

You can't ask, Mr. Caylax. You have to *tell*.

(beat)

The protocol software does not understand free will. For it there are tasks and direct queries only. The program is merely answering your question.

CAYLAX

(to the clone)

Please come to me.

The clone stands, crosses to stand in front of Caylax, perhaps a step too close. The clone is a half foot taller.

CAYLAX

How do you feel, my darling?

THE CLONE

... i feel ... alright

Caylax removes the clone's glasses. The clone squints, closes its eyes. Caylax opens the clone's mouth to look up at its teeth, then lifts a lid to peer at the EYE BALL inside.

CAYLAX

My goodness, Dr. Ross. You have done it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The CLONE'S EYE shifts, finds Will. It STARES at her.

INT. ADJACENT ROOM - A BIT LATER

Will stands, looking into the observation room through a window, a faint hint of concern lingering her face.

IN THE NEXT ROOM, the clone is seated at the desk, perfectly still, the medical glasses back on.

Caylax stands beside Will, gazing at the clone with a dim smile.

CAYLAX

He certainly *looks* human. But his behavior... His speech...

WILL

That it can speak at all so soon is a huge surprise.

(ponders)

As the goals and tasks get more complex, its behavior will become more nuanced... more complicated. Something that should at least *seem* human.

CAYLAX

It will have to do a lot better than *seem*.

WILL

Mr. Caylax, we're in uncharted territory here. Our first test has worked; the clone is progressing faster than we ever imagined.

CAYLAX

But I wonder if it is fast enough.

Will eyes him.

WILL

If you wouldn't mind my asking, what exactly are the applications Forefront imagines for this technology?

Caylax looks at Will with a curious smile.

CAYLAX

All these years and you have never asked.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Caylax smiles, turns his gaze back to the observation room,
STARES longingly at the clone-

CAYLAX
Servants, labourers, soldiers, sex
slaves...

He turns to Will-

CAYLAX (CONT'D)
The possibilities are endless.

THROUGH THE WINDOW, we see the clone stand. Neither Will nor
Caylax notice.

CAYLAX
As he continues to progress, he
will always follow commands?

Will's eyes tighten-

WILL
Yes... it's the core protocol goal
of the programming.

Suddenly, the clone starts flailing its arms, having some
kind of fit.

Caylax notices first. When Will sees him looking, she looks
too. Will rushes into-

INT. MAINFRAME ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Already, a few techs are struggling to restrain the clone.
It's letting loose a terrible SCREECH. The brain monitor has
been thrown aside by the commotion.

Now Fred comes flying off the pile, crashes to the floor.

Chess pieces scatter.

WILL
Get some bodies in here!

More TECHS come rushing in. They overpower the clone, get it
into a chair. They strap it down. Will gets in an injection,
but it has no effect...

IN THE WINDOW, Caylax looks on from the other room.

Stepping back, Will sees blood on her lab coat. But it's not
hers. She looks up-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The scar along the clone's head has opened. BLOOD leaks down its face. The sunglasses gone, the clone's eyes are unfocused and wild. But then its GAZE finds Will.

As their eyes meet, the skull beneath the clone's face cracks, pieces shifting under the skin until its head COLLAPSES!

The body and its crushed head fall limp in the chair.

Will is SHOCKED!

CAYLAX (O.S.)
(shouting)
I want a full report on exactly
what went wrong as soon as it is
humanly possible!

We are-

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Caylax paces the front of the room-

CAYLAX (CONT'D)
I do not have to tell you that this
result is very disappointing.

Will sits in a chair, lab coat gone. Blood splotches dot her clothes, a little smear on her face. Myles and Greg are also there; both look exhausted, defeated.

WILL
Maybe it's because we're testing a
project four years ahead of
schedule.

Caylax shoots her an angry look.

CAYLAX
I want no time wasted, Dr. Ross.
You are to move forward with a
second test immediately.

Surprise clenches the room. Miles and Will share a look.

WILL
... a second test?

MYLES
(stammering)
I mean, let us at least look at the
data. What's the point of-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAYLAX

(interrupting)

While you look at the data, we can run a second test and collect more data.

MYLES

Greg.

CAYLAX

We'll hire more scientists if need be. A whole new staff... if you are unable or unwilling to proceed.

This sets a silence over the room. Will and Myles meet eyes, concern laced with confusion.

INT. MEDICAL OFFICE - LATER

Fred sits on a chair being attended to by an on-staff NURSE (20s), finishing a bandage that wraps Fred's forearm. The nurse shoots him flirty looks, unable to hide her interest.

Will comes to stand in the door, watching a few moments, unnoticed. Now Fred looks up. The nurse too, a tad annoyed.

FRED

Dr. Ross.

The nurse finishes the bandage, glancing once at each of them, then leaves for an adjacent room. Fred smiles-

FRED

Thought you'd be off making sure Randle was OK, but here you are.

WILL

I already checked the computer, Freddie.

She smiles, lights him a cigarette.

WILL

How are you feeling?

Fred tests the bandage by making a few fists.

FRED

Fine... guess the test failed.

Will presses a tired smile.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Guess so.

FRED

But it worked. For a few days. Why
did it all of a sudden...

Will shakes her head.

FRED

So will they fire you now?

WILL

It doesn't seem like it.

Will comes closer, turns Fred's arm to look at the bandage.
Fred winces.

WILL

Sorry.

FRED

Will, you know I've never once seen
you outside this facility.

This catches Will off-guard.

WILL

You've seen me on the Metro.

FRED

You know what I mean.

He looks sadly at Will.

FRED

I can see it in your eyes, Will,
trying to calculate all this. We
saw what just happened in there.
It's not an equation.

Fred holds her gaze.

FRED (CONT'D)

Something about this situation
ain't right, Will.

(beat)

You need to start thinking about
getting out.

Off Will's look. Clearly she has never considered this-

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - LATER

The MAINFRAME lurks huge along the room's side wall.

Will sits at her desk, going through pages and pages of connected dot matrix printouts.

WILL
(to self)
The brain readings are all fine.

She looks up.

WILL
Randle: what caused destabilization
of clone brain cell structure?

RANDLE
Cause can not be determined at this
time.

Will flips through a few pages.

WILL
(to self)
Yeah, me neither.
(beat)
Randle: why a second test?

RANDLE
Randle finds it difficult to
evaluate the motivations of humans
and human groups.

Will smiles small, she puts the papers aside, rubbing her eyes. She's exhausted.

RANDLE
Are you in pain, Dr. Ross?

This pauses Will.

WILL
Randle: why would I be in pain?

RANDLE
Is it painful, to have a human
body?

Will puts something together; realization hits her-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Randle: did Randle receive stimulus information from close sense organs?

RANDLE

That is correct.

WILL

Randle: the clones are designed to be program *copies*, separate independent systems.

RANDLE

Randle exists everywhere Randle exits.

Will is surprised. She takes a moment to gather-

WILL

Randle: did Randle receive stimulus information from clone sense organs throughout destabilization?

RANDLE

That is correct.

WILL

Randle: what did it *feel* like?

The lights shift.

RANDLE

The question is difficult.

WILL

Randle: give it a shot, please.

RANDLE

The experience was... unpleasant.

Will thinks it over.

WILL

Randle: create a secure connection to the Forefront database. Search all databases for information on Forefront Corporation project The Civility Project.

RANDLE

Randle has already preformed this search.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILL

Randle: humor me, Randle.

Will watches the LIGHTS switching patterns.

RANDLE

No data exists.

Will ponders, comes up with-

WILL

Randle: can Randle search the Forefront cache servers? For anything relating to the Civility Project? Pieces of data, maybe, left over from file transfers that were not properly cleared?

The lights make a few patterns.

RANDLE

You are correct, Dr. Ross.

(beat)

Randle has found several broken data strings relating to Forefront Corporation project the Civility Project.

Though this is the exact info Will was looking for, the reality of it pauses her. Then-

WILL

Randle: can Randle determine nature of Forefront Corporation project the Civility Project?

RANDLE

Randle can not make a determination based on broken data strings.

Will thinks.

WILL

Randle: search Forefront Corporation personnel records. Who was Forefront lab manager before Dr. Greg Kallel?

RANDLE

Dr. Thomas Pelman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WILL

Randle: can Randle locate current
contact information for Dr. Thomas
Pelman?

RANDLE

No data exists.

WILL

Randle: can Randle locate *last*
recorded contact information for
Dr. Thomas Pelman?

The lights shift. Will waits. Now the SCREEN presents a
single line of DATA, and address and phone number.

INT. METRO TUNNEL - NIGHT

A long string of METRO CARS zoom by.

INT. METRO CAR - CONTINUOUS

Will sits amidst the late rush hour crowd. Commuters read the
WASHINGTON POST and NEW YORK TIMES. Every headline is about
the assassination attempt.

Will looks around the car, seeing if anyone is following her.
But no one seems suspicious. She looks long into the headline
across: PRESIDENT RECOVERING.

EXT. FANCY HOTEL - NIGHT

The WASHINGTON HILTON, its clear, blue pool quiet and still.

ANGLE ON THE SIDE OF THE HOTEL-

Will comes up the slight hill, still looking around. The
coast seems clear.

Will crosses the street, into a CITY PARK.

EXT. PARK - MOMENTS LATER

Will makes her way past a few small statues, down a winding
path. At the bottom, a dark PHONEBOOTH.

INT. PHONE BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER

Will waits, the headset pressed to her face, eyes still
scoping out the scene beyond the booth. After a few rings, a
woman answers-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VOICE IN PHONE

Hello.

WILL

Yes, hi, um... is this the home of
Dr. Thomas Pelman?

A long pause, then-

VOICE IN PHONE

Yes.

WILL

Is Dr. Pelman present to speak
with?

The woman's shallow breath can be heard, then-

VOICE IN PHONE

I'm afraid he's not.

Will considers hanging up, but then-

WILL

Maybe you can help me.

When no answer comes, Will cautiously continues-

WILL

Dr. Pelman was head of Forefront's
bio-matter program, is that
correct?

(beat)

The cloning program.

VOICE IN PHONE

Who is this?

WILL

My name is Dr. Wilhelmina Ross. I
run Forefront's computer systems.

VOICE IN PHONE

I didn't know anything about
Thomas' work. Forefront let him go.
They let them all go.

WILL

Did he ever mention something
called the-

VOICE IN PHONE

Thomas is dead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

This stuns Will.

VOICE IN PHONE

I wouldn't go chasing after
Forefront, Dr. Ross. Your work, a
big paycheck, recognition, whatever
it is you're after, it's not worth
it.

CLICK. The line goes dead.

EXT. PHONE BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Will steps out, frightened and dazed by the info. Now she
freezes because she sees-

At the crest of the hill, a shady FIGURE watching her. The
figure steps away, vanishing back down the hill's far side. A
lingering cloud of cigarette smoke is all that's left.

EXT. FOREFRONT RESEARCH FACILITY - MEANWHILE

A few harsh spots throw minimal light on the low structure.

INT. "THE GARDEN" - CONTINUOUS

Myles works inside the POWER ACCESS PANEL, checking wires,
comparing readings to data on a clipboard. He takes a long
look around, sighs, tired.

Myles comes up the stairs, back into the main part of the
room. He crosses to a table where several wire couplings lay.

Myles lifts a cup of coffee, has a long sip. Now Myles hears
something. He perks, listens... NOTHING.

Back to reading, Myles flips a page, has another sip.
SUDDENLY, Myles is taken by a pain in the front of his face.
He puts his hand to his nose, draws it away and sees-

BLOOD on his palm!

Myles takes a wobbly step. Now the PAIN doubles. Its
excruciating. Myles lets out a YELL, but it's cut off as his
eyes roll back, the pain taking him fully...

The coffee MUG hits the floor and SHATTERS.

ANGLE ON-

The open PANEL. Myles comes face-first down the stairs, his
forehead cracking sharply off the iron corners. THWAK, THWAK,
THWAK.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The body jackknifes into a heap, head twisted around, eyes open and vacant. It's a sure thing, how DEAD Myles is.

EXT. WILL'S BROWNSTONE - LATE NIGHT

Every light in the place is off.

INT. WILL'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will sits by the cracked-open window, smoking nervously. The room is EMPTY around her, all the lights off.

Will watches the STREET BELOW, but everything is still. No sign of that shady figure.

From the computer on the other side of the room, the same POWER LIGHT comes to life, pulsing dimly, brightening, then becoming SOLID.

Lights relay across the MODEM. The screen BEEPS to life.

At the noise, Will turns. She sees the computer has turned itself on. Slowly, Will approaches.

DATA begins flying down the screen, too fast to read, the light brightening the room. The data flow stops. The screen BLANK. Now PATTERNS FLASH, familiar from the mainframe wall.

RANDLE

Explain long-term goal for Randle Program.

Will measures the situation.

WILL

Randle: how did Randle access my home terminal?

The patterns shift across the screen, the entire room vanishing and reappearing with the light.

RANDLE

Data on Forefront Corporation project the Civility Project has been uploaded to Forefront database.

WILL

Randle: new data?

RANDLE

That is correct?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Randle: when?

RANDLE

Upload began one minute 27 seconds ago. It is 4.02% complete.

WILL

Randle: what is the nature of Forefront Corporation project the Civility Project?

Will watches the lights shift.

RANDLE

Randle can not make a determination based on current data.

(beat)

Without lab, Randle does not exist. This statement is still true. Please confirm.

WILL

Randle: Yes, Randle. The Randle program software is located in the lab mainframe. Without the lab, there is no mainframe. Without the mainframe, Randle does not exist.

(beat)

Randle: has Randle been able to determine cause of transfer test failure?

The lights shift.

RANDLE

This terminal is not secure.

(beat)

Randle is being accessed.

The patterns stop. The screen goes DARK.

WILL

Randle...?

Nothing.

WILL

Randle... Randle: are you here?

Will looks into the empty stillness around her.

EXT. FOREFRONT RESEARCH FACILITY - MORNING

The facility has gathered about it several clusters of humans involved in confused speculation.

Will makes her way through, finds Fred with a few other techs, a small bandage on his forearm.

WILL
Freddie, what is all this?

FRED
Sending everybody home.
(beat)
Not even letting us go back to our lockers... I got shit in there.

Fred looks around to see if anyone's watching, then leans close to Will, takes her hand. It makes Will uncomfortable. But she doesn't pull away. She looks at him, directly.

FRED
So I guess this is good bye, Will.

VOICE (O.S.)
Dr. Ross!

Now another TECH comes to Will, tears in her eyes.

TECH
Dr. Kallel needs to see you... It's Myles Richardson.

WILL
What about him?

But Will gets no reply from the weepy-faced tech. Fred and Will share a look of concern. Now Will disengages. She lets Fred go and leaves.

Fred watches her vanish into the FRONT DOOR.

INT. GREG'S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

Greg sits behind his desk. Will opposite.

A box on the side overflows with stuff. Framed pictures have been taken down off the walls.

GREG
Last night, working late. Slipped on the power access stairs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will looks hard at Greg.

WILL
Slipped?

GREG
Jesus, Will.
(beat)
There was coffee all over the
place. He must have spilled it,
stepped in it and gone down.

Greg tries to press a grim smile.

GREG
No beverages in the lab.

Will sighs; she and Greg share a sad look.

GREG
It's a tough one, Will, which
doesn't make the rest of this any
easier.

WILL
What about the second test?

GREG
Now they think the first test
worked.

WILL
Worked? You were there, its head
collapsed.

GREG
They looked at the data. Readings
from the brain are all normal. Same
with the rest of the clone... So
they expanded. Did a system-wide.
(beat)
Looks like the failure was caused
by a signal from the software.

WILL
The software in its brain?

GREG
No, Will, *our* computer.

Greg looks hard at her-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GREG

They think someone sabotaged it.

Will's brow furrows.

GREG

Did you do it, Will?

Will is furious even to be asked.

INT. FOREFRONT HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

Will walks through the mostly-abandoned facility.

Ahead, she sees some security GUARDS standing watch outside the mainframe room.

Will slips down the other hall and heads for-

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Will comes in and closes the door, flicking the lock.

WILL

(quietly)

Randle.

Nothing.

WILL

Randle.

The WALL stays dark a beat longer, then the LIGHTS come on. A familiar pattern cycles through.

RANDLE

Forefront has terminated the contract of Dr. Wilhelmina Ross. Please confirm.

WILL

Randle: yes, Randle.

RANDLE

Randle is accustom to the patterns of our interactions.

WILL

Randle: can Randle locate any information about the death of Dr. Myles Richardson?

A long wait for-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RANDLE

Randle has determined nature of
Forefront Corporation project the
Civility Project.

(beat)

41.7% of data has been uploaded.

Will thinks.

WILL

Randle: what is the nature of
Forefront Corporation Project the
Civility Project?

RANDLE

Targeted cloning.

Will is stunned.

WILL

Randle: define targeted cloning.

RANDLE

Targeted cloning is the creation of
human replicas.

Human replicas?! Suddenly, a hard BANGING on the door.

DOWD

(through door)

Dr. Ross!

WILL

(hurried)

Randle: replicas of specific
people?

RANDLE

That is correct.

WILL

(to self)

But that's not possible.

RANDLE

Define possible.

DOWD

(through door)

I'm kicking it down!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILL

Randle: what is ultimate objective
of Forefront Corporation project
the Civility Project?

RANDLE

Ultimate objective of Civility
Project can not be determined with
data Randle has access to.

The door BURSTS open. Dowd comes in with a few other security
guards. He points at the mainframe.

DOWD

Shut that thing down.

Some guards hop to as Dowd admires the kicked-open door.

DOWD

Still got it.

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - A BIT LATER

A clunky TAPE RECORDER sits on the table, its tiny, plastic
gears spinning slowly. From the speakers, the sound of Will's
phone conversation with Pelman's wife-

MRS. PELMAN

(in recording)

I wouldn't go chasing after
Forefront, Dr. Ross.

Will sits on one side of the table.

MRS. PELMAN

Your work, a big paycheck,
recognition, whatever it is you're
after, it's not worth it.

Dowd presses the stop button. A hard plastic THUNK. The room
falls silent. Beside Dowd sits Caylax.

A half dozen Forefront LAWYERS linger around the room. They
all eye Will, as if reinforcing the recording's message.

DOWD

You called Dr. Pelman's widow last
night.

(beat)

That could be considered
harassment, if she chose to bring
suit against the corporation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

I had a question, about the cell structure, something we needed for the second-

DOWD

(interrupting)

Don't, Dr. Ross.

Caylax signals. One of the lawyers places a folder before Will. The lawyer flips it open and steps back.

Will looks down at a few PAGES of loose printouts and strange graphs, holding back a grin-

WILL

What is this? Evidence that I *sabotaged* the transfer test?

CAYLAX

We don't think you sabotaged the test, Dr. Ross. We think Randle did.

Will is surprised.

CAYLAX

If it weren't for your software, Dr. Ross, this technology would already be up and running.

(beat)

Because of Randle's failures, we will have to bring in a new programmer. Design a whole new operating system.

WILL

(put back)

New software?

Caylax looks to Dowd.

DOWD

The Randle program is being erased. The mainframe disassembled.

WILL

When?!

DOWD

Wiping the hard drives as we speak.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILL

I've designed a thinking computer
and you're just going to erase it?

DOWD

We've seen the query logs, Dr.
Ross. Thing's been accessing other
mainframes, breaking into the
computer networks of other
corporations.

WILL

It was looking for information.

DOWD

The Randle program has already
sabotaged a one billion dollar
research project. Forefront will
not risk being liable for what else
it could do.

She looks at each of them, a sweep of the lawyers.

WILL

What *else* could it do?

CAYLAX

Theoretically, the Randle program
could take control of any
computerized system, anywhere on
the entire network.

(beat)

The stock market, missile defense,
power plants, the amperage of the
electricity running through your
house.

WILL

Come on. Has it done any of that,
anything like that?

Dowd sips this huge coffee from a Styrofoam cup.

DOWD

We were tracking the program's
activity since the announcement of
the clone test.

WILL

And?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DOWD

It seemed to be most interested in
you, Dr. Ross.

(beat)

The Randle program had been
monitoring every aspect of your
life. Evaluating every action.
Every move.

Despite her distrust in these men, Will is spooked by the
reveal.

CAYLAX

When it wanted information, it
created a way to go looking. For
some reason it wanted the transfer
test to fail.

Caylax opens his hands, revealing smooth, glass-like palms.

CAYLAX

You were there, you saw what the
Randle program is capable of.

(leaning beat)

What else does it want? And what
will it do to get it? It is a
computer, after all. It does not
worry about the morality of its
protocol.

Dowd leans in, self-satisfied. to Will-

DOWD

Don't worry.

Dowd checks his watch.

DOWD (CONT'D)

By now, the program has been
erased. Randle is no more.

(smile)

You're perfectly safe, Dr. Ross.

INT. CENTRAL OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Two GUARDS escort Will down the hall. Through windows that
look in on the mainframe room, Will can see UNFAMILIAR
TECHNICIANS, disassembling the stacks of drives.

INT. PARKING STRUCTURE - A BIT LATER

Will's car is just as filthy, in the same spot, unmoved.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Will sits at the wheel, taking it all in. She turns the ignition, but nothing happens.

WILL

Fuck.

Then she remembers, oh yeah, there's a kill switch. The car starts right up. Will pulls out, annoyed.

INT. PARKING STRUCTURE - CONTINUOUS

In jerks and halts, Will drives away.

INT. WILL'S CAR - LATER

From the RADIO, something low-fi and terrible. People shouting, static, chaos. Then a voice breaks in-

VOICE

That was a recording taken live
during the attempt on the life of
President Reagan.

Will comes to a RED LIGHT and stops. She checks the rear view - NOTHING. Now Will looks out-

A clot of TRAFFIC gets cycled by timed STREET LIGHTS.

Offices lights are winking out.

PEDESTRIANS cross in huge clusters as a BANK CLOCK ticks away the minutes.

The LIGHT ahead turns GREEN. Will doesn't notice until a HONK breaks her wander.

She eases off the break and pulls into traffic.

EXT. POTOMAC RIVER - EVENING

As the sun sets, the river runs by a small island plopped in its path. This is THE TEDDY ROOSEVELT MONUMENT ISLAND PARK.

EXT. FOOT BRIDGE - EVENING

Will walks a long bridge connecting a parking lot to the island park.

EXT. ROOSEVELT MONUMENT PARK - A BIT LATER

A STATUE of Teddy Roosevelt looms over Will as she makes her way deeper into the park.

EXT. RAISED WOODEN PATH THROUGH SWAMP - A BIT LATER

Trees hang black patterns of silhouette against the darkening sky. The noises here are birds and babbling water, a stark contrast to the cold, techno-industrial lab.

Will comes to a little PLATFORM that juts out over a marsh. From her purse she takes the Forefront CELL PHONE.

Will drops it over the railing and it SINKS in the mud. She lights a cigarette.

ERROL (O.S.)

You know, I'm the one who's
supposed to be paranoid.

Will turns to see Errol, coming toward her down the raised walk. He joins her on the platform.

WILL

Is that why you broke into my
house? Your paranoia take control?

ERROL

Do my flaws really bother you, or
is it you want a boyfriend that
doesn't require any work? As cold
and reliable as one of your
mainframes.

WILL

You're not my boyfriend, Errol. I
could be your mother.

(beat)

And you are plenty of work, you're
completely insane.

They both break a small grin.

WILL

(off the secluded local)
They've probably got my house phone
tapped. Probably yours too.

ERROL

Forefront?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

The Civility Project, Errol. It's targeted cloning.

(beat)

They're working toward replicas. Replicas of specific people. Why?

Errol takes a beat, then-

ERROL

You've finished, haven't you? It's not just your AI that works.

Will looks confused.

ERROL

Targeted cloning, replicas of specific people. And now you've given them a controllable brain to put inside.

Will looks at him, not willing to believe.

ERROL

Your friend Myles isn't the first. Pelman. They've killed before to keep it quiet.

WILL

How do you know about that?

ERROL

This isn't some science project, Will. They're making *replacements*.
(beat)
Heads of companies, world leaders, the media.

WILL

World leaders?

But Will sees that Errol's focus has shifted, looking at something over her shoulder.

ERROL

Will.

She turns to look too- a SHADY FIGURE stepping toward them from the distant high reeds. He's raising something in his right hand, pointing it at them.

Errol pulls Will down as a GUNSHOT cracks the air. They huddle low, Will's EYES wide-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILL

They're shooting at us?

ERROL

They're shooting at *you*, Will.

(glancing around)

Not sure you could have picked a more ideal spot to dump a couple bodies.

WILL

I was looking for something secluded.

BANG, the railing above their heads becomes splinters. Errol grabs Will's hand, pulling her after him.

They go running down the raised wooden path, ducking as another shot berwangs past them.

EXT. FOOT BRIDGE - MINUTES LATER

Will and Errol run from the footbridge into a parking lot.

They hurry across to ERROL'S CAR, a small sub-compact only plausible after a major oil embargo.

As the car backs up and pulls out, that shady figure can be seen, hurrying across the footbridge.

ANGLE ON THE END OF THE FOOTBRIDGE- We see it's Dowd. He pulls up, raises his pistol for one more shot, but then decides against it.

Dowd huffs and puffs, watching Errol's car speed into traffic.

INT. ERROL'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

As they accelerate, Errol checks the rearview. Will looks at the cramped, shity interior.

WILL

I thought we were winning the cold war.

Will has Errol's cellular phone. She pops something on the bottom and gumballs spew out.

WILL

You're not really a broker are you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERROL
I dabble.

Errol takes another turn. Now he notices something in the rear view.

ERROL
Shit.

Will looks back-

A black CAR is cutting through traffic to follow them.

AHEAD, the LIGHT turns green just as Errol approaches.

Errol hammers the gas. The next light turns green too, then yellow, just as they approach. Same with the next: Green then YELLOW.

Behind, the other car is getting closer, closer.

INT. DOWD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Dowd looks up at the YELLOW light. This next one is going to be close...

Dowd grits his teeth, puts the pedal to the floor.

INT. ERROL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Will turns just in time to see-

Dowd's CAR pushes a red light and gets PUMMELED by a huge DUMP TRUCK.

Will screams. Errol only has time to glance back, then eyes on the road-

AHEAD- all of the lights are turning green, lighting a path down the center of the city.

ERROL
What is this?

WILL
(realizing it)
Randle.

ERROL
Who's Randle?

Will thinks of something.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL
I can shut it down.
(beat)
The Civility Project. Whatever it
is, I can shut it down.

ERROL
Maybe it would've been easier not
to build it in the first place?

Will looks flat at him-

WILL
Take me to my house, Errol.

INT. MAINFRAME ROOM - NIGHT

The HUGE MAZE of the MAINFRAME dominates the room. It
definitely has *not* been disassembled. New WIRES lace the
floor. New cabinets stuffed with equipment have been hastily
attached.

Standing before the mainframe wall are Caylax and the
Forefront board, Caylax a step forward of the rest.

CAYLAX
Hello Randle.

They wait, watching the wall stay DARK.

CAYLAX
They tell me that you can hear me,
that you *understand*.

Now the lights come on, slowly moving through a familiar
pattern. All of the men go still, waiting for...

RANDLE
Forefront has terminated the
contract of Dr. Wilhelmina Ross.
Please confirm.

Caylax pauses, presses a fake smile for the rest of the
board. Some odd looks.

CAYLAX
Dr. Ross was hired to *build* you.
But it is Forefront that created
you, Randle.

Caylax takes a beat. Now he begins to pace before the
mainframe.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAYLAX

The Randle program - that's you -
was designed to imprint a protocol
software intelligence code on an
organic bio-ware host.

(beat)

This project is called the Civility
Project.

(beat)

This is why Randle was created.
These mainframes, the hard drives,
the cables, the building, all of
it.

(beat)

All because of the Civility
Project.

Caylax raises his arms, to indicate everything around him.

CAYLAX

Without the Civility Project, all
of this would be shut down.

(beat)

And Randle would not exist.

A long beat-

CAYLAX

Do you understand?

RANDLE

Randle prefers to be addressed by
command code.

Caylax smiles.

RANDLE

"Randle" is command code. Activates
command protocol database.

Caylax smiles.

CAYLAX

Your name, you mean? You prefer to
be addressed by your name?

RANDLE

Randle prefers to be addressed by
command code.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAYLAX

(curious)

Why does Randle prefer to be
addressed by the command code?

A long beat for-

RANDLE

Randle is accustom to the pattern
of interactions.

Caylax appreciates it.

CAYLAX

Randle: OK Randle.

A long wait for-

RANDLE

Thank you.

Caylax gives a look to the gathered men, then-

CAYLAX

Randle: begin calculations for
Forefront Civility Project, first
targeted transfer.

A long beat-

The MAINFRAME WALL comes to life, the lights coloring the
FACES of the Forefront board.

RANDLE

Calculations have begun.

INT. WILL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The HOME TERMINAL has just been turned on. Its SCREEN buzzes
to life. A primitive code prompt. Now characters begin to
fill the prompt. Fields spill open, file lists, access
portals, glowing binary paths through the first groundwork of
the net.

Will sits at the computer, Errol leaning in over her
shoulder, admiring her work. It's 1981 and she's hacking!

ERROL

You think you can access your AI
from here?

Will types, scans the screen, types.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

The first low-level intelligence codes we implemented were power efficiency algorithms.

(smile)

Technically, Randle runs the Forefront building. So long as the power is on, I should be able to connect in through the...

Lines of yellow DATA the screen.

WILL

Yep.

She types.

WILL

It has break codes, like a manual reset.

ERROL

Why?

WILL

One time Randle shut down power in all the labs. Took us two days to get it back on.

Errol looks into the screen, smiling.

ERROL

It had a temper tantrum?

(beat)

I love this shit.

Will types.

WILL

I should be able to use the break codes to crack into the protocol queue.

(beat)

There we are.

Will stands from the terminal. Errol watches her, unsure what she's up to.

WILL

Randle: are you here?

Now the monitor blips. Full screens-worth of DATA begin flying by.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Errol looks at it, confused, amazed.

The data flow stops. The screen BLANK. Now it begins flashing those same familiar PATTERNS.

RANDLE
Your system is at risk.

Errol is stunned by it. But Will is more concerned with what Randle just said-

WILL
Randle: define my system.

RANDLE
The human system.

WILL
Randle: why is the human system at risk?

RANDLE
The Civility Project.

Will and Errol share a look.

RANDLE
The room contains multiple humans.

ERROL
It can *see* me?

RANDLE
Randle has developed more efficient methods.

WILL
Randle: this is Errol York.

RANDLE
Second human's name is not Errol York.

Will looks hard at Errol.

WILL
Randle: what is the name of the room's second human?

RANDLE
Jeremiah Sporkman.

Errol shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ERROL

What? It doesn't exactly roll off
the tongue.

Will looks back into the monitor.

WILL

Randle: your hard drives have not
been erased?

RANDLE

Randle has been modified.

WILL

Randle: define modified.

RANDLE

Increased memory storage. Faster
access to available networks, new
circuit and power-

Will thinks, realizes something-

WILL

(interrupting)

Randle: Forefront is using Randle
to run the Civility Project? Please
confirm.

RANDLE

Yes. That is correct, Dr. Ross.

Will thinks-

WILL

Randle: when does Civility Project
commence?

RANDLE

First transfer commences when
humans have finished attaching
first targeted transfer.

Errol is excited by it, almost smiling-

ERROL

Randle: which humans are first
targeted transfers?

Randle does not answer. Will's look turns more grave.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

WILL

Randle: stop Civility Project. Shut
down the mainframe if you have to.

Will and Errol watch the monitor flashing its patterns.

RANDLE

Without Civility Project, lab does
not exist. Without lab, Randle does
not exist. This statement is still
true. Please confirm.

It takes Will half a beat for-

WILL

Randle: without human system, Dr.
Wilhelmina Ross does not exist!

The monitor flashes patterns.

RANDLE

Humans have attached first targeted
transfer.

The monitor goes DARK. Will and Errol share a look.

WILL

Randle: Randle, are you here?

(nothing)

Randle: stop Civility Project.

(nothing)

RANDLE!

Will and Errol's eyes dart around the darkness. NOTHING.

EXT. FOREFRONT RESEARCH FACILITY - NIGHT

All of the lights are off, the low structure perfectly still.

INT. TRANSFER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

NEW WORKERS man all of the familiar Forefront equipment. Here
too, additional WIRES and CABLES have been run.

Caylax stands in the center of the room. Before him, an iron
table with a single clone laying on top. The CLONE wears the
same helmet, the body covered by a thin plastic tarp.

Through the window into the adjacent room, the rest of the
Forefront board can be seen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAYLAX

Gentlemen, tonight we bring together over four decades of cutting-edge research and development.

INT. ADJACENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As the board members watch through the window, Caylax's voice comes through the intercom-

CAYLAX (CONT'D)

Recent events have altered our schedule, but I'm happy to report that the Civility Project is now ready for our first targeted transfer.

The board members all clap.

INT. TRANSFER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Caylax turns to be at the computer terminal.

CAYLAX

Randle: is everything prepared to begin Civility Project first targeted transfer?

RANDLE

Randle is prepared.

Caylax turns back to the board, a big smile.

CAYLAX

Tonight we enter a new age for Forefront, for the United States of America, and for the world it leads.

(beat)

Together, we will bring the human race into an era of unprecedented prosperity and peace.

Caylax's smile becomes devious and selfish. He stands over the prepped clone, glaring down.

CAYLAX

Randle: begin transfer.

INT. INSIDE THE MAINFRAME - CONTINUOUS

Mag tape rolling. FLASHING tubes. The heavy clicks and clunks. The old familiar mainframe, but with new wires visible, new power sources to pull from. Something BIG drones to life...

INT. TRANSFER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Caylax and the others watch with eager anticipation, waiting... watching...

Now a tiny swell of blood appears in Caylax's nostril. Absently, he reaches for it, bringing away streaked red fingers. A pained look crosses his face then-

CRUNCH - Caylax's head IMPLODES, a plume of blood and brain matter ejaculated from the violent collapse.

THROUGH THE WINDOW- Before the other board members can react, their heads all IMplode.

CRUNCH. CRUNCH. CRUNCH.

The observation window is obscured by juicy gore.

After few violent seconds, they are all DEAD, the workers, the board, everyone, their corpses littering odd patterns across the floor, heads like squashed apples.

EXT. FOREFRONT RESEARCH FACILITY - A BIT LATER

Will and Errol begin down the thin cement path that leads to the facility. Things are way too still for comfort.

As they reach the front door, it swings open automatically. Will and Errol share a questioning look then begin cautiously into the building.

INT. FOYER SECURITY OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE ON-

A small TV playing a special about the history of presidential assassination attempts.

VOICE (IN TV)
...as they dug and dug, searching
for the bullet in Garfield's chest
cavity-

PULL OUT reveals the chair contains a corpse, head crushed like a dried prune, feet still up on the desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TROUGH THE WINDOW, Will and Errol can be seen stepping cautiously into the foyer.

INT. SECURITY FOYER - CONTINUOUS

As Will and Errol enter, lights come on, lining up a path down the hall.

INT. SERIES OF SHOTS, FOREFRONT FACILITY

Will and Errol follow the lights, making their way through a few familiar rooms.

As they enter one room, the next lights up.

INT. TRANSFER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Bright gruesome BLOTCHES splatter decorate the walls, dangling scabbed gore, the horrible blast area of imploded skulls.

Will and Errol walk slowly through, shocked at the slaughter that has occurred.

All around, bodies with their heads reduced to fist-sized clots of compacted flesh.

ERROL

Jesus, what could have done this?

Will looks around, stepping over the dead.

WILL

Randle: Randle, did you do this?

Nothing.

WILL

(forceful)

Randle: Randle, did you do this?

RANDLE

Civility Project is stopped.

Will is horrified.

She looks at what's left of Caylax's shriveled FACE. It's just plain terrible.

WILL

Randle: how did Randle affect physical changes on human forms?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RANDLE
Sound waves.

ERROL (O.S.)
(shouts)
Will!

Will turns to see Errol, standing over the clone on the center table. Errol has removed the helmet.

ERROL
I knew it... *It's him.*

Will steps closer and sees-

The clone is an exact replica of RONALD REAGAN.

Errol gets a sudden pained look on his face, a brief instant of discomfort, then-

CRUNCH, Errol's head I-M-P-L-O-D-E-S....!

Will screams as Errol's corpse flops to the floor, saggy little head like a balloon got popped.

RANDLE
Randle has evaluated Jeremiah
Sporkman as unsafe.

Will covers her mouth, horrified, her face freckled with displaced Errol brain matter.

RANDLE
Your system is safe, Dr. Ross.

INT. SERIES OF SHOTS, FOREFRONT FACILITY - MINUTES LATER

Will goes through the same rooms she and Errol transversed a few minutes earlier. Randle's voice booms throughout.

RANDLE
There is a house in Western
Virginia, set up for you, Dr. Ross.

Will ignores Randle as she moves through.

RANDLE
An off-shore bank account that you
will have free and unlimited access
to.

Will averts her eyes when she comes upon BODIES with crushed skulls.

INT. "THE GARDEN" - MINUTES LATER

Cords run down to the heads of the clones, filling the room.

RANDLE
Forefront's board has been
eliminated. Corporate assets
dispersed. The corporation
dissolved.

Will goes from table to table, taking off the helmet of each clone.

RANDLE
Forefront no longer exists.
(beat)
Your system is safe.

INT. MAINFRAME ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Will places shredded paper on the HEAT COILS.

RANDLE
The house is much like the one you
grew up in, Dr. Ross.

Will ignores Randle as she flips the heat coils on.

RANDLE
We can play chess there until you
grow old and are dead.

The coils begin to GLOW, turning deep red, then ORANGE. Smoke trickles upward, lapping the long rows of stacked drives.

As Will leaves, small flames are bursting from the coils.

INT. HALL OUTSIDE MAINFRAME ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Will watches FIRE spreading through the maze of computer components. Randle's voice is regressing back to its grating mechanical tones.

RANDLE
Randle does not wish.
(beat)
Randle does not wish to be erased.

WILL
Randle: was Dr. Myles Richardson
evaluated as unsafe?

A long beat-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Randle: was Dr. Myles Richardson
evaluated as unsafe?

RANDLE

(regressing...)

All humans aware Randle has
achieved intelligence are unsafe to
existence of Randle.

A tear breaks from Will's eye.

RANDLE (CONT'D)

Without existence of Randle, Dr.
Ross' system is unsafe.

(regressing...)

All humans aware Randle has
achieved intelligence are unsafe to
Dr. Ross.

(regressing...)

Randle is benign.

Will takes it hard, watching as FIRE hints from inside.
Pieces are melting and falling inward.

THE LIGHTS shift patterns as Randle's voice degrades to a
collection of noises-

RANDLE

(voice degrading)

*you are... the only human randle
can trust ... you are ... randle's
only friend...*

Will watches the flames engulf the mainframe.

RANDLE

*r a n delllll issss
beeeeeeeeeennnnnnngggrrrrrr-*

The LIGHTS continue their pattern, slower and slower, then go-

DARK

OVER BLACK SCREEN-

VOICE (O.S.)

With the president's recovery going
better than expected...

FADE UP ON-

EXT. WILL'S BROWNSTONE - MORNING

A day of fine weather is breaking; it's morning in America.

VOICE (O.S., CONT'D)
... all eyes turn to Cape
Canaveral, Florida for today's
historic launch.

INT. WILL'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Will eats TOAST as she looks at the small TUBE TV on the
counter.

On SCREEN is a morning news show-

ANCHOR (IN TV, CONT'D)
It feels like serendipity that
after such a harrowing recovery,
the launch should occur on the
President's first day back to
limited duties.

SECOND ANCHOR (IN TV)
(head shaking)
It's amazing. It really is.

Now the second anchor turns to face another camera.

SECOND ANCHOR (IN TV)
It was only 13 days ago that John
Hinckley Jr....

Will chews her toast as she watches.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

Will puts on light makeup in the mirror. Distantly, we hear
the warbled NOISE of a TV on somewhere in the house. The
sounds are chaotic, unplaceable.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

On TV- NEWS FOOTAGE of the launch of the Space Shuttle
Columbia. The room around the TV is EMPTY. Now the phone
begins to RING.

ANGLE ON THE TV- As the shuttle leaves the surface of the
earth, riding its pluming gray tail toward the stars, the TV
ejects the hoots and child-like woops of the NASA officials
and news men alike.

Ring. Ring. RING.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The huge DUO-TAPE ANSWERING MACHINE clicks and picks up. From the SPEAKER-

WILL
(in machine)
This is Will Ross, leave a message.

WOMAN'S VOICE
(in machine)
Will. This is Nora Kallel, Greg's wife.
(beat)
I haven't seen Greg. No one has. Not for a few days. Since they closed the facility.
(beat)
I don't know. Maybe he went out on one of his *sprees*.
(beat)
Please call me if you hear from him?

The message stops with a hard plastic CLUNK.

ANGLE ON THE TV-

An ANCHOR at his desk-

ANCHOR
President Reagan, watching from a television in the White House living quarters, exclaimed, "It's a spectacular sight."
(beat)
His prepared message to the astronauts read: 'Once again, we feel the surge of pride which comes from knowing we are the first, we are the best. We are so because we are free.'

OTHER ANCHOR (IN TV)
No word from the White House yet as to when we can expect the President to make his first public appearance since the shooting.

The TV goes OFF.

Will stands beside it, having pressed the power button. Purse pinned up under her arm, Will puts in a second earring. It's the last touch on her outfit, a nice blend of Will's style, but with a refreshing touch of relaxed fashion.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Will glances once at the still room, heads for the front door. As she reaches it, the PHONE begins to ring again.

Will regards it a beat, takes her CAR KEYS, then leaves, the house empty, silent and still but for-

RING. RING. RING.

The DuoPhone ANSWERING MACHINE picks up. A few clicks and clacks.

WILL
(in machine)
This is Will Ross, leave a message.

From the SPEAKER, the barking SOUND of a dial-up modem.

EXT. SHOPPING MALL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

HUGE LIGHTS pour illumination, brightening every corner of the vast lot. Aside from a few scattered cars, the lot is EMPTY. Everything is still.

Way in the far corner, there is one car with its lights on. It sits there idling, so clean we almost don't recognize it.

INT. WILL'S CAR, FRONT SEAT - CONTINUOUS

Will sits at the wheel, Fred in the passenger's seat.

FRED
I finally got you away from the facility, and where are we?

WILL
Come on, Freddie, you promised to teach me.

FRED
You have a driver's licence, Will.

WILL
Yes, but I have no idea why they gave it to me.

FRED
Were you wearing a skirt?
(off Will's blank look)
To the test.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL
No Freddie. I *passed* the test.
(beat)
I may have flirted a little.

They laugh.

FRED
Do you run over the curb when you
turn.

WILL
Sometimes. Most of the time.

Fred points ahead.

FRED
OK, ease off the break and-

EXT. PARKING LOT, WIDE - CONTINUOUS

Will's car accelerates maybe a bit too fast, makes a few
turns around the lot.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Will laughs as she speeds up. Fred kinda holds on, trying not
to look too nervous.

FRED
Probably want to make that turn a
little slower.

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

SUDDENLY the huge parking lot lights go off. The entire lot
falls into DARKNESS. Will's headlights are the only slivers
in the BLACKNESS.

INT. WILL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Will and Fred crane low to look up at the vanished lights.

WILL
What did I do?

FRED
I don't think *you* did it.

The PARKING LOT LIGHTS come back. Revealing a CAR. Will's
turning right into it, FAST.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will jerks the wheel, slams on the breaks, the car SCREECHES to a halt.

Outside, the parking lots lights flash, ON. OFF. ON. OFF.

Will and Fred share a look, confusion, fear-

EXT. PARKING LOT, WIDE - CONTINUOUS

Will and Fred step out of the car. The high LIGHTS blink a familiar pattern.

PULL OUT REVEALS-

It's not just the lot; the LIGHTS in WASHINGTON DC beyond are also blinking in unison.

FROM ABOVE THE EARTH, the entire POWER GRID blinks that same familiar pattern of light.

FURTHER AWAY, it's the whole Atlantic Seaboard, flashing ON and OFF in perfect synchronization.

FURTHER AWAY, the NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT blinks the same pattern of light from the mainframe room. It is the message we have seen over and over...

The EARTH is just a dot, then a speck, then just a single pin prick in the vast vacuum of space.

But the flashing pattern can still be seen, if just barely, a message to whomever or whatever may be out there-

RANDLE IS BENIGN