

THE CIRCLE

Written by

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Based on the novel

by

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FADE IN:

INT. UTILITY BUILDING - OFFICE - DAY

FINGERS

type on a computer keyboard. Lightning fast. Sitting in an ugly burlap-lined cubicle, focused on her work, is:

MAE HOLLAND, 24. With her olive skin, dark hair, and brown eyes, Mae is striking, but slightly aloof, as though she's thinking about everything -- or perhaps nothing at all.

In this sickly green, cinderblock-walled office, Mae stands out. The other bored, mostly middle-aged CUBICLE-DWELLERS seem to be counting the minutes until five o' clock.

But not Mae. She has a focus. A cool intensity. What the hell is Mae doing here?

INT./EXT. MAE'S CAR (MOVING) - LONGFIELD, CALIFORNIA - DAY

Mae drives an OLD CHEVY through LONGFIELD: a small, dusty, Central Valley town. Near Fresno. Working class. Farmers, truckers, factory workers. Not exactly where a bright young recent college grad would go to make a name for herself.

EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD - DAY

Mae sits on the bumper of her broken down car, waving as --
-- a beaten-up PICKUP TRUCK pulls up. In the driver's seat, grinning widely, is: MERCER (25), unruly hair, large frame, zero vanity.

NOTE: We won't see Mercer again for a while, but remember his face.

MERCER
(heavy on charm)
Missed me, huh?

Mae rolls her eyes and LAUGHS. These two clearly have a history.

MAE
My parents didn't answer their
phone. You did.

INT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mae eats dinner at the kitchen table with her MOTHER (early-50s) and FATHER (early-50s) -- who're clearly still very much in love. The kitchen is nice, but not too nice. Solidly lower middle class.

NOTE: Mae's father has slightly slurred speech as well as other symptoms associated with Multiple Sclerosis (MS).

MAE'S FATHER

Sure was nice of Mercer to help
with your car.

MAE'S MOTHER

I'm so glad you two were able to
stay friends after --

MAE

(clearly a charged topic)
Yeah...
(changing the subject)
...So, any word on the insurance
situation?

MAE'S MOTHER

They don't want to insure your
father, plain and simple.
(off Mae)
And they won't cover Copaxone. It's
not on their "list."

Mae glances at her father, who looks down at his food, hates being pitied.

MAE'S FATHER

Any word yet from Annie?

Mae shakes her head "no."

INT. UTILITY BUILDING - OFFICE - DAY

Mae is at her desk, focused on her computer screen, studying:

Various WEBSITES for MS MEDICATION/PAIN MANAGEMENT

Mae's cell phone RINGS. She glances at the caller's name -- ANNIE -- and quickly answers it.

ANNIE (V.O.)

What're you doing?

NOTE: We'll meet Annie soon enough.

MAE
(lowers her voice)
I'm at work.

ANNIE (V.O.)
What're you doing tomorrow?

MAE
I'll be right back here at work.

ANNIE (V.O.)
Ah, that's too bad. I was asking
'cause...there's officially a job
waiting for you here at the Circle!
(beat)
Unless of course you don't want to
leave your current job.

EXT. UTILITY BUILDING - PARKING LOT - DAY

Mae hurries to her car with a BOX of her belongings. She
talks on her cell phone.

MAE
I love you guys too! I think
everything is about to change, Dad.
(eyes full of tears)
Everything.

EXT. THE CIRCLE - DAY

Mae stares down at the word

Dream

carved into a TILE on a WALKWAY. As she walks, she reads
other inspirational words and phrases on tiles:

Participate. Find community. Innovate. Imagine.

Mae is on the Bay Area campus of the CIRCLE: 400 acres of
soft green hills, tennis and volleyball courts, a Calatrava
fountain, clear blue sky overhead, and the brushed steel and
glass headquarters of the most influential tech company in
the world.

Mae stops in front of the MAIN ENTRANCE, the CIRCLE'S LOGO
etched into the glass above, takes a deep breath, and enters.

INT. THE CIRCLE - ATRIUM - CONTINUOUS

The front hall seems endless: offices everywhere above, four stories high on either side, the walls made of GLASS.

Mae looks down and sees HER OWN FACE reflected in the immaculate glossy floor. Worried.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
You must be Mae!

Mae musters up a wide smile, turning to see: RENATA (mid-20s) beautiful in a white silk blouse and scarf. Very high energy.

RENATA
I'm Renata.

MAE
Hi, I'm looking for --

RENATA
Annie. I know. She's on her way.

A SOUND comes from Renata's tiny EARPIECE.

RENATA (CONT'D)
(listens)
She's actually...

Renata looks at Mae, but sees something else -- a RETINAL INTERFACE (many Circlers have this). The effect is one of perpetual semi-distraction.

RENATA (CONT'D)
...in the Old West -- but she'll be here soon.

Mae nods, confused.

RENATA (CONT'D)
(off Mae)
All the buildings are named after historical eras.

MAE
(an attempt at humor)
I hope she's got some hardtack and a sturdy horse.

Renata smiles politely but doesn't laugh. She gets another SIGNAL from her earpiece.

RENATA

Oh, wait. Now she's saying she's
still tied up over there.
(radiant smile)
Why don't I take you to your desk?

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - DAY

Mae follows Renata across the lawn, passing a PAIR OF
CIRCLERS sitting on a man-made hill, gesturing to a CLEAR
TABLET, talking with great intensity.

RENATA

You'll be in the Renaissance.

Renata gestures across the lawn to: a BUILDING OF GLASS AND
OXIDIZED COPPER.

RENATA (CONT'D)

This is where all the Customer
Experience people are. You've
visited before?

MAE

I have. A few times, but not this
building.

They pass YOUNG PEOPLE, dressed professionally and splayed
about like sunbathers.

RENATA

So you've seen the pool, the sports
area...

Renata waves her hand toward a BLUE PARALLELOGRAM and the
angular GYM rising behind it.

RENATA (CONT'D)

...over there there's the yoga
studio, crossfit, Pilates, massage,
spinning. I heard you spin?
(not waiting for a reply)
The dorms are over there --

Renata gestures to the DORMS -- part college dorms, part
hipster glass apartments.

RENATA (CONT'D)

-- a lot of Circlers live on
campus.

Renata and Mae arrive at: THE RENAISSANCE, another building with a forty-foot atrium, a CALDER MOBILE turning slowly above.

RENATA (CONT'D)
And...here we are.

MAE
(off the mobile)
Oh, I love Calder.

RENATA
I know you do.
(smiles)
This one used to hang in the French parliament. Or something like that.

Mae is entranced by the beauty of the mobile, the building, everything. It's overwhelming.

RENATA (CONT'D)
Shall we?

INT. THE CIRCLE - RENAISSANCE - ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Renata and Mae enter a GLASS ELEVATOR, tinted faintly orange. LIGHTS flicker on and, on the walls, appears MAE'S YEARBOOK PHOTO along with the MESSAGE:

WELCOME MAE HOLLAND

Mae actually GASPS.

RENATA
(smiles, charmed)
Yeah, everything's on sensors. The elevator reads your ID, then says hello. Annie gave us that photo.
(off Mae)
You guys must be tight if she's got high school pictures of you.

MAE
(smiles awkwardly)
Yeah, we go way back...

RENATA
Anyway, hopefully you don't mind. We do that for visitors, mostly. They're usually impressed.

INT. THE CIRCLE - RENAISSANCE - CATWALK - MOMENTS LATER

The elevator doors open and Renata and Mae exit onto a narrow, steel-grated catwalk. Mae glances down, seeing all the way to the ground floor, four stories below.

MAE

I guess you don't put anyone with
vertigo up here.

Renata stops and turns, gravely concerned.

RENATA

Of course not. But your profile
said --

MAE

No, no, I'm fine.

RENATA

Seriously, we could put you lower
if --

MAE

No, really. It's perfect. Sorry. I
was making a joke. Obviously not a
good one.

Renata actually seems shaken. It's endearing. Sort of.

INT. THE CIRCLE - RENAISSANCE - MAIN FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Renata and Mae walk through the main floor, wide and windowed and bisected by a long hallway.

On either side, the OFFICES are fronted by floor-to-ceiling glass, the OCCUPANTS visible within -- each office tastefully, specifically decorated (sailing paraphernalia, bonsai trees, etc.).

They finally stop at: a CUBICLE, dull grey, small, and lined with BURLAP -- exactly like Mae's previous office.

RENATA

Here you are.

Mae silently nods, trying to hide her dissatisfaction.

RENATA (CONT'D)

This okay?

MAE
(forces a smile)
It's...great.

RENATA
Okay, then. I'll leave you to get
acquainted with your new workspace.

Renata turns and leaves. Mae takes in her dismal workspace:
an ANCIENT COMPUTER (unlike anything else in the building), a
chair with a half-broken back, the aforementioned burlap.

MAE
(under her breath)
Fucking burlap...

ANNIE (O.S.)
Now I'm thinking this wasn't such a
good idea.

Mae turns to see: ANNIE ALLERTON (26), her hands in fists at
her sides, posing like a pouting child. She's warm, cute,
goofy, old-money confident, and fiercely intelligent.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
"Fucking burlap."
(bursts into laughter)
That was incredible. Thank you so
much for that. I knew you'd hate it
-- I just wanted to see how much.

Mae glances at: Renata, who stands behind Annie, her hands
high in surrender.

RENATA
Not my idea -- Annie put me up to
it! Please don't hate me!

ANNIE
(satisfied sigh)
I had to actually buy that cubicle
from Walmart. And the computer!
That took me ages to find online. I
thought we could bring that kind of
stuff up from the basement or
something, but no -- we honestly
had nothing on the entire campus
ugly and old enough.
(off Mae)
Oh god, you should've seen your
face.

Mae shakes her head, can't help but grin.

MAE

You're such a sicko.

ANNIE

Me? I'm not sick. I'm awesome.

MAE

I can't believe you went to that much trouble to upset me.

ANNIE

Well, I did. That's how I got to where I am now.

(salesman's wink)

Now let's go. I'm giving you the full tour.

INT. THE CIRCLE - ART GALLERY - DAY

Annie leads Mae through the gallery, past a HALF-DOZEN BASQUIATS and other PAINTINGS by famous modern artists.

MAE

Thanks, Annie. I can't tell you how much this job --

ANNIE

(not a big deal)

Whatever. And I'm sorry you're in Customer Experience. I know that sounds shitty, but half the company's senior people started there.

INT. THE CIRCLE - AQUARIUM - DAY

Annie and Mae stand in front of a tall display where JELLYFISH, ghostly and slow, rise and fall.

ANNIE

I'll be watching you. And every time you do something great I'll make sure everyone knows about it so you won't to stay in Customer Experience too long.

MAE

Don't worry, I'm happy to be anywhere here.

(off Annie)

Are we working at all today?

ANNIE

Working? This is working. This is what you're tasked with doing the first day: get to know the place, the people, get acclimated.

(beat)

You know how you put new wood floors into your house?

MAE

No, I don't.

ANNIE

Well, first you have to let them sit there for ten days, to let the wood adjust. Then you do the installation.

MAE

So in this analogy...I'm the wood?

ANNIE

Yes, you're the wood.

MAE

And then I'll be installed.

ANNIE

(grins, nods)

We'll hammer you with ten thousand tiny nails. You'll love it.

INT./EXT. THE CIRCLE - DAY

Annie and Mae explore the: KENNEL; OUTDOOR AMPHITHEATRE; NIGHTCLUB; BORROW ROOM (a shop where every fun item you can imagine -- from bicycles to telescopes to hang gliders -- is loaned to Circlers for free.)

INT. THE CIRCLE - CAFETERIA/"GLASS EATERY" - DAY

In the nine-story cafeteria, with walls and floors made of glass -- creating the illusion of floating in mid-air -- Mae and Annie listen to:

An ICONIC SINGER-SONGWRITER (think Paul Simon, Neil Young, James Taylor, etc.) PLAY on a small stage in the corner -- while DINERS barely pay attention.

MAE

(starstruck)

Is that...?

ANNIE

(nods)

There's someone every day --
musicians, comedians, writers...

(off the singer)

We book 'em a year ahead -- we have
to fight them off.

MAE

I can't imagine the budget for
that...

ANNIE

(as though it's a
ridiculous idea)

Oh god, we don't pay them!

INT. THE CIRCLE - HALLWAY - DAY

Mae follows Annie down a long hallway, appointed in deep
cherry and walnut, a series of compact chandeliers emitting a
calm amber light.

MAE

Old school.

ANNIE

You know about Bailey, right? He
loves this ancient shit.

(beat)

Oh, wait, has anyone given you the
"Three Wise Men" spiel?

MAE

Um, no...

ANNIE

(glances up)

Check this out.

Annie gestures to: an ugly, strangely amateurish PAINTING
hanging on the wall.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Hideous, right?

In the painting, the "THREE WISE MEN" -- the three founders
of the Circle -- are arranged in a pyramid, wearing
expressions that cartoonishly represent their personalities.

CLOSE ON: TY GOSPODINOV, mid-20s, the Circle's boy-wonder
visionary, wearing nondescript glasses, his face shadowed and
obscured by an enormous hoodie, smiling off to the left.

ANNIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Ty looks checked out, right? But
 none of us would be here if it
 wasn't for him.

CLOSE ON: EAMON BAILEY, youthful 50s, twinkly-eyed, earnest,
 a charming and relatable everyman face for the Circle.

ANNIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Six months before the Circle's IPO,
 he hired Eamon Bailey.
 (beat)
Everyone loves Eamon.
 (beat)
 And then there's Tom Stenton...

CLOSE ON: TOM STENTON, 40s, tight-lipped grin in an Italian
 suit -- a tough-dealing throwback to a 1980s Wall Street
 Trader.

ANNIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Tom doesn't look so good here. He's
 not quite that sharky. But I hear
 he loves this picture.

Mae studies the men's images, hangs on Annie's every word.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
 Ty programmed the Unified Operating
 System. It combined user profiles,
 payment systems, e-mail accounts,
 passwords, preferences. Tom and
 Eamon figured out how to market it.
 And TruYou was born.
 (beat)
 One account, one online identity --
 for everything. For the rest of
your life.

Mae hesitates, then says:

MAE
 If they're all so brilliant and
 wealthy, why couldn't they afford a
 portrait by someone who knows what
 they're doing?

Annie LAUGHS.

INT. THE CIRCLE - OCHRE LIBRARY - LATER

Annie and Mae arrive at an enormous, Medieval DOOR. A pair of
 giant GARGOYLE KNOCKERS protrude at chest level.

MAE
Nice knockers.

Annie SNORTS and waves her hand over a BLUE PAD on the wall. The door opens. Mae's eye's widen in disbelief.

ANNIE
Holy fuck, right?

The library is three-stories high, everything fashioned in wood and copper and silver, with easily TEN-THOUSAND BOOKS, most bound in leather. Between books are BUSTS of notable people (Joan of Arc, MLK, Jefferson).

Mae is stunned, speechless. This is easily the most jaw-droppingly impressive private library she's ever seen.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
Oh, look up.

Mae looks up: the ceiling is STAINED GLASS, a fevered rendering of countless angels arranged in rings.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
It's from some old church in Rome.

INT. THE CIRCLE - OCHRE LIBRARY - TOP FLOOR - LATER

Annie leads Mae through narrow corridors of ancient, round-spined books, some as tall as Mae.

ANNIE
Before I show you this, you have to give me a verbal non-disclosure agreement, okay?

MAE
Fine.

ANNIE
Seriously.

MAE
I'm serious!

ANNIE
Good. Now when I move this book...

Annie removes a large VOLUME titled "*The Best Years of Our Lives*."

ANNIE (CONT'D)
...watch this.

Annie steps back as the WALL begins to slowly MOVE INWARD, revealing a

SECRET CHAMBER.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
That's High Nerd, right?

The sound of a DROPLET emits from Annie's earpiece.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
(to the person on the
other end)
Okay.
(to Mae)
Time to go.

INT. THE CIRCLE - GREAT HALL - DAY

ANNIE AND MAE

sit in the SECOND BALCONY of the GREAT HALL -- 3,500 seats of warm wood and brushed steel. The place is PACKED.

Down below, people begin to APPLAUD as

ON STAGE

EAMON BAILEY (seen earlier in the the Three Wise Men painting), wearing jeans and a V-neck sweater, walks to the podium. He has no visible mic, but when Eamon speaks, his voice is amplified and clear. He is perhaps the most likable person. Ever.

BAILEY
Hello, everyone. My name is Eamon
Bailey.

More APPLAUSE. Eamon shakes it off.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Thank you. I'm so glad to see you
all here. A bunch of you are new to
the company since I last spoke. Can
the newbies stand up?

ANNIE AND MAE

Annie nudges Mae, who nervously stands. Around 60 OTHER PEOPLE stand around the room -- young, diverse, shy, and quietly stylish. The APPLAUSE swells. Even some WHOOPS.

ANNIE

(whispers)

You're so cute when you blush.

ON STAGE

BAILEY

Newbies, you're in for something special. This is Dream Friday, where we present something we're working on. Often it's one of our engineers or designers or visionaries. Today, unfortunately, it's just me.

(beat)

For that, I apologize in advance.

VOICE (O.S.)

We love you Eamon!

LAUGHTER from the audience.

BAILEY

Well, thank you. I love you back. I love you as the grass loves the dew, as the birds love a bough.

(beat)

It's been a whole month since I've gotten up on this stage, and I know a lot of you have been wondering just where the heck I've been.

VOICE (O.S.)

Surfing!

More LAUGHTER.

BAILEY

Well, that's right. I've been doing some surfing, and that's part of what I'm here to talk about. As you know, I love to surf. Now, it used to be that you'd wake and call the local surf shop and ask them about the breaks.

(beat)

And pretty soon they stopped answering their phones.

Knowing LAUGHTER.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Then we got cellphones and you
could call your buddies who
might've gotten out to the beach
before you. They, too, stopped
answering their phones.

Big LAUGH.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
So then the internet happened, and
here and there some geniuses set up
cameras on the beaches. We could
log on and get some pretty crude
images of the waves at Stinson
Beach. It was almost worse than
calling the surf shop!

A SCREEN descends behind Bailey.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Here's how it used to look.

The screen shows: a standard BROWSER display. An unseen hand
types in the URL for a WEBSITE called SURFSIGHT. A poorly
designed SITE appears, with a tiny, pixilated, comically slow
image of a COASTLINE streaming in the middle.

The audience TITTERS.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Almost useless, right? Let's
refresh that page to show the site
with our new video delivery.

The page refreshes, and now the image is FULL-SCREEN with
PERFECT RESOLUTION.

Sounds of AWE from the audience.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Looks pretty good, right? Maybe I
should be out there right now!

ANNIE AND MAE

Annie leans into Mae.

ANNIE
The next part is incredible. Just
wait.

ON STAGE

Bailey steps forward. He's got the entire room captivated -- and he knows it.

BAILEY

Would it surprise you to know this
isn't coming from a big camera, but
actually just one of these?

Bailey holds a SMALL DEVICE, the shape and size of a
lollipop.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

As you can see, this camera needs
no wires. It's transmitting this
image via satellite.

A round of APPLAUSE shakes the room.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

Okay, so I set up that camera this
morning. I taped it to a stake,
stuck that stake in the sand, in
the dunes, with no permit, nothing.
In fact, no one knows it's there.

(beat)

Actually, I was pretty busy this
morning...

The original image of Stinson Beach shrinks, moves to the
corner of the screen, and ANOTHER BOX emerges, showing the
waves at RODEO BEACH.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

Here's Rodeo Beach. And now
Montara. Ocean Beach. Fort Point.

With each beach Bailey mentions, another LIVE IMAGE appears.
There are now SIX BEACHES in a grid -- live and visible with
perfect clarity and brilliant color.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

My friends, we're looking at
retailing these -- in just a few
months, mind you -- at fifty-nine
dollars each.

Bailey holds out the tiny camera and tosses it to a WOMAN in
the front row. She catches it, holds it aloft, and turns to
the audience, smiling gleefully.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
You can buy ten of them for
Christmas and suddenly you have
constant access to everywhere you
want to be -- home, work, traffic
conditions. Anyone can install
them. It takes five minutes tops.

The screen behind Bailey clears. A NEW GRID appears.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Here's the view from my back yard.

A live FEED of a tidy, modest BACK YARD appears.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
(off the screen)
Here's my front yard. My garage.
Here's one on a hill overlooking
Highway 101 where it gets bad
during rush hour. Here's one near
my parking space to make sure no
one parks there. Here's my mom's
house.

A live FEED of a bright HALLWAY -- with BAILEY'S MOTHER
walking in nothing but a TOWEL.

A roar of LAUGHTER erupts.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Oops, let's drop that one.

The screen now has SIXTEEN discrete, live IMAGES.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Now, these are just my cameras. I
access them all by simply typing in
Camera 1, 2, 3, 12, whatever. Easy.
(beat)
But what about sharing? What if my
buddy has some cameras posted and
wants to give me access?

The screen multiplies from SIXTEEN BOXES to THIRTY-TWO.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Here's my friend Lionel's screens.
He's into skiing, so he's got
cameras positioned so he can tell
the conditions at twelve locations
all over Tahoe.

TWELVE IMAGES of SNOW-COVERED MOUNTAINS and VALLEYS appear.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

If you have one thousand friends,
and they have ten cameras each, you
now have ten thousand options for
live footage.

The screen atomizes to a THOUSAND MINI-SCREENS. Beaches,
mountains, lakes, cities, offices, and living rooms appear.

The audience APPLAUDS wildly.

Then the screen goes to black. A WHITE PEACE SIGN emerges.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

Now imagine the human rights
implications. Protesters on the
streets of Egypt no longer have to
hold up a camera, hoping to catch a
human rights violation. Now it's as
easy as gluing a camera to a wall.
(off the audience)
Actually, we've done just that.

A stunned HUSH comes over the audience.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

Let's have Camera 8 in Cairo.

A live shot of a STREET SCENE in CAIRO appears: BANNERS lie
on the street. POLICE IN RIOT GEAR are in the distance.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

They don't know we see them, but we
do. The world is watching. All is
quiet now, but can you imagine if
something happened? There would be
instant accountability.
(beat)
Well, we're calling it SeeChange.

The word appears on the screen behind Bailey:

SeeChange

A quick burst of APPLAUSE, which grows as the audience gets
the double-meaning of the name SeeChange.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

I agree with the Hague, with human
rights activists the world over.
There needs to be accountability.
Tyrants can no longer hide.

(MORE)

BAILEY (CONT'D)
 There needs to be, and will be,
 documentation and accountability,
 and we need to bear witness.
 (beat)
 To this end, I insist that all that
 happens should be known.

The words appear behind Bailey:

ALL THAT HAPPENS MUST BE KNOWN.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
 Folks, we're at the dawn of the
 Second Enlightenment.
 (beat)
 Knowledge is good. Knowing is good,
 right?

The audience CHEERS in agreement.

Bailey turns to the screen and reads:

BAILEY (CONT'D)
 "All that happens must be known."

MAE

leans toward Annie in a state of awe.

MAE
 (wide-eyed)
 This is incredible.

ANNIE
 I know, right?

ON STAGE

BAILEY
 Now, do these cameras have to be
 stationary? Of course not. I happen
 to have a dozen helpers all over
 the world right now, wearing the
 cameras around their necks. Let's
 visit them, shall we?

ON SCREEN: An image of MACHU PICCHU appears. It looks like a
 postcard. Then the image begins moving down towards the site.

The crowd GASPS, then CHEERS.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
 See, this opens up the possibility
 of visual surrogates.

A live image of PARIS appears. Then KUALA LUMPUR. Then a LONDON PUB.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

Now let's experiment a bit, using all of this together. I'm sitting at home. I log on and want to get a sense of the world.

(off the screen)

Show me traffic on the 101. Streets of Jakarta. Surfing at Bolinas. My mom's house. Show me the webcams of everyone I went to high school with.

At each command, a new IMAGE appears, until there are at least a HUNDRED live streaming IMAGES, all at once.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

We will become all-seeing, all-knowing. Because knowing is good.

(proud smile)

But knowing everything is even better.

The audience is now standing. Thunderous APPLAUSE.

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - BUFFET - NIGHT

A MASSIVE PARTY. Tiki torches everywhere. CIRCLERS limbo, play kickball, Electric Slide. Tons of booze.

Mae follows Annie down a forty-foot BUFFET, LAUGHING as they load their plates.

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - LATER

Wineglass in hand, Mae drifts by herself through the buzzed crowd, tipsily watching: PEOPLE on a BOCCE COURT roll CANTELOUPES into bowling pins.

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - LATER

Mae lies on the grass next to TWO-DOZEN CIRCLERS, their eyes closed and their arms or legs slightly overlapping. When one person says "Ha," the person next to them says "Ha." And on. And on. LAUGHTER. The game, not surprisingly, is called "Ha."

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - BUFFET - LATER

Mae returns to the decimated buffet. Only scraps left. She goes over to a NEARBY BAR to get another drink.

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - LATER

Mae stumbles through the thinning crowd, a VODKA/RED BULL in hand. She's clearly had one too many.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
There's more over there.

Mae turns just in time to see:

KALDEN, late-20s, skinny, jeans and a tight long-sleeve jersey, and grey, almost white hair.

MAE
Am I following you...?

KALDEN
(over his shoulder)
No, you're standing still. But you should if you want some wine.

Mae shrugs -- what the hell? -- and follows Kalden.

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - CANOPY OF TREES - MOMENTS LATER

Kalden leads Mae down to the bottom of a MAN-MADE WATERFALL.

KALDEN
(reaching into the water)
I hid a few bottles here.

Kalden submerges his arm to the shoulder, finally retrieving TWO GREEN WINE BOTTLES. He shows them off to Mae, proud.

KALDEN (CONT'D)
You want to go back to the game...
(off the bottles)
...or...?

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - STEPS - NIGHT

Mae and Kalden sit up on a high ring of steps overlooking the party below, each drinking from a wine bottle. Mae is more than a bit buzzed.

KALDEN

So are you here with someone, or do you work here...?

MAE

I do -- in CE.

KALDEN

CE?

MAE

Customer Experience.

KALDEN

Oh, right. We used to just call it Customer Service.

MAE

So I take it you're not new?

KALDEN

Me? No. I've been here a little while.

(off Mae)

Sorry, I'm Kalden.

MAE

Mae.

They shake hands.

MAE (CONT'D)

This is actually my first day.

KALDEN

No way.

MAE

I fuck you not.

(definitely not what she meant to say)

I meant --

KALDEN

You fuck me not? That sounds very conclusive. You've made a decision with very little information.

(off Mae)

You fuck me not...wow.

MAE

What I was trying to say was, "I shit you not," but, well, maybe I've had a few, and...

Kalden LAUGHS. Not at Mae. With her. It's charming.

KALDEN
First day. I get it.
(raises his bottle)
Well, congratulations. A toast.

They CLINK bottles and drink more.

KALDEN (CONT'D)
Can I see what you do sometime?

MAE
For my work?

KALDEN
Yeah, can I stop by and say hello?
I mean, not if it makes you
uncomfortable.

MAE
Sure...I guess. It's not so
exciting, though.

KALDEN
Maybe, maybe not.

Kalden glances down at the party, then turns and eyes Mae intensely.

KALDEN (CONT'D)
See you around campus, I'm sure.

And then Kalden leaves. Mae nods to herself, confused. Yeah, that happened.

ANNIE (O.S.)
Drinking alone?

Mae turns to see: Annie standing behind her, grinning. Annie sits down next to Mae, reaches to Mae's feet, and lifts up the BOTTLE.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
I thought we ran out of everything
hours ago.

MAE
There was some wine in the
waterfall by the Industrial
Revolution.
(beat)
Did I really just say that?

Annie LAUGHS and takes a swig.

ANNIE
You'll get used to it.

INT. SHUTTLE (MOVING) - NIGHT

PEOPLE on the shuttle drunkenly talk, laugh, keep drinking.
In the back, Mae is slouched low in her seat. Asleep.

EXT. MAE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - TENDERLOIN, SAN FRANCISCO -
NIGHT

Mae stumbles into the entrance of her apartment building -- a
former low-rent hotel, still rough-around-the-edges.

INT. MAE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mae has fallen asleep on her FUTON watching TV. Her bedroom
is barely larger than the futon. Neon city lights bleed in
through her window, as does NOISE from the street outside.

ON TV

SENATOR WILLIAMSON (50s) gives a press conference, surrounded
by AIDES and a pair of AMERICAN FLAGS. The TICKER below her
reads:

SENATOR WILLIAMSON SEEKING TO BREAK UP THE CIRCLE

SENATOR WILLIAMSON
Today, I call upon my colleagues on
the Senate antitrust subcommittee
to commence a hearing and the
antitrust division of the
Department of Justice to launch an
investigation into the Circle. We
cannot rely on them to say, "Trust
us, we're not breaking anti-trust
laws." If that's true, I'm sure the
Circle will be glad to cooperate
fully...

INT. THE CIRCLE - CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AREA - MORNING

Mae follows Renata into the CE Area. On the wall is written:

LET'S DO THIS. LET'S DO ALL OF THIS.

The room is the size of a basketball court, with TWENTY DESKS separated by dividers of glass, arranged in groups of five.

RENATA

You're the first here. But you won't be alone for long.

Renata sweeps her arm around, indicating: a dozen GLASS-WALLED OFFICES surrounding the open space.

MAE

The designers really like glass, huh?

INT. THE CIRCLE - CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AREA - MAE'S DESK -
LATER

Mae sits at a desk. Her desk. The office is full now.

Brandon, 35 (old by Circle standards), stands in front of Mae, holding a gleaming, translucent TABLET.

BRANDON

I have the honor of giving you your new tablet.

Brandon turns the tablet over to reveal an inscription:

MAEBELLINE RENNER HOLLAND

Brandon hands the tablet to Mae -- who seems surprised by how light it is.

LATER

In addition to the tablet and laptop, Brandon has a sleek NEW PHONE in front of him -- right next to Mae's OLDER PHONE.

BRANDON (CONT'D)

Everything you had on your other phone and on your hard drive is accessible here on the tablet and here on your new phone, but it's also backed up on the cloud and on our servers. It can never be lost.

MAE

Great, thank you.

Brandon stands.

BRANDON

No sweat.

(begins to leave)

Oh, and it's crucial that all company devices are password protected, so I gave you one. It's written here.

Brandon hands Mae a SLIP OF PAPER with a series of digits, numerals, and obscure typographical symbols.

BRANDON (CONT'D)

I hope you can memorize it today and then throw this away. Deal?

MAE

Deal.

Brandon bows and leaves, revealing: DAN (early-30s), handsome, wears a brown hoodie.

DAN

(deeply contented smile)

Hello, Mae. I'm your team leader. Like to take a walk?

EXT. THE CIRCLE - ROOFDECK - DAY

Dan and Mae take in the VIEW of the Circle campus from high up, as well as the surrounding city of SAN VINCENZO, and the BAY beyond.

DAN

We're a group of the best minds of our generation. Generations. And making sure this is a place where our humanity is respected, our opinions are dignified, and our voices are heard -- this is as important as any revenue, any stock price, any endeavor we undertake.

(off Mae)

Does that sound corny?

MAE

Not at all. That's why I'm here. I love the "community first" idea.

Dan turns to look into the hills to the east.

DAN

If we don't give the customers a satisfying, human and humane experience, then we have no customers. It's pretty elemental.

(dramatic pause)

We're the proof that this company is human.

Mae grins, overwhelmed with her good fortune.

DAN (CONT'D)

I know you'll be great here.

Dan extends his arm towards Mae, as if he wants to put his palm on her shoulder, but thinks against it, his hand awkwardly falling to his side.

INT. THE CIRCLE - CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AREA - MAE'S DESK - DAY

Mae sits in front of her computer next to: JARED, 20s, fuzzy-haired, serene in his khakis.

MAE

(off the computer)

What kind of average is average?

JARED

(grins)

If your daily customer rating dips below 95, then you might step back and see what you can do better.

(beat)

Now, if it's consistently slumping, you might have a meet-up with Dan to go over some best practices. Sound good?

MAE

(nods)

Absolutely -- I'm used to being in the dark about where I stand at work until, like, quarterly evaluations. It's nerve-wracking.

JARED

Well, you'll love this, then. Let's do a live one. Ready?

Mae nods.

Jared brings up a CUSTOMER REQUEST and gives it a quick read.

JARED (CONT'D)

Easy.

Jared begins to type a quick RESPONSE.

JARED (CONT'D)

(as he types)

..."Have a fantastic day"...

A FEW MOMENTS LATER

On the SCREEN, a score appears (NOTE: screen messages will be in *italics*): 99

JARED (CONT'D)

Now, that's good, right? Ninety-nine is good. But I can't help wondering why it wasn't 100...

Jared opens up the customer's SURVEY ANSWERS and skims through.

JARED (CONT'D)

There's no clear sign that any part of their experience was unsatisfactory. Most companies would say, "Wow, 99 out of 100 points, that's nearly perfect."

(off Mae)

But at the Circle, that missing point nags at us. Here's a follow-up survey that we send to find out what about our interaction could be improved -- and how.

Jared sends the follow-up survey. Seconds later, the RESPONSE comes back: *All was good. Sorry. Should have given you a 100. Thanks!!*

JARED (CONT'D)

Sometimes you might just encounter someone who isn't really sensitive to the metrics. So it's good to ask them, to make sure you get that clarity.

(off Mae)

Ready to do your own?

Hesitant, perhaps a bit nervous, Mae says:

MAE

I am.

JARED
Don't feel bad if it takes a while
to get the hang of it, okay?

Mae nods.

JARED (CONT'D)
(smiles)
Here we go...

Jared brings up a CUSTOMER REQUEST.

A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Mae and Jared stare at the screen, waiting. A DING as a
number appears: 100

JARED (CONT'D)
(dumbfounded)
First one you get 100...wow.
(glances at Mae)
I knew you'd be good, but --

MAE
Thanks.

JARED
Okay, then. Let's turn on your
second screen. This one is for
intra-office messaging.

Jared turns on a SMALLER SECOND SCREEN to Mae's right.

JARED (CONT'D)
Think you're ready to get started-
started?

Mae nods excitedly.

LATER

Mae types furiously. A bit overwhelmed, but laser-focused.

On her SECOND SCREEN, a MESSAGE appears:

JARED: *Great so far! Let's see if we can get that up to 97.*

Mae types a reply:

MAE: *I will!*

JARED: *And send follow-ups to the sub-100s.*

MAE: *Okay.*

LATER

Mae is in the zone. Fingers moving a mile a minute. A MESSAGE appears on the second screen -- this one from Dan:

DAN: *Fantastic work, Mae! How you feeling?*

Mae seems surprised to hear from her team leader. She types:

MAE: *Fine. Thanks!*

Mae goes back to work. Another MESSAGE pops up:

JARED: *Anything I can do? Questions I can answer?*

MAE: *No thanks! I'm all set for now. Thanks, Jared!*

Mae returns to her primary screen. But then, on the second screen, appears:

JARED: *Remember that I can only help if you tell me how.*

MAE: *Thanks again!*

If Mae is at all annoyed, she does a good job of hiding it. She takes a breath and goes back to work.

MUCH LATER

Mae is lost in her work. A MESSAGE appears from Dan:

DAN: *Great work, Mae!*

Mae smiles to herself. Seconds later, another message appears, this one from Annie:

ANNIE: *Dan says you're kicking ass. That's my girl!*

Mae grins. A MESSAGE appears on her screen, alerting her that she's been mentioned on ZING (Think: Twitter). She clicks over to her Zing account to read it.

ANNIE (on Zing): *Newbie Mae is kicking ass!*

Annie's zing goes out to the entire Circle campus -- 10,041 people. She quickly sends another zing:

ANNIE (on Zing): *The highest score of any CE newb ever of all time suck it.*

Mae smiles to herself. Goes back to work. Even more focused.

INT./EXT. MAE'S CAR (MOVING) - MORNING

Mae drives along the sunny coast. Music BLARES.

MAE'S FATHER (PRE-LAP)
We're just so proud of you, Mae-
flower.

INT. WATERFRONT RESTAURANT - DAY

Mae sits across her parents, the remains of their MEAL on the table. They're part of the early dinner crowd.

MAE'S MOTHER
We really are. You have a glow.

MAE'S FATHER
You do.

MAE
I do not have a glow.

MAE'S MOTHER
(grins)
Like you're with child.

Mae rolls her eyes.

MAE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
So? It's been great?

MAE
I don't ever want to work anywhere
else.

MAE'S MOTHER
I told Karolina's mom. You know
her. She looked like someone stuck
a sharp stick up her behind.
Boiling with envy.

MAE
Mom...

MAE'S MOTHER
I let your salary slip.

MAE
Mom.

MAE'S MOTHER

What? It's been very fun. I just casually slip it into conversations: My daughter's at the hottest company on the planet -- and has full dental.

MAE

Please don't. I just got lucky. And Annie --

MAE'S FATHER

How is Annie?

MAE

Good.

MAE'S MOTHER

What does she do exactly...?

MAE

She's in the Gang of 40.
(off her parents' confused expressions)
She's part of all the big decisions. I think she specializes in dealing with regulatory issues in other countries.

MAE'S MOTHER

I'm sure she's got a lot of responsibility.

MAE'S FATHER

And stock options! I can't imagine what she's worth.

MAE

Dad, please don't imagine it.

MAE'S MOTHER

(off-handed)

Oh, we saw Mercer the other day.

This is clearly a sensitive topic.

MAE

That's good.
(with an edge)
How's the antler-chandelier business?

MAE'S FATHER

Easy there. He's got his own business. And not to brag, but it's apparently thriving.

MAE

(changing the subject)

I've averaged 97 so far. They say that's a record for a newbie.

Mae's mother and father look at her in confusion, no clue what she's talking about.

MAE'S FATHER

What's that, Mae-flower?

MAE'S MOTHER

Enough of this. We brought you a surprise. You have it, Vinnie?

Mae's father reaches under his chair, retrieves a small WRAPPED BOX, and gives it to Mae.

MAE

Aw, you guys...

Mae opens the box, revealing a SILVER PEN.

MAE'S FATHER

Are we the best or what?

Mae and her mother LAUGH.

MAE'S FATHER (CONT'D)

You guys settle up. I'm going to the car to recline for a moment.

Mae's father gets up to leave.

Mae begins to get up, but her mother puts her hand on her shoulder.

MAE'S MOTHER

He gets tired. It's fine.

They both watch as Mae's father exits the restaurant.

MAE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

It's just a different routine now. He rests. He does things, he walks and eats, then he rests again.

Mae silently nods. This is really painful for her.

EXT. RESTAURANT - PARKING LOT - DAY

Mae and her mother approach their car and see: Mae's father in the driver's seat of his CAR, reclined almost all the way back, gazing into the distance.

INT./EXT. MAE'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Mae drives along the coast.

EXT. MAIDEN'S VOYAGES - PARKING LOT - LATER

Mae's car pulls into the lot next to a marina.

EXT. MAIDEN'S VOYAGES - BEACH - LATER

Mae walks down to the beach, where there's a small WOODEN BUILDING with KAYAKS and PADDLE BOARDS lined up outside.

Mae turns to find: MARION (50s), the bowlegged, frizzy-haired, perpetually sunny, owner of Maiden's Voyages.

MARION
(smiles)
My best customer.

EXT. BAY - DUSK

Mae, wearing a LIFE JACKET, paddles out past the fishing boats. Past the breakers. Past the PADDLE-BOARDERS. Past everything, until she's in the open mouth of the bay. And then past that. Mae hears a BARK, turns and sees:

A HARBOR SEAL, staring right at her. It doesn't move. And then, suddenly, it ducks underwater.

EXT. ISLAND - DUSK

Mae jumps out of her kayak onto a ROCKY SHORE. She pulls the kayak up onto the beach. Mae sits on the beach, picks up a STICK and mindlessly draws in the sand. Tiny unearthed CRABS scurry off. Mae looks out at the water. And then...

...Mae begins to suddenly, uncontrollably SOB. This feels like it's been a long time coming.

FADE TO BLACK.

The sound of TYPING.

FADE IN:

INT. THE CIRCLE - CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AREA - MAE'S DESK - DAY

Mae is at work. The SILVER PEN her parents gave her is on her desk. So is a THIRD COMPUTER SCREEN.

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - DAY

Annie and Mae sit in a CROWD. There's a BUZZ of excitement. An OUTDOOR STAGE has been set up. People begin to APPLAUD as

ON STAGE

TOM STENTON (seen earlier in the painting of Three Wise Men) takes the stage without an introduction. He commands respect. In a flawless black suit, no tie, he walks to the center of the stage and, without even saying hello, begins:

STENTON

Transparency is something we advocate here at the Circle. We look to a guy like Stewart as an inspiration -- a man who's willing to open up his life to further our collective knowledge.

(beat)

He's been filming, recording, every moment of his life now for five years, and it's been an invaluable asset to the Circle, and soon, I bet, to all of humankind. Stewart?

Stenton looks out to the audience and finds: STEWART (60, bald) standing with what looks like a small TELEPHOTO LENS around his neck. WARM APPLAUSE -- then Stuart sits down.

STENTON (CONT'D)

Meanwhile, there's another area of public life where we want and expect transparency: democracy.

(beat)

Yet every day, long after the founding of this republic, our elected leaders find themselves embroiled in some scandal or another, usually involving them doing something secretive, illegal, against the will and best interests of the nation.

(beat)

(MORE)

STENTON (CONT'D)
 No wonder public support for
 Congress is only at 11 percent.

A wave of MURMURS from the audience.

STENTON (CONT'D)
 (slight grin)
 As you know, a certain senator was
 just revealed to be involved in
 some very unsavory business.

The crowd LAUGHS, CHEERS, TITTERS.

MAE

leans to Annie and whispers:

MAE
 Wait, what senator?

ANNIE
 Williamson -- you didn't hear?
 She's under investigation for a
 half-dozen things, all kinds of
 ethical violations. On her computer
 they found a hundred weird
 searches, downloads -- some very
 creepy stuff.

ON STAGE

On the SCREEN behind Stenton, an IMAGE appears of: Senator
 Williamson avoiding reporters as she walks to her car.

STENTON
 Your occupation could be dropping
human feces on the heads of senior
 citizens and your job approval
 would be higher than 11 percent.
 (waits for laughter)
 I'm happy to say there's a woman
 who's taking all this very
 seriously, and she's doing
 something to address the issue.
 (smiles)
 Let me introduce Olivia Santos,
 representative from District 14.

CONGRESSWOMAN SANTOS, a stout woman of about fifty, wearing a
 red suit and a yellow floral scarf, strides from the wings,
 both arms waving high over her head.

Scattered and polite APPLAUSE. It's clear that few in the
 Great Hall know who she is.

Stenton gives Santos a stiff hug, and as she stands beside him, her hands clasped in front of her, he continues:

STENTON (CONT'D)
 Congresswoman Santos is here to
 announce what I must say is a very
 important development in the
 history of government.
 (to Santos)
 Congresswoman?

Stenton steps back, sits on a high stool. Santos moves to the front of the stage, her hands entwined behind her.

CONGRESSWOMAN SANTOS
 (gazes across the room)
 That's right, Tom. I'm as concerned
 as you are about the need for
 citizens to know what their elected
 leaders are doing. It's your right,
 is it not? It's your right to know
 what they're doing on the
 taxpayer's dime.
 (off the audience)
 I intend to show how democracy can
 and should be: entirely open,
entirely transparent.

The audience APPLAUDS with new vigor. WHISPERS of anticipation.

CONGRESSWOMAN SANTOS (CONT'D)
 (excited smile)
 Starting today, I'll be wearing the
 same device that Stewart wears. My
 every meeting, movement, my every
 word, will be available to all my
 constituents -- and to the world.

APPLAUSE. Stenton gets off his stool and makes his way to Santos.

STENTON
 Can we give Congresswoman Santos a
bigger round of applause?

The APPLAUSE grows. Followed by WHOOPS. WHISTLES.

A TECHNICIAN emerges from the wings and hangs a NECKLACE around Santos's head (a small version of the camera Stewart wears). Santos holds the LENS to her lips and kisses it.

The audiences CHEERS. Stenton raises his hands for silence.

STENTON (CONT'D)

(to Santos)

So you're saying that every conversation, every meeting, every part of your day will be broadcast?

CONGRESSWOMAN SANTOS

Yes, it will all be available on my Circle page. Every moment till I sleep.

The APPLAUSE drowns her out. Santos bows, putting her palms together in a posture of prayer. The APPLAUSE shows no sign of quieting. Santos pushes a BUTTON on the device around her neck, and there it is:

The VIEW FROM HER CAMERA, projected on the

GIANT SCREEN behind her. The audience sees itself and ROARS with approval.

INT. THE CIRCLE - THE COLONY - NIGHT

A crowded RECEPTION for Congresswoman Santos, who has a large group of Circlers waiting to congratulate her.

Mae wanders the room.

A huge WALLSCREEN comes to life, and on it is: TY (the third "Wise Man," seen earlier in the portrait), wearing his customary oversized face-obscuring hoodie and glasses.

Everyone turns to listen as Ty says:

TY

(from the wallscreen)

Hey, everyone. Sorry I can't be there with you all. I've been working on some very interesting new projects that are keeping me away from incredible social activities like the one you're enjoying. But I wanted to congratulate you all on this phenomenal new development -- I think it's a crucial new step for the Circle and will mean a great deal to our overall awesomeness.

(beat)

Thank you all for your hard work on it, and let the party truly begin!

Ty's image disappears, replaced by a DIGITAL SUNSET.

SABINE (O.S.)
Can we meet the newbie?

Mae turns to see --

-- Annie, as well as: SABINE (Late 20s, blonde, sturdy) and JOSEF (mid 20s, thin, pale, British).

ANNIE
'Course.
(jabs her fork at them)
Mae, this is Josef and Sabine.
(off Josef)
Josef here is in Educational
Access. He's trying to get tablets
into schools that can't afford
them. He's a do-gooder.

JOSEF
(shrugs)
So you're in Customer Experience?

MAE
I am.

JOSEF
I saw you're doing pretty well so
far.

ANNIE
Good? She's got a 97 so far. That's
insane. I didn't get above a 95 the
first week. Mae's a star!

Mae blushes.

SABINE
I started in Customer Experience
too.

ANNIE
And Sabine's a biochemist.

MAE
(to Sabine)
Wow, what do you -- ?

SABINE
Biometrics. You know, iris scanning
and facial recognition. Right now
I'm working on ChildTrack.

Mae nods, her curiosity piqued.

ANNIE

Sabine is being modest. She helped start a program to prevent child abductions.

MAE

Wow...how?

SABINE

(matter-of-fact)

Basically, the children are chipped so it's impossible for a predator to remove it. The second a kid's not where he's supposed to be, a massive alert goes off, and the kid can be tracked down immediately.

(beat)

Well, within 90 seconds.

Mae is silent. Stunned. Impressed.

SABINE (CONT'D)

So immediately you take all child abduction, rape, murder, and you reduce it by 99 percent.

Annie leans in and proudly whispers:

ANNIE

They just approved it in Vegas. Bailey and Stenton think we could have every child on it in the next year.

LATER

Mae picks up a GLASS OF WINE from the BAR. Walks through the crowd. Through an open DOORWAY she notices...

...KALDEN -- last seen at the party her first day at the Circle -- sitting alone in a stairwell.

INT. THE CIRCLE - STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

Kalden looks up to see Mae. His face brightens.

KALDEN

Hey...

Kalden goes silent.

MAE

You don't remember my name.

KALDEN
No, but I know you, and I wanted to see you.

MAE
Mae.

KALDEN
Right. I'm Kalden.

MAE
I know -- I remember names.

KALDEN
I looked for you one day but...you looked busy.

MAE
(surprised)
You came to CE?

KALDEN
I did, but I didn't want to bother you.

MAE
And you couldn't leave a message somehow?

KALDEN
I didn't know your last name.

MAE
I don't know your last name, either. And there's no Kalden listed anywhere.

KALDEN
Really? Huh. Well, we're here now.

Mae steps back to take Kalden in.

MAE
You do work here, right?

KALDEN
Of course. How else could I get in? Security is pretty good here. Especially on a day like today, with our luminous guest.

Kalden nods at: Congresswoman Santos, currently signing a CIRCLER'S TABLET.

MAE

How long have you worked here again?

KALDEN

Me? Um...

(scratches the back of his head)

Wow, I don't know. A while now.

MAE

One month? A year? Six years?

KALDEN

Six? That'd be the beginning. You think I look old enough to have been here six years? Is it the grey hair?

Mae smiles, nods.

MAE

Should we get a drink?

KALDEN

No, you go ahead.

MAE

Afraid to leave your hideout?

KALDEN

Just feeling less social.

INT. THE CIRCLE - THE COLONY - MOMENTS LATER

Mae makes her way to a table where a few hundred GLASSES OF WINE have been poured and are waiting.

INT. THE CIRCLE - STAIRWELL - LATER

Mae returns to Kalden's stairwell with TWO GLASSES OF WINE. Kalden is in the same place -- with TWO GLASSES of his own.

KALDEN

Someone came by with a tray.

They stand briefly, then CLINK all four glasses together.

KALDEN (CONT'D)

So, did you like the speech?

MAE

The whole Santos thing? Very exciting. I think this will be a momentous, uh, moment in the history of demo --

Mae hesitates, noticing Kalden's growing smile.

MAE (CONT'D)

What?

KALDEN

Nothing...you don't have to give me a speech. I heard what Stenton said. You really think this is a good idea?

MAE

You don't?

Kalden shrugs and drains half a glass.

KALDEN

(changing the subject)
So, you really think I look old?
What would you say? Thirty?

MAE

You don't look that old.

KALDEN

I don't believe you. I know I do.

Awkward silence. They glance at the FEED FROM SANTOS'S CAMERA -- projected onto the FAR WALL. A group of CIRCLERS stand, watching, while Santos mingles a few feet away.

KALDEN (CONT'D)

Hmmm...

Kalden looks back at Mae, grins at the absurd sight of them both double-fisting wine glasses.

KALDEN (CONT'D)

I'm gonna get rid of this one.

Kalden downs an entire glass. So does Mae, spilling a little.

MAE

(mumbles)
Sorry...
(off the image from Santos' camera)
So where does all that go?

KALDEN
The stuff from the camera?

MAE
Yeah, is it stored somewhere here?
The cloud?

KALDEN
Well, it's in the cloud, sure, but
it has to be stored in a physical
place, too. The stuff from
Stewart's camera...wait --
(excited)
-- you want to see something?

Kalden starts to go down the steps.

MAE
I don't know...

Kalden looks back up, as if his feelings are hurt.

CUT TO:

Mae takes the last few steps to a BLUE DOOR.

MAE (CONT'D)
I'm really trusting you.

Kalden passes his fingers over a WALL-MOUNTED PAD and it
opens.

KALDEN
Good, you should.

INT. THE CIRCLE - UNDERGROUND HALLWAY - NIGHT

Mae follows Kalden through a tunnel. They arrive at another
DOOR -- and again, Kalden unlocks it with his fingertips.

INT. THE CIRCLE - DIMLY LIT CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Mae follows Kalden down a dimly lit corridor that slopes
downwards and has no apparent end.

MAE
I still don't know what you do
here.

KALDEN

Not much. I go to meetings. I listen, I provide feedback. It's not very important.

MAE

Do you know Annie Allerton?

KALDEN

Of course. I love Annie.
(over his shoulder)
Have you heard of Project 9?

MAE

Is that where we're going?

Kalden opens another DOOR.

KALDEN

No.

INT. THE CIRCLE - UNDERGROUND ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mae and Kalden enter a room the size of a basketball court, dimly lit except for a DOZEN SPOTLIGHTS trained on: an enormous, polished RED METAL BOX, the size of a bus, surrounded by a network of GLEAMING SILVER PIPES.

KALDEN

This is Stewart.

MAE

All this for one person?

KALDEN

Well, it's the storage of the raw data, and then the capacity to run all kinds of scenarios through it.

MAE

Why have it here, as opposed to the cloud or in the desert somewhere?

KALDEN

Well, some people like to scatter their ashes and some like to have a plot close to home, right?

Mae stares at the box in silent awe.

KALDEN (CONT'D)

Want to see Santos's room?

INT. THE CIRCLE - UNDERGROUND ROOM #2 - MOMENTS LATER

Kalden and Mae enter another, identical room, with another great RED BOX dominating the space.

KALDEN

This was supposed to be for someone else, but when Santos stepped up, it was assigned to her.

(hears something)

Oh wait, something's about to happen!

Kalden takes Mae by the hand back to the other room.

INT. THE CIRCLE - UNDERGROUND ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Kalden and Mae stand, still holding hands, and listen to the HUM of the machines.

MAE

Has it happened?

Kalden raises his eyebrows, telling her to wait. A loud RUSH comes from the pipes overhead -- the sound of water.

KALDEN

Such a pretty sound, don't you think?

MAE

Beautiful.

Their eyes meet. Awkward silence.

INT. THE CIRCLE - NARROW CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Kalden leads Mae by the hand down an unlit corridor.

MAE

Now I'm scared.

KALDEN

Almost there.

They arrive at a steel DOOR that CREAKS as it opens.

INT. THE CIRCLE - UNDERGROUND CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

They enter an enormous chamber that resembles a CAVE, with a BARREL-VAULTED CEILING, lit by weak BLUE LIGHT.

MAE

(awe)

What is this...?

KALDEN

It was supposed to be part of the subway. But they abandoned it.

Kalden points down the great TUNNEL, lined by STALAGMITES and STALACTITES.

MAE

Where's it go?

KALDEN

It connects to the one under the bay. I've gone about a half-mile into it, but then it gets too wet.

Kalden gestures to the BLACK WATER on the floor.

KALDEN (CONT'D)

My guess is that this is where the future Stewarts will go.

They gaze down the tunnel in silence.

KALDEN (CONT'D)

You can't tell anyone I took you here.

MAE

I won't.

Kalden eyes Mae, hesitates, then says:

KALDEN

Oh, there's one other thing.

Kalden reaches into his pocket, takes out his DRIVER'S LICENSE, and hands it to Mae. It reads:

TYSON MATTHEW GOSPODINOV

In the PHOTO, Kalden/Ty is clean-shaven, dark -- not grey -- haired, wears glasses, and looks essentially like he did in the painting.

MAE

(shocked)

You're...Ty?

NOTE: From here forward, Kalden will be called Ty.

TY

(nods)

I change my look, the way I move. I
get rid of the glasses, the
hoodies...and, of course --
(stating the obvious)
-- my hair went grey.

MAE

What kind of name is Kalden,
anyway? You get it off some baby-
name site?

TY

(smiles)

I did. You like it?

MAE

Do Bailey and Stenton know you're
going around with some other name?

TY

Of course.

(beat)

And "being" Kalden lets me move
around unnoticed, keep my finger on
the pulse of what's going on here.

MAE

Does Annie know?

TY

No.

MAE

So I'm --

TY

You're the third person who knows.

MAE

But why...?

TY

Because, well...I really like you.

Mae's eyes meet Ty's, and then suddenly --

-- she takes his face in her hands and KISSES him. Ty's hands
rise to Mae's waist and he tentatively holds her. It's very
romantic.

INT. MAE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAWN

Mae wakes up to her phone RINGING. She looks around, dazed. Did last night actually happen? Mae answers the phone.

MAE'S MOTHER (V.O.)
(crying)
Sweetheart, please come home! We're
at the hospital now. They think
your father's had a seizure.

EXT./INT. MAE'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Mae speeds inland.

EXT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - DAY

Mae pulls up to her parents' house. A familiar PICKUP TRUCK is parked in the driveway.

INT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - FOYER - DAY

Mae hurries in to see: MERCER -- last seen picking up Mae from the side of the highway (in the very beginning) -- munching on a pear.

MERCER
They called me to help.

Mercer reads the fear on Mae's face, tightly embraces her.

INT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mae finds her father resting on the couch, watching a baseball game on TV.

MAE'S FATHER
Hey, Mae-flower. Heard you out
there.

Mae sits on the coffee table and takes her father's hand.

MAE
You okay?

MAE'S FATHER
(nods)
Just a scare, really. It started
strong but petered out.

Mae's father cranes his head around her.

MAE
(annoyed)
Are you trying to watch the game?

MAE'S FATHER
Ninth inning.

Mae gets up and her mother enters the room.

MAE'S MOTHER
We called Mercer to help get your
father into the car.

MAE'S FATHER
I didn't want the ambulance.

MAE
So was it a seizure?

MERCER (O.S.)
They're not sure.

Mae turns to see Mercer in the doorway.

MAE
(with a slight edge)
Can I please hear the answer from
my own parents?

MAE'S FATHER
Mercer was a lifesaver.

MAE
Why didn't you call me to say it
wasn't so serious?

MAE'S MOTHER
It was serious. That's when I
called.

MAE
But now he's watching baseball.

Mae's mother forces a smile.

MAE'S MOTHER
Want some chicken? Mercer brought
some chicken.

EXT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Mercer and Mae sit on a bench in the backyard.

MAE

Thanks for helping.

MERCER

It was easy. Vinnie's lighter than he used to be.

MAE

How's business?

MERCER

Really good. I actually had to take on an apprentice last week. Isn't that cool? I have an apprentice. And your job? Great?

MAE

It is great.

MERCER

(genuinely happy for her)
Good to hear. I was hoping it'd work out. So you're doing what, programming or something?

MAE

I'm in CE. Customer Experience.
(off Mercer's confused expression)
I deal with advertisers right now.

Mercer silently nods.

MAE (CONT'D)

(suddenly remembers)
Wait, I saw something about your stuff the other day -- there was this comment about someone getting something shipped damaged? They were so pissed. I'm assuming you saw that.

Mercer exhales, his face going sour.

MERCER

I didn't...

MAE

There were other comments, too, and most of them were nice. There was actually one really funny one.

Mae begins scrolling through her phone.

MERCER

Please don't read it.

MAE

Here it is: "All those poor deer antlers died for this shit?"

(off Mercer, who looks annoyed)

What? It's funny!

MERCER

Mae, I have to ask you to --

MAE

I know, you want me to stop reading you customer comments. Fine.

MERCER

No, that's not what I was --

MAE

You want me to read them to you?

MERCER

Mae, how about you just let me finish my sentence?

MAE

But you talk so slow.

MERCER

I talk normally. You've just gotten impatient.

Mae goes silent.

MERCER (CONT'D)

We have to change how we interact. You send me links, you quote someone talking about me, you say you saw a picture of me on someone's wall.

(off Mae)

Even when I'm talking to you face-to-face you're telling me what some stranger thinks of me. It's like we're never alone.

MAE

You don't have to get dramatic about it.

MERCER

How weird is it that my ex-girlfriend gets her information about me from some random person who's never met me?

MAE

Fine, sorry.

MERCER

Will you promise to stop doing this?

MAE

Stop reading online?

MERCER

I don't care what you read. But when you and I communicate, I want to do it directly.

MAE

But you run a business! These are your customers. This is how they express themselves -- and how you know if you're succeeding.

MERCER

See, that's not true, Mae. I know I'm successful if I sell chandeliers.

(off Mae)

If people order them, then I make them, and they pay me money for them. If they have something to say afterward, they can call me or write me.

Mae looks unconvinced.

MERCER (CONT'D)

Twenty years ago, "like" and "dislike" and "smiles" and "frowns" were for junior high. Someone would write a note and it would say, "Do you like unicorns and stickers?" and you'd say, "Yeah, I like unicorns and stickers! Smile!"

(sighs)

Now it's everyone...

MAE

Listen, I can't help it if you're not social.

MERCER

I'm social enough. But nobody needs the level of contact you're purveying. It improves nothing. It's not nourishing. It's like snack food. You know how they engineer this food?

(off Mae)

They scientifically determine precisely how much salt and fat they need to include to keep you eating. You're not hungry, you don't need the food, it does nothing for you, but you just...keep eating.

INT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - MAE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mae sits in bed in her childhood bedroom, typing away on her laptop. The computer's cool BLUE GLOW seems to soothe her.

INT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mae and her father watch a WNBA game. Looks like a typical lazy Saturday. Mae's father tries to get up, his fists buried deep in the couch, but he can't lift himself.

MAE'S FATHER

You think you can help me up, Mae-flower?

When Mae gets up and reaches for his hand, she notices a growing STAIN on her father's pants.

MAE'S FATHER (CONT'D)

(under his breath)

Mother-bastard...

Mae's father sits down, embarrassed.

MAE'S FATHER (CONT'D)

(eyes closed)

Can you get your mother?

MAE

What's wrong?

MAE'S FATHER
Please just get your mother.

MAE
I'm right here. Let me help.

Mae reaches for her father's hand, but he swats it away.

MAE'S FATHER
Get. Your. Mother.
(soft, ashamed)
Please, dear. Get Mom.

EXT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Mae runs into the backyard to find her mother on her knees in the GARDEN.

MAE
I think Dad had an...accident.

MAE'S MOTHER
Is he okay?

MAE
Yeah, he just...

Mae's mother gets it.

MAE'S MOTHER
I think you better head back now.
He won't want you to see this.

MAE
I can help.

MAE'S MOTHER
Please, honey. You have to grant him some dignity.

MAE'S FATHER (O.S.)
Bonnie!

Mae's mother takes Mae's hands in her own.

MAE'S MOTHER
Mae, sweetie, we'll see you in a few weeks, okay?

EXT./INT. MAE'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Mae drives fast along the coast, her body shaking with rage.

EXT. BAY - DAY

Mae paddles out into the bay in a KAYAK. For this brief, private moment, she seems peaceful.

INT. THE CIRCLE - CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AREA - MAE'S DESK - DAY

A coffee by her side, Mae logs onto her computer. She now has FOUR SCREENS. Hundreds of second-screen MESSAGES pop up:

ANNIE: *We missed you Friday night!*

JARED: *You missed a great bash.*

DAN: *Bummed you weren't at the Sunday Celebration!*

INT. THE CIRCLE - ANNIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Mae sits on a couch across from Annie.

ANNIE

Why didn't you tell me sooner? I didn't know your parents had this insurance nightmare.

MAE

Sorry, I just didn't see any scenario where my dad's health would overlap with the Circle.

ANNIE

I'll get on it.

Annie quickly types something on her phone.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

(as she types)

Probably later tonight. I'm running into a meeting now -- it's endless today. Dealing with some juicy Russian tax stuff. Those guys don't fuck around...

Annie's phone CHIMES. She checks it.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

(off her phone)

Okay, good news sooner than expected.

(off Mae)

I twisted a few arms and they say they can get your dad on.

Mae is speechless.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Mae?

MAE

(barely a whisper)
You're...serious?

ANNIE

We have eleven-thousand people on the plan. We get to dictate terms, right?

(a thought)

Oh, want your mom on the plan, too? Of course you do. She's healthier, so that's easy. We'll put both of them on.

Tears form in Mae's eyes.

MAE

When?

ANNIE

(smiles)
Immediately.

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - DAY

With a spring in her step, Mae talks on the PHONE.

MAE'S MOTHER (V.O.)

(emotional)

Oh, Mae, this is...this is...you've saved our lives, Mae! Thank you. Thank Annie, too.

MAE

Okay, Mom, I will. I gotta go now.

Mae hangs up, sees a TEXT MESSAGE that reads:

DAN: *Can you see me asap?*

INT. THE CIRCLE - DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Mae sits in a leather chair. In one corner is Dan, who sits at his desk, and opposite Mae is:

JOSIAH (Late-20s) and DENISE (early-30s), both with the same wide smiles, level-eyed sincerity, simple button-down shirts, and TABLETS in their laps.

DENISE

Mae, we're from HR, and this is just a regular check-in we do with new community members here. We're especially glad to see you.

JOSIAH

You're such an enigma.

MAE

I am?

DENISE

(nods)

It's been years since I can remember someone joining who was so, you know, shrouded in mystery.

Mae looks curiously at Denise.

DENISE (CONT'D)

I thought we'd start by saying that everyone really likes you.

JOSIAH

(nods in agreement)

You're a super-cool member of the team. Everyone thinks so.

MAE

(unsure)

Thank you.

DENISE

And your work here has been exemplary. Your ratings have been averaging 97, and that's excellent, especially for your first month.

(beat)

Do you feel satisfied with your performance?

MAE

I do.

DENISE

Good. But as you know, it's not all about work here. You're not just some cog in a machine.

JOSIAH

We consider you a full, knowable person of unlimited potential. And a crucial member of the community.

MAE

Thank you.

DENISE

But...you've had a blip or two when it comes to meshing with the community here. Like your absence at most of the weekend and evening events -- all of which are of course totally optional.

(off Mae)

Is there anything you want to add to our understanding of all this?

MAE

I...I'm sorry?

Denise and Josiah smile.

DENISE

Let's start with this past weekend. We know you left campus at 5:42 p.m. on Friday, and you got back here 8:46 a.m. on Monday.

MAE

Was there work on the weekend? Did I miss something?

DENISE

No, no, no. There wasn't, you know, mandatory work here on the weekend.

(beat)

That's not to say that there weren't thousands of people here Saturday and Sunday, enjoying the campus, participating in a hundred different activities.

MAE

I know, I know. But I was home. My dad was sick, and I went back to help out.

JOSIAH

I'm sorry to hear that.

(off Mae)

Was this related to his MS?

Mae is taken by surprise -- is this really their business?

MAE

(flat)

Yes.

DENISE

But see, here's where it gets especially confusing -- we don't know anything about this episode. Did you reach out to any Circlers during this crisis?

Mae shakes her head "no."

DENISE (CONT'D)

You know there are four groups on campus for staffers dealing with MS? Two of them are for children of MS sufferers. Have you sought out one of these groups?

MAE

No, not yet. I was just really upset and worried. I wasn't very present.

Denise raises a finger.

DENISE

Ah, present. That's a wonderful word. I'm glad you used it. Do you consider yourself usually present?

MAE

I try to be.

Josiah smiles and taps a flurry into his tablet.

DENISE

But the opposite of present would be what...?

MAE

...Absent?

DENISE

Yes, absent. Let's put a pin in that thought, too. Let's go back to your dad, and this weekend. Did he recover okay?

MAE

He did. It was a false alarm.

DENISE

(smiles)

Fantastic. Now let's talk about the rest of the weekend. On Friday, you find out that your dad's okay. But the rest of the weekend, you basically go blank. It's like you disappeared!

(off Mae)

This is when someone like you -- with a low Participation Rank -- might be able to improve that, if she wanted to. But yours actually dropped -- two thousand points. Not to get all number-geeky, but you were on 8,625 on Friday and by late Sunday you were at 10,288.

MAE

I didn't know it was that bad. I guess I was just recovering from the stress of my dad's episode.

DENISE

Can you talk about what you did the rest of the weekend?

MAE

It's embarrassing. Nothing, really. I just drove back.

JOSIAH

That's it?

MAE

Well...I kayaked?

Josiah and Denise register dual looks of surprise.

JOSIAH

You kayaked? Where?

MAE

Just in the bay.

JOSIAH

With who?

MAE

No one. Just alone.

JOSIAH

(hurt)

I kayak too...

Denise types something on her tablet.

DENISE
(off her tablet)
Mae, I'm looking at your profile,
I'm finding nothing about you and
kayaking. No smiles, no ratings, no
posts, nothing.

Mae shrugs.

DENISE (CONT'D)
Mae, I'm no psychologist, but this
behavior sometimes stems from a low
sense of self-worth -- a point of
view that says, "Oh, what I have to
say isn't so important."
(beat)
Do you feel that describes your
point of view?

MAE
Maybe. But sometimes I'm sure that
what I say is important.

JOSIAH
But notice you said "sometimes I'm
sure." The "sometimes" is
interesting to me.

DENISE
Mae, we'd love if you could
participate in a special program.
Does that sound appealing?

Mae hesitates, then flashes a smile and says:

MAE
Absolutely.

DENISE
Good. I think it might make you
feel sure not just sometimes, but
always.

INT. THE CIRCLE - CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AREA - MAE'S DESK - DAY

Mae sits at her desk, wearing tiny HEADPHONES and a
MICROPHONE attached to a hair-thin arm. A new screen -- her
FIFTH SCREEN -- sits on her desk.

A bell RINGS and Mae nods. And then, from her earpiece, comes
a MALE NEWSCASTER VOICE that asks:

VOICE FROM EARPIECE
 For vacations, do you want
 relaxation, like a beach, or
 adventure, like a white-water
 rafting trip?

MAE
 Adventure.

A tiny bell RINGS.

VOICE FROM EARPIECE
 Thank you. What sort of adventure?

MAE
 White-water rafting.

Another RING. Mae nods.

VOICE FROM EARPIECE
 Thank you. For white-water rafting,
 do you prefer a multi-day trip,
 with overnight camping, or a day
 trip?

Mae looks up to find the room filling with the rest of the
 pod, returning from lunch.

MAE
 Multi-day.

RING. Mae nods.

VOICE FROM EARPIECE
 Thank you. Would you be willing to
 pay 1,200 dollars for a week-long
 trip down the Grand Canyon?

MAE
 Meh.

Mae looks up to see Jared, standing on his chair.

JARED
 The chute is open!

Almost immediately, twelve CUSTOMER QUERIES appear on Mae's
 screen. Mae begins to answer the first query. But then she
 hears, in a voice identical to her own:

VOICE FROM EARPIECE
 (sounds like Mae)
 Mae.

Mae looks around, confused.

VOICE FROM EARPIECE (CONT'D)
(sounds like Mae)
Mae.

Then she realizes the voice came from the earpiece. Mae turns DOWN the volume slightly.

VOICE FROM EARPIECE (CONT'D)
(sounds like Mae)
Mae.

Too soft. Mae turns the volume back up.

VOICE FROM EARPIECE (CONT'D)
(sounds like Mae)
Mae.

Finally, Mae replies:

MAE
Yes?

Nothing happens. So Mae nods.

VOICE FROM EARPIECE
(sounds like Mae)
Thank you, Mae.

The bell RINGS. The first voice returns.

VOICE FROM EARPIECE (CONT'D)
(male newscaster voice)
Would you be willing to pay 1,200
dollars for a week-long trip down
the Grand Canyon?

MAE
Yes.

The bell RINGS.

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. THE CIRCLE - CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AREA - DAY

The office is busy. Full. But something is different:

SEECCHANGE CAMERAS are on the ceiling. The walls. At desks. Everywhere. Nobody pays attention to them. Or if they do, they're really good at pretending not to.

INT. THE CIRCLE - CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AREA - MAE'S DESK -
CONTINUOUS

Mae is busy at her computer. A ZING appears on her screen:

STENTON: *16,188 elected officials, from Lincoln to Lahore, have now gone completely clear.*

This zing is quickly followed by another:

BAILEY: *And the waiting list is growing!*

Mae glances up and sees, at the far end of the room, resting against a doorjamb:

Ty.

Mae waves --

-- and Ty gives a subtle wave back. Just then:

VOICE FROM EARPIECE
(sounds like Mae)
Mae.

Ty spins away and disappears.

VOICE FROM EARPIECE (CONT'D)
(sounds like Mae)
Mae.

Mae rips off the headphones and jogs to the door where she saw the figure...

...but he's gone.

INT. THE CIRCLE - BATHROOM - DAY

Mae splashes water on her face. Her phone RINGS. She glances at the number: blocked.

MAE
Hello?

TY (V.O.)
It's me.

MAE
Where've you been?

TY (V.O.)
It's complicated. All the cameras.
(beat)
I want to see you.

MAE
I'm in the bathroom.

TY (V.O.)
I know.

MAE
(surprised)
You know?

TY (V.O.)
CircleSearch, SeeChange...you're
not hard to find.

MAE
And where are you?

TY (V.O.)
I'm coming.

MAE
I can see you later. There's a
thing in the New Kingdom. Open-mic
folk night. A safe, public place...

TY (V.O.)
Stay right there.

MAE
Ty --

But he's already hung up. Mae looks around. She glances at
the STALLS.

INT. THE CIRCLE - BATHROOM - STALL - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Mae sits on the toilet. She hears a door OPEN. And a lock
CLICK. The sound of FOOTSTEPS, stopping near the stalls. A
beat. Mae looks up and sees that Ty has climbed over the
stalls walls --

-- and he deftly drops down next to her.

MAE
(taken aback)
What are you doing?

Ty pulls Mae close to him...

TY
(whispers)
Mae, stop thinking.

...and begins kissing her neck. Mae hesitates, then says:

MAE
Okay.

TY
And close your eyes.

Mae does exactly that.

TY (CONT'D)
Picture what I'm doing to you.

Ty continues kissing her while his hands are busy with her skirt and panties. He pulls her even closer.

TY (CONT'D)
(breathless)
Mae...

Mae holds the walls on either side of them.

TY (CONT'D)
...Mae...

LATER

Mae and Ty LAUGH, straighten out their clothes. Ty kisses her on the mouth. It's surprisingly sweet.

TY (CONT'D)
Bye.

INT./EXT. MAE'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Mae drives inland, through farm country.

MAE'S FATHER (V.O.)
Everything's different now.

EXT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mae and her parents prepare dinner. Mae's mother joyfully dices vegetables on a cutting board. Mae's father holds his WRIST MONITOR up to Mae's WRIST MONITOR.

MAE'S FATHER

Look at us -- we match!

Mae smiles.

MAE'S FATHER (CONT'D)

Your mother has whole swaths of extra time now. It's all so simple. I see the doctor and the Circle takes care of the rest.

Mae glances above the KITCHEN TABLE and sees: a CHANDELIER with SILVER PAINTED ANTLERS.

MAE

Is that what I think it is?

MAE'S MOTHER

It is.

MAE

Not bad.

MAE'S FATHER

Not bad? It's Mercer's best work, and you know it. This thing would go for five grand in one of those San Francisco boutiques. He gave it to us for free.

MAE

Why for free?

MAE'S MOTHER

Because he's our friend! Because he's a nice young man. And wait before you roll your eyes or come back with some witty comment.

MAE

(bites her tongue)
It's really nice.

MAE'S MOTHER

Glad you think so. You can tell him yourself in a few minutes.

MAE
(her eyes widen)
No. Please, no.

INT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - KITCHEN - DINING AREA - NIGHT

Mae sets the table while nursing a glass of wine.

MERCER (O.S.)
Hey, Mae.

Mae looks up to see Mercer; he's dressed up (well, by his standards). Mercer gives Mae a tentative hug.

MAE
(gestures to the
chandelier)
Your chandelier thing is
really...beautiful.

MERCER
Thanks.

Mae takes out her PHONE and snaps a picture.

MERCER (CONT'D)
What're you doing?

MAE
I just wanted to take a picture.
(turns the phone to
Mercer)
Look...

Mercer takes a long look at the photo.

MERCER
(flat)
It looks good.

MAE
It looks incredible.
(beat)
I'm gonna run upstairs and change.

INT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - MAE'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mae sits on her bed, clicking away on her phone.

MAE'S FATHER (O.S.)
Mae!

INT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - KITCHEN - DINING AREA - NIGHT

Mae walks back in to find: Mercer and her parents waiting at the table, which is crowded with steaming food.

MAE'S MOTHER
We like to eat when it's hot.

MAE
Sorry. I was just --
(changing the subject)
-- Wow, this looks good.

MAE'S MOTHER
I want to raise a toast --

Mae's phone BEEPS.

MAE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
What's that?

MAE
(grins)
Nothing, Mom.

MAE'S MOTHER
I was just saying that I wanted to
toast having us --

Mercer's phone RINGS.

MERCER
Sorry.

He maneuvers his hand outside his pants, finding the off button.

MAE'S MOTHER
Everyone done?

MERCER
Sorry, Mrs. Holland. Go on.

But at that moment, Mae's phone BUZZES loudly again. When Mae glances at the screen, she sees: 37 new ZINGS and MESSAGES.

MAE'S FATHER
Something you have to attend to?

MAE
No, not yet.

They begin to eat. Mae's phone BUZZES again.

MAE (CONT'D)

Okay, I can't stand it anymore. I posted that photo I took of your chandelier, Mercer, and people love it!

(raises her glass)

That's what we should toast.

Mercer doesn't look amused.

MERCER

You posted them where?

MAE'S FATHER

(raises his glass)

That's great, Mercer.

MERCER

Where'd you post them, Mae?

MAE

Everywhere relevant. And the comments are amazing.

(searches her screen)

Just let me read the first one. And I quote: "Wow, that is gorgeous."

That's from a pretty well-known industrial designer in Stockholm.

Here's another one: "Very cool.

Reminds me of something I saw in Barcelona last year." That was from a designer in Santa Fe who has her own shop. I bet you could sell them there if you wanted to. So here's another --

Mercer can't take it anymore.

MERCER

Stop. Please.

MAE

(focused on her phone)

Why? You haven't even heard the best part. On DesignMind, you already have 122 smiles!

MERCER

Mae, stop. Please stop.

(staring right at Mae)

I don't want to get loud here, in your parents' home, but either you stop or I have to walk out.

MAE
Just hold on a sec!

Mae scrolls through her messages.

MAE'S MOTHER
Mae.

But Mae is focused on her phone.

MAE'S FATHER
Mae.

Mae finally looks up to see --

-- her parents staring at her and...

...Mercer gone.

MAE'S MOTHER
I think it's nice you want to
support Mercer, but I just don't
understand why you do this now.
We're trying to enjoy a nice
dinner.

Mae stares at her mother, absorbing all the disappointment
and bewilderment she can stand, then runs off.

EXT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

As MERCER'S TRUCK backs out of the driveway, Mae runs out in
front of the truck.

MAE
Stop!

Mercer SLAMS on the brakes. Mae runs to his window.

MAE (CONT'D)
What the hell is your problem? I
was just trying to help you because
I believe in what you do.

MERCER
Do you think it's just a
coincidence that every time some
congresswoman or blogger talks
about the Circle as some kind of
monopoly, they suddenly become
ensnared in some terrible sex-porn-
witchcraft controversy?

MAE

Your conspiracy theories never
cease to amuse me, Mercer.

Mercer nods, smiles through gritted teeth.

MERCER

Here's the thing: you're not very
interesting anymore. You sit at a
desk twelve hours a day and you
have nothing to show for it except
for some numbers that won't be
remembered in a week.

MAE

Fuck. You.

MERCER

Do you even go outside anymore?

Mae angrily glares at Mercer, who stares at Mae
uncomprehendingly -- and then drives off, leaving Mae
standing alone in the driveway.

EXT/INT. MAE'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Mae speeds furiously along the moonlit coastline. She passes
the SIGN for Maiden's Voyages. Mae looks in her rearview
mirror. Thinks about it. Pulls a U-turn.

EXT. MAIDEN'S VOYAGES - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Mae peers through the chain-link fence, sees nobody -- only
the closed and shuttered RENTAL KIOSK.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Mae drags a KAYAK to the water's edge.

EXT. BAY - NIGHT

Mae rows out in the water. The fog is thick. Far away a
foghorn BLARES from the mouth of the GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE.

LATER

Mae walks the perimeter of the island. She comes upon:

A cluster of large rocks with a DOZEN SEALS lying about,
sleeping. Looming above is...

...a BRIDGE (not the Golden Gate) with passing CARS.

Mae sits down, peacefully watching the seals and streaming CAR LIGHTS.

EXT. BAY - NIGHT

Mae rows back to shore.

EXT. MAIDEN'S VOYAGES - BEACH - NIGHT

Mae jumps out of the kayak onto the shore, dragging the kayak onto the beach. Suddenly, she's blinded by a BRIGHT LIGHT!

INT./EXT. SQUAD CAR - NIGHT

Mae sits in the back seat of a squad car, handcuffed. A few POLICE OFFICERS stand nearby. Mae watches as:

A PICKUP TRUCK pulls up and Marion gets out. Marion's eyes widen as she sees Mae.

MARION
Oh, Jesus Christ.

Marion rushes over to Mae.

INT. THE CIRCLE - DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

HD FOOTAGE OF: Mae appears on the beach. Finds the kayak. The logline at the bottom of screen reads: 10:14 p.m.

DAN (O.S.)
Did you know that a member of the
Circle had placed a SeeChange
camera at that beach?

Mae looks terrible, like she hasn't slept. She sits in a chair next to Dan -- who stands. They watch the WALLSCREEN.

MAE
No, I didn't.

DAN
(off the wallscreen)
It's pretty obvious you knew you
were doing something wrong. This
isn't the behavior of someone with
a standing arrangement with Marge
or whomever.
(MORE)

DAN (CONT'D)
(off Mae)
I mean, I'm happy that you two
colluded on your story and that you
weren't arrested, because that
would have made your working here
impossible.

Mae is silent. She couldn't feel more ashamed.

INT. THE CIRCLE - CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AREA - MAE'S DESK - DAY

Mae works quietly at her desk. Very distracted.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Mae Holland?

Mae turns to see: DONTAE (30, preppy).

MAE
(soft)
Yes.

DONTAE
I work with Eamon -- he'd like to
see you.

Mae's eyes widen.

INT. THE CIRCLE - HALLWAY - DAY

As Dontae and Mae stop at a DOOR, Dontae says:

DONTAE
Here's a funny portrait of the
Three Wise Men.

Dontae gestures to an all-too-familiar PAINTING. Mae pretends
to be surprised by it, delighted by its innocence.

DONTAE (CONT'D)
Bailey's niece did it.

Dontae RAPS the door with the large GARGOYLE KNOCKER.

INT. THE CIRCLE - OCHRE LIBRARY - DAY

Mae watches as Bailey carefully pours hot water into a TEA
CUP.

BAILEY

So tell me, Mae: how're you feeling
about what happened last night?

MAE

Terrible. I barely slept. I'm so
ashamed I want to puke.

Bailey hands Mae the saucer and cup and gestures for her to
sit down. There are TWO CHAIRS, both leather and overstuffed.
Bailey drops into a chair with a loud SIGH.

BAILEY

Would you say you behave
differently when you know you're
being watched?

MAE

Of course.

BAILEY

And when you'll be held
accountable.

Mae nods.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

And when there'll be a video of
your behavior, for example, that
will exist forever.

MAE

It's unconscionable, Mr. Bailey. I
just want you to know how much I
value my position here and your
faith in me. I'll do anything to
make this up to you.

(beat)

Seriously, I'll take on any extra
work, I'll do anything. Just tell
me.

BAILEY

(amused grin)

Mae, your job isn't in jeopardy.
You're here for good. Annie's here
for good. Sorry if you believed
otherwise. We don't want either of
you to ever leave.

Mae breathes a sigh of relief.

MAE

That's so good to hear. Thank you.

Bailey puts down his cup and rests his hand on his lap.

BAILEY

It's no secret that the Circle is
itself trying to become complete.
We're trying to close the circle at
the Circle.

(smiles at his own
wordplay)

Look at our logo.

Bailey points to: a WALLSCREEN, where, on his cue, the CIRCLE
LOGO appears.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

See how that "c" in the middle is
open? For years it's bothered me,
and it's become symbolic of what's
left to do here...

The "c" on screen closes and becomes a perfect circle.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

See that? A circle is the strongest
shape in the universe. It's
perfect. And that's what we want to
be: perfect. So any information
that eludes us, anything that's not
accessible, prevents us from being
perfect. You see?

MAE

I do.

Bailey leans forward. Locks eyes with Mae.

BAILEY

Mae, is there anything you'd like
to tell me before we wrap up?

Mae's eyes widen. He must know. She can't lie.

MAE

That...I've been here before?

A sly smile appears on Bailey's face.

MAE (CONT'D)

(quick)

Annie brought me -- she said it was
some kind of secret. I didn't want
to get in trouble.

BAILEY

(smiles extravagantly)

Only lies get us in trouble. Only the things we hide.

(off Mae)

Of course I knew you'd been here, Mae! Give me some credit. But I was curious why you hid this from me.

(beat)

Now that I know your secret, do you feel better or worse?

Mae thinks about it. Wants to be honest. Nothing but honest.

MAE

Better.

BAILEY

Relief?

MAE

Yes, relief.

BAILEY

(nods)

Mae, I'm a believer in the perfectibility of human beings.

(gains momentum)

And when we become our best selves, the possibilities are endless. We can solve any problem. We can cure any disease, end hunger, everything, because we won't be dragged down by all our weaknesses, our petty secrets, our hoarding of information and knowledge.

(off Mae)

We will finally realize our potential.

Mae nods. Yes. Yes. Yes.

INT. THE CIRCLE - GREAT HALL - STAGE WINGS - DAY

Mae stands in the wings, watching the PACKED AUDIENCE talk to each other in eager anticipation.

BAILEY (O.S.)

Ready?

Mae turns to find Bailey behind her, smiling warmly.

MAE
I think so.

BAILEY
You'll be great. Don't worry --
just be natural.

INT. THE CIRCLE - GREAT HALL - STAGE/AUDIENCE - DAY

Eamon walks on stage, waves to the crowd, as the audience
CLAPS with abandon.

BAILEY
Hello, Circlers!

Eamon sits down in one of TWO EMPTY CHAIRS.

AUDIENCE
HELLO, EAMON!

BAILEY
Thank you for being here today, on
a very special Dream Friday. I
thought we'd change it up a bit
today and have not a speech, but an
interview.

Bailey glances at Mae -- who waits offstage -- and smiles.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
I had a conversation with a young
Circler the other day that I wanted
to share with you. So I've asked
Mae Holland, who some of you might
know as one of our newbies in
Customer Experience, to join me
today. Mae?

Mae steps onto the stage, overwhelmed by all the faces in the
audience. She nervously makes her way to her chair.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Hello, Mae. How are you?

MAE
Terrified.

The audience LAUGHS.

BAILEY
Don't be nervous.

MAE

Easy for you to say.

More LAUGHTER. Mae seems reassured. She looks out into the audience, sees: rows and rows of SMILING FACES.

BAILEY

Mae, many of the people in the room already know the broad outlines of the events of last Sunday night, with SeeChange and all. But give us a summary.

Mae glances at her hand in her lap, ashamed.

MAE

I committed a crime, basically. I borrowed a kayak without the knowledge of the owner, and I paddled to an island in the middle of the bay.

BAILEY

Would you have done it had you known people were watching?

MAE

Definitely not.

BAILEY

So in a way, doing all this in darkness, unobserved and unaccountable, it facilitated impulses that you regret?

MAE

Absolutely. And I risked my life. I wasn't wearing a life preserver.

A loud MURMUR.

BAILEY

So you not only committed a crime against the owner of this property, but you risked your own life. All because you were being enabled by, what, some cloak of invisibility?

LAUGHTER from the audience.

MAE

Right.

BAILEY

Mae, do you think you behave better or worse when you're being watched?

MAE

Better, without a doubt.

BAILEY

What happens when you're alone?

MAE

Well, for one thing, I steal kayaks.

The audience bursts into LAUGHTER.

MAE (CONT'D)

Seriously. I do things I don't want to do. I...lie.

BAILEY

When we spoke last week, you had a way of putting it that I thought was very interesting and succinct. Can you tell us all what you said?

MAE

I said that secrets are lies.

BAILEY

"Secrets are lies." It's very memorable. Can you walk us through your logic with that phrase?

MAE

Well, secrets make crimes possible. We behave worse when we're not accountable. And secrets inspire speculation. When we don't know what's being hidden, we guess, we make up answers.

Mae glances at the audience, her eyes catching --

-- Annie, who stares back at her, unblinking.

BAILEY

(smiles, pleased)

Well, that's interesting, isn't it? Let's recap that first statement of Mae's. Can we get that on the screen?

On a SCREEN behind Mae appear the words:

SECRETS ARE LIES

BAILEY (CONT'D)

So, what'd you see on this last trip, Mae? I understand it was quite beautiful.

MAE

It was, Eamon. There was an almost-full moon, and the water was very calm, and I felt like I was paddling through liquid silver.

BAILEY

Sounds incredible.

MAE

It was.

BAILEY

But there's no record of any of this.

MAE

No, not outside my own memory.

Audible GROANS from the audience. Bailey turns to the audience and shakes his head, indulging them.

BAILEY

Okay, now this is where we get into something personal. As you all know, I have a son, Gunner, who was born with cerebral palsy. Though he's living a very full life, and we're trying, always, to improve his opportunities, he is confined to a wheelchair. He can't walk. He can't run. He can't...go kayaking.

(beat)

So what does he do if he wants to experience something like this? Well, he watches video. He looks at pictures. Much of his experiences of the world come through the experiences of others.

(beat)

When he experiences the SeeChange view of a Circler climbing Mount Kenya, he feels like he's climbed Mount Kenya.

(MORE)

BAILEY (CONT'D)

When he sees firsthand video from an America's Cup crew member, Gunner feels, in some way, that he's sailed in the America's Cup, too. These experiences were facilitated by generous humans who have shared what they saw with the world -- my son included. And there are many others out there like Gunner.

(to Mae)

Does it feel right to have deprived them of seeing what you saw, Mae?

Mae tries to hide her emotion.

MAE

(verge of tears)

It doesn't. It feels very...wrong.

BAILEY

Do you think they have a right to see things like you saw?

MAE

(nods)

I do.

The crowd MURMURS. Bailey nods.

MAE (CONT'D)

It was just selfish, Eamon. When you deprive your friends, or someone like your son Gunner, of experiences like I had, you're basically stealing from them.

(beat)

Knowledge is a basic human right. Equal access to all possible human experiences is a basic human right.

Mae seems surprised with her own eloquence, and the audience answers with thunderous APPLAUSE.

Bailey winks at Mae, then turns to the audience.

BAILEY

Let's thank Mae for her candor and her consummate humanity, can we please?

The audience APPLAUDS, rises to their feet.

Mae, not sure what to do, awkwardly stands, then sits down again and waves from her seat.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
And here's the best part: in the
interest of sharing everything she
can with the world, Mae will be
going transparent -- immediately!

As the applause GROWS, we...

FADE TO BLACK.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE (PRE-LAP)
Feeding moved back to 1:02.

FADE IN:

INT. THE CIRCLE - AQUARIUM - DAY

A SHARK swims through an aquarium. This shark is unique in two regards: it is BLIND, and it is TRANSLUCENT.

Mae stands in front of the aquarium -- wearing a NECKLACE with a tiny LENS over her heart. She glances down the dark hallway at: a few other aquariums, each one slightly smaller than the one before it.

NOTE: When Mae hears "Additional Guidance," it comes from a small EARPICE she wears. The voice is calm and sometimes male, sometimes female.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE
Let's move over to the octopus for
now.

NOTE: When Mae speaks, it's for all the viewers watching through her small lens. She's now the Circle's ambassador.

MAE
Let's see the octopus.

Mae moves to a round GLASS STRUCTURE sixteen feet high and twelve feet in diameter. Inside, a pale OCTOPUS floats in the water, inflating and then shrinking.

MAE (CONT'D)
This is a relative of the telescope
octopus. But this one has never
been captured alive before.

The octopus' tentacles extend to the coral below.

MAE (CONT'D)

Tom Stenton found this one first.
It came from behind a submersible
and shot in front, as if it were
asking him to follow.

Mae checks her right wrist. She wears BANDS on both wrists.
They provide SCREENS that gives a REAL-TIME VIEW from her
lens, also providing the most recent and popular COMMENTS, as
well as her current WATCHER NUMBERS. At this exact moment...

...441,762 people are watching exactly what Mae sees.

MAE (CONT'D)

Let's see the seahorses.

Mae goes to the

NEXT AQUARIUM. Inside, HUNDREDS OF SEAHORSES, no larger than
the fingers of a child, hide in nooks and cling to foliage.

MAE (CONT'D)

Not particularly friendly fish.
Wait, are they even fish?

Mae glances at her wrist, and sees a message appear:

*Absolutely a fish! Class Actinopterygii. Same as cod and
tuna.*

MAE (CONT'D)

Thank you, Susanna Win from
Greensboro!
(off the aquarium)
Now let's see if we can find the
daddy of all these baby seahorses.

Mae walks around the aquarium and finds the FATHER SEAHORSE --
the size of a hand, resting at the bottom of the tank.

MAE (CONT'D)

I think he's hiding. But he doesn't
seem to know we're on the other
side of the glass here, and can see
everything.

Mae adjusts the angle of her lens to get a better shot of the
seahorse. She glances at her wrist and reads a ZING.

MAE (CONT'D)

(laughs)
My favorite Zing of the day,
describing our seahorse friend as:
(reads)
(MORE)

MAE (CONT'D)
 "The croissant of the animal
 kingdom."
 (amused)
 I like that.

VOICE FROM EARPIECE
 Shark feeding ready.

Mae glances at her wrist.

MAE
 Okay, I'm seeing a bunch of
 requests that we get back to the
 shark. Let's go.

Mae goes back to the

FIRST AQUARIUM -- which is also the largest. Standing above
 the aquarium on a sleek red ladder is: GEORGIA (30s, curly
 black hair and cuffed jeans).

MAE (CONT'D)
 Hey, I'm Mae.

GEORGIA
 I kn --

Georgia quickly glances at Mae's camera, tries to be
 inconspicuous.

NOTE: Everyone relates differently to Mae now that she wears
 a camera 24/7.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)
 Um, hello, Mae. I'm Georgia, and
 I'll be feeding Mr. Stenton's shark
 now.

The shark seems to sense that food is coming. It begins to
 turn violently, rising closer to the surface.

Mae glances at her wristband: her watchers have risen to over
 500,000 people.

MAE
Someone's hungry.

Georgia tries her best to appear confident, but there's a
 hint of fear in her eyes.

GEORGIA
 Okay, I'm going to feed the shark
 something new today. As you
 (MORE)

GEORGIA (CONT'D)
 know, he's been fed all kinds of
 stuff, from salmon to herring to
 jellyfish. He's devoured everything
 with equal enthusiasm.

Georgia lifts a lucite bucket holding a LIVE LOBSTER.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)
 Here we have a regular Maine
 lobster, which we're not sure if
 this shark is equipped to eat.

Georgia dangles the lobster just over the surface of the
 water, working the shark into a frenzy.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)
 Some sharks can process the shells
 of crustaceans, some can't.

Mae watches with increasing anxiety as the shark gets closer.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)
 So I'll just drop this little guy
 into --

Before Georgia can finish her sentence, the shark rises up
 and SNATCHES the lobster from her hand!

Georgia SQUEALS and grabs her fingers.

MAE
 (terrified)
 Did he get you?!

GEORGIA
 (holding back tears)
 Almost...

Georgia rubs her hand as if she's been burned.

Mae glances up to see --

-- a SILHOUETTE on the other side of the glass, beyond the
 aquarium's far wall. His face is visible for a moment:

Ty.

Mae wants to call out, but considers her camera, decides
 against it.

MAE
 (to Georgia)
 Okay, then. Thank you for
 that...unforgettable show.

INT. THE CIRCLE - NEWSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mae crosses the crowded, quaintly retro newsroom, looking for Ty. No luck. She waves to EVERYONE. They wave back, pretend not to be self-conscious of Mae's camera. A MESSAGE on the wall says:

THINK COMPLETION

On another wall it says:

THE CIRCLE MUST BE WHOLE

NOTE: These slogans are on walls throughout the Circle now.

Mae goes to the far DOOR, opening it to the bright daylight.

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - CONTINUOUS

Mae steps out as: Ty disappears across the wide green lawn. He glances back for a second and his eyes meet Mae's eyes.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

Where are you headed?

MAE

Sorry, no place. I was just...never mind.

Mae's phone RINGS. She checks her wrist -- no caller ID -- and answers the call.

MAE (CONT'D)

Hello?

TY (V.O.)

We have to meet.

Mae glances around, notices other CIRCLERS on the lawn.

MAE

Excuse me.

TY (V.O.)

Your watchers can't hear me. They only hear you. Right now your engineers are wondering why the incoming audio isn't working. They'll fix it in a few minutes.

(beat)

Listen, this has to stop. When can we meet --

Mae hangs up.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE
 Sorry about that. Somehow the
 incoming audio wasn't working.
 We're working on it. Who was it?

Mae considers her reply, unsure if anyone had indeed heard Ty, then says:

MAE
 Some lunatic. Babbling about the
 end of the world.

Mae checks her wrist. ZINGS are pouring in. The most popular is:

Tech problems at Circle HQ? Next: Santa forgets Christmas?

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE
 Tell them the truth, as always.

MAE
 Okay, I have no idea what just
 happened. When I do, I'll let you
 all know.

INT. THE CIRCLE - CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AREA - DAY

Mae walks into her old pod, where, dominating an entire wall and cast in steel are the WORDS:

SECRETS ARE LIES; SHARING IS CARING; PRIVACY IS THEFT

MAE
 This is where I worked when I first
 arrived at the Circle. And yes, for
 those of you wondering, I still
 clock in to work here!

The area is bursting with NEWBIES, all of whom look up at Mae, alarmed and happy to see her there among them; she's like a celebrity.

Mae waves to them and gives a faux-curtsey.

MAE (CONT'D)
 Why wouldn't I? I love it here.
 (nostalgic)
 I can't tell you how much it means
 to me to have my opinion heard.
 (glances at her work
 station)
 (MORE)

MAE (CONT'D)
Everything that's great in my life
started right here.

INT. THE CIRCLE - GLASS EATERY - DUSK

Mae is at dinner with Renata, Denise, and Josiah. It's crowded, and we can't hear what they say -- but it's clear that they're all trying hard not to acknowledge Mae's camera.

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - NIGHT

Mae LAUGHS at an IMPROV COMEDY TROUPE performing before an audience of CIRCLERS. Mae turns around so her camera can get a good shot of everyone laughing.

EXT. THE CIRCLE - DORMS - NIGHT

Mae approaches the dorms.

MAE
Home sweet home...

INT. THE CIRCLE - MAE'S DORM ROOM - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Mae washes her face and brushes her teeth -- her camera recording it all.

INT. THE CIRCLE - MAE'S DORM ROOM - LATER

Mae sits in bed in her modern, white dorm. Smart appliances, wallscreens and shades, everything centrally monitored. SEECHANGE CAMERAS dot the room.

MAE
Good night, everyone. See you in
the morning.

Mae glances down at her wristband: Only 98,027 people are watching now. A few thousand send her good-night MESSAGES.

Mae lifts the LENS over her head and places it in its CASE. She sits in bed, unable to sleep. Mae turns on her WALLSCREEN with a remote and clicks to:

A SeeChange CAMERA that says "MOM & DAD." But the image is BLACK. Mae clicks to another camera. BLACK. And another.

Mae picks up her phone and sends a ZING ("Hi!") to her PARENTS. No reply. She sends the same zing to ANNIE. No reply. Mae waits. Nothing.

INT. THE CIRCLE - MAE'S DORM ROOM - KITCHEN - LATER

Mae drinks SAKE and, on her laptop, looks up MERCER'S WEBSITE -- it's been taken down. Mae hits REFRESH. Still down.

INT. THE CIRCLE - MAE'S DORM ROOM - LATER

Mae turns off her SeeChange cameras, one-by-one. Turns off the light. She gets in bed. Her face is a blank. No joy. No sadness. Nothing.

MORNING

Mae's alarm BEEPS. The shades automatically open. Mae wakes up, immediately putting on her camera and turning it on.

MAE

Good morning, everyone. This is a day like every other day, in that it's unlike any other day!

Mae glances at her wrist. MESSAGES ("Top 'o the morning!" etc.) begin pouring in. Instant gratification. Mae smiles.

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - MORNING

Mae walks across the lawn, coffee in hand, while overhead:

Several HELICOPTERS shake the campus, landing on a rooftop HELIPORT.

Mae glances at her wristband, sees a MESSAGE from:

DR. VILLALOBOS: *Hey, can you stop by the clinic? Nothing urgent, but it should be today.*

Mae types back: *Sure!*

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - LATER

Mae stands next to a large modern SCULPTURE. CIRCLERS pass by, glancing at Mae.

MAE

This was done by a renowned Chinese
artist who's been in frequent
trouble with the authorities
there...

Mae hesitates, unable to remember the artist's name.

MAE (CONT'D)

I want to thank all the watchers
who sent frowns to the government
there, both for their persecution
of this artist, and for their
restrictions on internet freedoms.

(beat)

We've sent over 180 million frowns
from the U.S. alone, and you can
bet that has an effect on the
regime.

At that moment, Mae sees, across the quad --

-- Annie, walking in the opposite direction.

MAE (CONT'D)

Annie!

Annie continues to walk away. Mae hurries after her, trying
to seem casual. Annie turns a corner.

MOMENTS LATER

Mae sees a DOOR to a stairway close and rushes to it.

INT. THE CIRCLE - STAIRWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Mae enters the stairway, looks up and sees Annie.

MAE

Annie!

MAE (CONT'D)

Annie!

Annie stops, turns, and slowly makes her way down the steps.
She smiles a practiced, exhausted smile, and hugs Mae.

MAE (CONT'D)

Everyone, this is Annie. You've
heard about her -- Gang of 40
member, world-strider, beautiful
colossus and my close personal
friend. Say hi, Annie.

ANNIE

Hi.

MAE

So, how was the trip?

Annie glances at the camera and smiles, though it's clear, in the briefest of grimaces, that she doesn't enjoy this.

ANNIE

It was great.

MAE

Anything you'd like to share? How'd things go with everyone in Geneva?

ANNIE

Sure, I saw the Von Trapps, and they've gotten some new clothes. Also made of drapes.

Mae forces a LAUGH.

MAE

Anything else you'd like to talk about?

ANNIE

What else? Well, let me think...

Awkward silence. Annie takes Mae's hand and digs her fingernails into her palm just enough to get her attention.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

...I actually have to use the bathroom. Come with?

INT. THE CIRCLE - BATHROOM - DAY

Mae sits down in a stall and LOCKS the door behind her. Annie sits in the stall next to her.

ANNIE

Um...are we alone?

MAE

For three minutes -- only when I'm using the bathroom. Then they turn the audio back on.

Mae glances down and see the edge of Annie's foot.

MAE (CONT'D)
So, how are you?

ANNIE
Great, great. You?

MAE
Good.

ANNIE
Well, you should be good. You're
killing it!

MAE
You think?

ANNIE
C'mon, false modesty won't work
here. You should be psyched.

MAE
Okay...
(laughs)
...I am.

ANNIE
I mean, you're like a meteor here.
It's insane. People are coming to
me trying to get to you. It's
just...so crazy.

MAE
Sorry about asking stupid questions
back there.

ANNIE
It's okay. But you put me on the
spot.

MAE
So...when do I get to see you?

ANNIE
Soon. We'll make something happen.

MAE
Tonight? Please?

ANNIE
Sorry, tonight I'm just gonna crash
and get fresh for tomorrow. I have
a bunch of stuff. There's all the
new work on Completion -- I assume
Bailey has told you all about it.

Mae goes silent. She hates that Annie might know more about Completion than she does -- and the mention of Bailey makes her slightly...jealous?

MAE

I get it. That's fine. I'll see you tomorrow anyway. At the Concept Kingdom meeting.

ANNIE

What?

MAE

There's a Concept King --

ANNIE

I know what it is.
(slight edge)
You're going?

MAE

I am.
(with pleasure)
Bailey thought I should go.

ANNIE

And broadcast it?

MAE

Of course. Is that a problem?

ANNIE

No, I'm just...surprised. Those meetings are full of sensitive intellectual property. Maybe he's planning to have you attend the beginning or something.
(beat)
I can't imagine...

Mae listens as Annie's toilet FLUSHES -- and sees that Annie is getting up.

MAE

You leaving?

ANNIE

Yeah, I'm really so late...I could just die now.

MAE

Hey, don't die.

Annie hurries to the door and leaves. Mae stands, turns her audio back ON, and exits.

A MOMENT LATER

Mae hurries back in, silences her audio, and sits back down in the stall. She takes a deep breath, and...

...begins to cry.

INT. THE CIRCLE - CLINIC - LOBBY - DAY

Mae rushes into the lobby to find: DR. VILLALOBOS (30s, brilliant, shockingly gorgeous) waiting for her.

DR. VILLALOBOS
(radiant smile)
Hello, Mae.

MAE
Hi.

Dr. Villalobos examines Mae's wristband.

DR. VILLALOBOS
(mile a minute)
I see your heart rate is normal,
and I imagine with your jog over
here, all your viewers are getting
some interesting data, too.

INT. THE CIRCLE - CLINIC - EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Dr. Villalobos stands in front of Mae, who sits on an EXAMINATION TABLE.

DR. VILLALOBOS
So your vitals have been looking
good.

Mae glances at her wrist, checking the IMAGE from her camera.

DR. VILLALOBOS (CONT'D)
Your step count could be better.

Dr. Villalobos gestures to the WALLSCREEN, where a few hundred data points are displayed.

MAE
I know, it's just been busy lately.

DR. VILLALOBOS
Okay, but let's bring those steps
up. As a promise to me?

Mae nods.

DR. VILLALOBOS (CONT'D)
Okay, now this is the not-so-good
news. It's not about you or your
health. It's your parents.
(off Mae)
They're fine, but I want to show
you something.

Dr. Villalobos brings up: the SEECHANGE CAMERA FEEDS from
Mae's parents' house.

DR. VILLALOBOS (CONT'D)
See anything wrong?

Mae scans the screen. Where a grid of SIXTEEN IMAGES should
be visible, twelve are blank.

MAE
Um...there are only four working.

DR. VILLALOBOS
Correct.

MAE
Has tech been there to check?

DR. VILLALOBOS
No need. We saw your parents do it.
For each one, they reached up and
put some kind of cover over them.
Maybe just some sticker or fabric.
(off Mae)
Did you know about this?

MAE
(shakes her head)
No, I'm so sorry. They shouldn't
have done this.

Instinctively, Mae checks her wrist for her current
viewership: 1,298,001!

DR. VILLALOBOS
Have you heard from your folks
recently? Our records say you
haven't. But maybe...

Awkward silence.

MAE
It's been a little while.

DR. VILLALOBOS
Would you be willing to go visit?
As you know, good medical care is
hard to provide when...
(smiles)
...well, when we're in the dark.

INT./EXT. MAE'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Mae speeds along the highway.

INT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Mae walks into the kitchen to find her parents chopping vegetables.

MAE
How are you guys?

Mae embraces her parents in a three-way hug.

MAE'S FATHER
You're sure affectionate tonight,
Mae!

MAE
Ha ha.

Mae rolls back her eyelids, indicating they shouldn't imply that she's not affectionate.

Mae's parents glance at each other and, as if remembering that they're on camera and their daughter is a more visible and important person, they adjust their behavior.

INT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Mae and her parents sit down to dinner.

MAE
(keeping it light)
So, there's a slight concern from
the health folks that some of your
cameras aren't working.

MAE'S FATHER
Really? Maybe we should check the
batteries?

He winks at Mae's mother.

MAE

How can anyone provide you with the best health care when you don't allow them to see how you're doing? It's like going to see a doctor and not allowing her to take your pulse.

MAE'S FATHER

That's a very good point. I think we should eat.

MAE'S MOTHER

(glances slyly at her husband)

We'll get them fixed right away.

Mae smiles and raises her glass.

MAE

Here's a toast to you two. And while we're at it -- a toast to all the thousands of people who reached out to you guys after the last time I was here.

Mae's parents smile stiffly and raise their glasses. They eat in silence. After Mae's mother carefully chews and swallows her first bite, she turns to Mae.

MAE'S MOTHER

(right into Mae's camera)

Well, we sure did get a lot of messages.

Mae's father also looks directly into the lens.

MAE'S FATHER

But we do ask you, from now on, to just send your best wishes through the air. Or if you pray, just pray for us. No need to put it into a message. Just --

(closes his eyes)

-- send your good wishes, your good vibes, our way. No need to e-mail or zing or anything.

MAE

I think you just mean to say...
(holding back her anger)

(MORE)

MAE (CONT'D)
 ...that it'll just take you a
 little while to answer all of the
 messages -- but you'll get to them
 all eventually. Right?

Mae's parents glance at each other.

INT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - FOYER - NIGHT

Mae puts on her coat. Her mother meets her at the door.

MAE'S MOTHER
 Mercer asked us to give this to
 you.

Mae's mother hands Mae an ENVELOPE. Mae curiously eyes it --
 no name or address -- and kisses her mother on the cheek.

INT./EXT. MAE'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Mae pulls out of the driveway. She can't stop glancing at the
 envelope on her lap. Mae PULLS OVER, rips it open, and reads:

Dear Mae,

*Yes, you can and should read this on camera. I expected that
 you would, so I'm writing this letter not only to you, but to
 your "audience."*

As Mae reads the note, we hear:

MERCER (V.O.)
 I can't see you anymore, Mae. Not
 that we had such a constant or
 perfect friendship anyway, but I
 can't be your friend and also
 part of your experiment. I'll be
 sad to lose you, as you've been
 important in my life. But we've
 taken very different paths.

Mae glances at her wristband. COMMENTS pour in:

*Mae, were you ever so young and dumb? How did you end up
 dating a zero like this?*

MERCER (V.O.)
 If you saw your parents, and your
 mom gave you this note, then you
 saw the effect all your stuff has
 had on them. I wrote this note
 after seeing them.

(MORE)

MERCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
They're both strung out, exhausted
by the deluge you unleashed on
them. It's not right. I helped them
cover some of the cameras. I even
bought the fabric. I was happy to
do it. They don't want to be smiled
upon, or frowned upon, or zinged.
They want to be alone. And not
watched...

Mae checks how many pages are left: four. Double-sided.
Upset, Mae tosses the letter on the floor, opens the car
door, and storms back into the house.

INT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mae storms into the living room. Empty.

INT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Mae walks into the kitchen. A POT boils on the stove. But
Mae's parents are nowhere to be found.

INT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - STAIRS - MOMENTS LATER

Mae runs up the stairs, taking them three at a time.

INT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - PARENTS' BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mae turns into her parents' bedroom to see:

Her father sitting on the bed, and her mother kneeling on the
floor, his penis in her hand.

Mae quickly turns away, aiming the camera toward a dresser.
Her parents fumble to cover themselves. Nobody says a word.

EXT. MAE'S PARENTS' HOME - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Mae fumbles to dial a number on her phone. It goes straight
to voicemail.

MERCER (V.O.)
(recording)
Hey, you're hearing this message
'cause I'm not using this phone
anymore...

INT. MAE'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Mae cell phone goes through her car speakers.

MAE

Is there anything we can do?

BAILEY (V.O.)

(empathetic, fatherly)

Mae, c'mon. You know we can't do that. What would transparency be if we could delete anything we felt was embarrassing in some way? For this experiment, Mae, and the Circle as a whole, to work, it has to be pure and complete. I know this episode will be painful for a few days, but trust me, very soon nothing like this will be the least bit interesting to anyone.

(beat)

So for the time being, we need you to be a role model, okay?

Mae silently shakes her head. But she knows, in her heart...that Bailey is right. He's always right.

MAE

Okay.

INT. THE CIRCLE - ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Mae rises up in the elevator.

INT. THE CIRCLE - CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AREA - MAE'S DESK - NIGHT

Mae works at her computer in the empty CE area. She forwards a ZING to her father that reads:

Beautiful that an older couple, dealing with MS no less, can be sexually active. Inspiring to us all!

A moment later, Mae's phone RINGS. She answers it.

MAE'S FATHER (V.O.)

Please stop.

MAE

But dad --

MAE'S FATHER (V.O.)
Really. No more.

A RUSTLE, then Mae's mother gets on and says:

MAE'S MOTHER (V.O.)
We love you, dear. But we need you
to not contact us anymore unless
it's private.
(beat)
Good night.

Mae's mother hangs up. Mae is stunned.

LATER

Mae wears a SURVEY HEADSET while fighting back TEARS.

VOICE FROM EARPIECE
Are you a regular user of
conditioner?

MAE
Yes.

VOICE FROM EARPIECE
Thank you. What do you think about
organic hair products?

MAE
Smile.

INT. THE CIRCLE - VICTORIAN ERA - TOP FLOOR - DAY

The room is grand, with epic views and a glass ceiling. The GANG OF 40 is assembled. All the power-players of the Circle are there, including Stenton, Mae -- who sits in the middle of the table, thrilled to be there -- and...

...Ty, whose hooded image is visible on a WALLSCREEN.

BAILEY (O.S.)
Hello, Mae!

Bailey arrives and takes a place at the opposite end of the long room, waving to Mae and her audience.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
(huge smile)
Okay, I think we should just dig
in, given we're all present.

Mae sits in the middle of the table. She glances at her wrist: 1,982,992 viewers. Then she scans the room, and sees, by the door, behind two rows of Circlers --

-- Annie, who doesn't return the look.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Hi, gang. Pun intended.
(smiles)
You might have seen that as of today, over twenty thousand other leaders and legislators around the world have followed Congresswoman Santos' lead and taken the pledge to make their lives as public servants completely transparent.

APPLAUSE. Mae's camera is trained on Bailey and the SCREEN behind him. She checks the view on her wrist -- COMMENTS pour in (one person compares this event to the Manhattan Project; another to "Edison's Menlo Park Lab, circa 1879").

BAILEY (CONT'D)
The governor of Arizona had her entire staff go transparent. Tom and I --
(glances at Stenton)
-- have seen to it that they get a steep discount on the necessary hardware and server capacity to make it happen.

The 40 CLAP heartily. Behind Bailey, a PICTURE appears of: an EMPTY POLLING PLACE, in a desolate high school gym somewhere. It dissolves into an array of NUMBERS.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Now, here's how many people voted in the last national election.

The screen behind him reads: *140 million*

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Here's how many were eligible to vote.

The screen reads: *244 million*

BAILEY (CONT'D)
And here's how many Americans are registered with the Circle.

The screen reads: *241 million*

BAILEY (CONT'D)
What does that tell you?

An OLDER MAN with a gray ponytail yells:

PONYTAIL MAN
We're awesome!

LAUGHTER opens up the room.

BAILEY
Well, sure. But besides that? It
tells you that the Circle has a
knack for getting people to
participate.
(beat)
And there are a lot of people in
Washington who agree.

Behind Bailey, the familiar IMAGE of: UNCLE SAM pointing.
Then another IMAGE appears -- of Bailey wearing the SAME
OUTFIT, in the same pose, next to Uncle Sam.

The room GUFFAWS.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
So now we get to the meat of
today's session: What if your
Circle profile automatically
registered you to vote?

Bailey sweeps his eyes across the room, hesitating at Mae and
her watchers.

Mae checks her wrist. One viewer writes: *Goosebumps!*

BAILEY (CONT'D)
With TruYou, to set up a profile,
you have to be a real person, with
a real address, complete personal
info, a real Social Security
number, a real and verifiable date
of birth. In other words, all the
information the government
traditionally wants when you
register to vote.
(beat)
So why wouldn't state governments
just consider you registered once
you set up a TruYou profile?

People in the room nod, some out of acknowledgement that it's
a sensible idea, a notion long discussed.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

(smiles)

There's no reason. And I have verbal commitments from 181 other members of Congress and 32 senators. They've all agreed to push legislation to make your TruYou profile your automatic path to registration.

A brief round of APPLAUSE.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

Now think...think if we can get closer to full participation in all elections.

APPLAUSE ripples through the room.

Bailey smiles broadly. Stenton rises to his feet. It seems to be the end of the presentation. But just then...

...Mae tentatively raises her hand.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

Yes, Mae?

MAE

Well, I wonder if we couldn't take this one step further. I mean...well, actually, I don't think it --

BAILEY

No, no. Go on, Mae. You started well. I like the words one step further. That's how this company was built.

Mae glances around the room: the faces a mix of encouraging and concerned. This includes Annie, who watches sternly.

MAE

(gathers herself)

Okay...why couldn't we just work backwards from that goal, using all the steps you outlined? All the tools we already have.

Mae looks around the room, ready to quit at the first pair of skeptical eyes, but she sees only curiosity.

BAILEY
(curious)
Go on...

MAE
I'm just going to connect some dots. Well, first of all, we all agree that we'd like 100 percent participation, and that everyone would agree that 100 percent participation is the ideal.

BAILEY
Yes, it's certainly the idealist's ideal.

MAE
And we currently have 83 percent of the voting-age Americans registered on the Circle?

BAILEY
Yes.

MAE
And it seems that we're on our way to voters being able to register, and maybe even to actually vote, through the Circle.

Bailey's head bobs side to side, some indication of mild doubt, but he's smiling, his eyes encouraging.

BAILEY
A small leap, but okay. Go on.

MAE
So...why not require every voting-age citizen to have a Circle account?

There's a SHUFFLING in the room, some intake of breath, mostly from the older Circlers.

STENTON
Let her finish.

Mae glances over to find Stenton near the door, his arms crossed, his eyes staring at the floor. He looks briefly up at Mae and nods brusquely.

MAE

(gaining confidence)
 Okay, I know the initial reaction will be resistance. I mean, how can we require anyone to use our services? But there are all kinds of things that are mandatory for citizens of this country.

Stenton steps forward and says:

STENTON

We require people to pay taxes. And to pay into Social Security. To serve on juries.

MAE

Right, and to pee indoors, not on the streets. I mean, we have ten thousand laws. We require so many legitimate things of citizens of the United States. So why can't we require them to vote? They do in dozens of countries.

An OLDER CIRCLER says:

OLDER CIRCLER

It's been proposed here.

STENTON

Not by us.

MAE

And that's my point.
 (nods to Stenton)
 The technology has never been there before. Now we can register them automatically, and then when election day comes around, you make sure they vote.

ANNIE (O.S.)

How do we do that?

Mae looks over and realizes it was Annie who spoke up. Their eyes meet. Mae looks hurt. It's a tense moment.

Bailey jumps in and says:

BAILEY

Oh, jeez. A hundred ways. That's an easy part. You remind them ten times that day.

(MORE)

BAILEY (CONT'D)

Maybe their accounts don't work
that day till they vote. That's
what I'd favor anyway.

(beat)

"Hello, Annie!" it could say. "Take
five minutes to vote." Whatever it
is. We do that for our own surveys.

(disappointment)

You know that, Annie.

(to Mae, bright)

And the stragglers?

Mae smiles. She has an answer. She glances at her bracelet:
7,202,821 people are watching.

MAE

Well, everyone has to pay taxes,
right? How many people do it online
now? Last year, maybe 80 percent.
What if we all stopped duplicating
services and made it all part of
one unified system?

(beat)

You use your Circle account to pay
taxes, to register to vote, to pay
your parking tickets, to do
anything.

(excited)

I mean, we would save each user
hundreds of hours of inconvenience,
and collectively, the country would
save billions!

STENTON

Hundreds of billions.

Annie steps forward and asks:

ANNIE

(directly to Mae)

But why wouldn't the government
just build a similar service? Why
do they need us?

A few SNICKERS. Mae, confused and surprised that Annie is
challenging her, glances at Bailey and Stenton.

STENTON

(smiles, raises his chin)

Well, Annie, it would cost too much
and they don't have the expertise.
We already have the infrastructure,
and 83 percent of the electorate.

(MORE)

STENTON (CONT'D)

(cold)

Does that make sense to you?

Annie nods grimly, her eyes showing fear and regret. Stenton looks at her, as if assessing her anew. He turns to Mae, urging her to continue, then moves to the head of the table.

INT. THE CIRCLE - MAE'S DORM ROOM - MORNING

Mae's alarm BEEPS, shades open, and she wakes up. She groggily checks her phone: 322 new MESSAGES. Suddenly, the phone RINGS. Blocked caller ID. Mae lets it go to voicemail.

INT. THE CIRCLE - MAE'S DORM ROOM - BATHROOM - LATER

Mae showers. Her phone RINGS over and over.

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - MORNING

Mae walks across the quad, reading zings on her phone:

BAILEY: *We're calling it Demoxie. It's democracy with YOUR voice and YOUR moxie. And it's coming soon.*

CIRCLERS wave to Mae, call her name, and some CHEER. She's like a rock star. A YOUNG CIRCLER approaches Mae and says:

YOUNG CIRCLER

(nervous)

I just wanted to tell you that I've never voted before -- in fact, I've never really felt like I had a voice that our government was interested in listening to.

(off Mae)

But now I feel like I can actually be involved. Like I can be heard. Thank you, Mae.

MAE

(smiles awkwardly)

You're welcome.

INT. THE CIRCLE - DEVELOPERS' POD - DAY

Mae walks into the Developers' Pod to find:

TWO DOZEN ENGINEERS and DESIGNERS -- who look like they haven't slept. When they see Mae, they erupt in CHEERS. Lights dim, and a SINGLE LIGHT shines on:

SHARMA, a dark-haired woman with a face of barely contained joy.

SHARMA
Hello Mae, hello Mae's watchers.
(bowing briefly)
I'm so glad, and so honored, to be
with you today.

The WALLSCREEN comes to life. The word "Demoxie" appears, rendered in a spirited font and set inside an American flag.

SHARMA (CONT'D)
(motions to the
wallscreen)
The goal is to make sure that
everyone who works at the Circle
can weigh in on issues that affect
their lives.

On the SCREEN, below the Demoxie logo, a question appears:

Should we have more veggie options at lunch?

It is book-ended by BUTTONS on either side -- "Yes" and "No."

MAE
(nods)
Very impressive, guys!

SHARMA
Thank you. Now, if you'll indulge
us. You have to answer, too.

MAE
Oh, okay.

Mae walks up to the screen and pushes "Yes." On the screen a HAPPY FACE appears with the words "You are heard!" arcing above. The question disappears, replaced by the words:

*Demoxie result: 75% of respondents want more veggie options.
More veggie options will be provided.*

The engineers and developers CHEER.

MAE (CONT'D)
Incredible.

SHARMA
Imagine this rolled out nationwide.
Worldwide!

MAE
It's beyond my capability to
imagine.

SHARMA
(laughs)
But you came up with this!

EXT. THE CIRCLE - CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AREA - MAE'S DESK - DAY

Mae sits at her desk, excitedly reading zings like:

*We're on the verge of actual change and Change at the speed
our hearts demand!*

Mae's phone RINGS. Blocked number. Mae sends it to voicemail.

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - DAY

Mae walks through the middle of HUNDREDS OF CIRCLERS eating
lunch. The BUZZ of excitement is palpable.

MAE
(to her viewers)
Can you feel that energy? Everyone
is talking about Demoxie.

Mae's phone RINGS -- a blocked number. Mae sighs, finally
answering the phone.

MAE (CONT'D)
Hello?

TY (V.O.)
(terse)
Mae, this is Ty. Don't say my name.
The incoming audio isn't working.

MAE
(glances around)
No.

TY (V.O.)
Mae. Please. This is life or death.

INT. THE CIRCLE - BATHROOM - DAY

Mae sits in the stall, her audio off. Her phone RINGS and she
quickly answers it.

MAE

I'm sure someone is tracing this.

TY (V.O.)

You can't do this. Your mandatory thing, and the positive reaction it's gotten -- this is the last step toward closing the Circle, and that can't happen.

MAE

What are you talking about? You know more than anyone that that's been the goal of the Circle since the beginning. I mean, it's a circle. It has to be complete.

TY (V.O.)

Mae, you know this isn't right.

Mae doesn't answer.

TY (V.O.)

You're in a position to influence historical events here. No one entity should have this much power. We're on the verge of having another very hungry, very evil empire on our hands.

(beat)

Do you understand?

MAE

I'm hanging up.

TY (V.O.)

When was the last time you had a real conversation with your friends or your parents?

Mae hangs up.

INT. THE CIRCLE - GREAT HALL - DAY

Mae finds a seat in the back of the CROWDED, raucous hall.

ON THE SCREEN

The DEMOXIE LOGO appears. Then the first question:

1. Should Take Your Daughter to Work Day happen twice a year, instead of just once?

The crowd LAUGHS. Mae votes "Yes" on her wristband.

ON THE SCREEN

Notes can be seen adding up, and within eleven seconds the entire campus has voted and the results are tallied: 45% of the Circle says "Yes."

Bailey ZINGS: *Looks like once is enough for now.*

The Great Hall shakes with APPLAUSE.

ON THE SCREEN

2. John or Paul or...Ringo?

LAUGHTER from the audience.

CUT TO:

Ringo wins with 64%. John receives 20% and 16% for Paul.

This response receives surprised CHEERS.

ON THE SCREEN

are the INSTRUCTIONS: *Imagine the White House wanted the unfiltered opinion of its constituents. Imagine you had the direct and immediate ability to influence U.S. foreign policy.*

The instructions vanish, replaced by the QUESTION:

3. Intelligence agencies have located terrorist mastermind Mohammed Khalil al-Hamed in a lightly populated area of rural Pakistan. Should we send a drone to kill him, considering the likelihood of moderate collateral damage?

WHISPERS across the room. Mae catches her breath. Considers the question. She votes "Yes."

CUT TO:

ON THE SCREEN

71% of Cirlers favor a drone strike.

A sobering HUSH falls over the audience.

CUT TO:

ON THE SCREEN

4. Is Mae Holland awesome or what?

Mae LAUGHS -- as does everyone else. Mae blushes. Doesn't want to vote on this question. But the QUESTION on her wristband BLINKS urgently:

All Circlers must vote.

Mae, self-conscious about calling herself awesome, pushes "Frown."

CUT TO:

ON THE SCREEN

97% of Circlers think Mae is awesome (Only 3% do not).

The Great Room erupts in WHOOPS and CHEERS.

MAE

looks up at the SCREEN, her eyes drifting over...

...to the 3%.

Mae does the calculation in her mind: 3% out of almost ten-thousand Circlers means...hundreds of people don't think Mae is awesome. A dark cloud passes over Mae's face.

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - DAY

As everyone exits the Great Hall, CIRCLERS pat Mae's back, smile at her, say "We love you." Mae wears a tight smile and glances at everyone with a hint of suspicion.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. THE CIRCLE - MAE'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Mae sits up in bed, holding an ENVELOPE mailed to her from: MERCER. No return address. Mae rips open the envelope, holds up the letter to her CAMERA, and begins to read it aloud.

MAE

"Mae, I know I said I wouldn't write again. But I wanted to let you know that I'm moving north, off the grid, to the densest and most uninteresting forest I can find."

Mae's wristband is popping with MESSAGES like:

Why do you bother, Mae? and I'm already bored.

MAE (CONT'D)

"And when the cameras come, I'll keep going north -- with all the other hermits...or refugees."

Mae glances down at another MESSAGE: *Good riddance, Bigfoot.*

MAE (CONT'D)

"I wish you the best, Mercer."

LATER

Lights out. But Mae can't sleep. She goes through ZINGS on her TABLET. She sends a Zing to Annie. No reply. Sends another. Still nothing. Mae glances at the screen and sees:

Annie -- represented as a pulsing RED DOT, in her office. The dot does not move.

Mae calls Annie. It RINGS. And RINGS. But no answer.

INT. THE CIRCLE - CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AREA - DAY

Mae stands in the doorway, watching various CIRCLERS work.

Some of the employees glance up at Mae and smile or wave at her camera. One WILD-HAIRED MAN (early-20s) wears a headset, answering survey questions as he types intensely.

WILD-HAIRED MAN

(nodding)

No, no, smile, frown, yes, yes, no, Cancun, deep-sea diving, upscale resort, breakaway weekend, January, January, meh, three, two, smile, smile, meh, yes, Prada, Converse, no, frown, frown, smile, Paris.

INT. THE CIRCLE - CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AREA - MAE'S DESK - DAY

Mae sends another zing to Annie. Waits. No response.

INT. THE CIRCLE - GREAT ROOM - BACKSTAGE - DAY

A STYLIST orbits around Mae, applying powder to her nose and forehead, Vaseline to her lips. Bailey sits in a nearby chair.

BAILEY
(admiring smile)
Make us proud out there.

INT. THE CIRCLE - GREAT HALL - STAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Mae steps on stage into a bright single SPOTLIGHT and is greeted by a wall of APPLAUSE.

MAE
Hello everyone, I'm Mae Holland.

The APPLAUSE starts again.

MAE (CONT'D)
Okay, okay...
(raises her hands)
You've probably heard about
SoulSearch, maybe a rumor here and
there. Today we're putting it to
the test, in front of the entire
Circle audience here and globally.
Do you feel ready?

The audience CHEERS its answer.

ON SCREEN behind Mae: a giant DIGITAL GLOBE spins.

A BLIP from Mae's earpiece:

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE
(Stenton)
Fine job so far.

NOTE: Stenton will provide AG throughout this scene.

ON SCREEN: a SILHOUETTE appears, the shape of a human, torso and up, with the familiar mug-shot measurements.

MAE
In just seconds, the computer will
select, at random, a fugitive from
justice. Whoever it is has been
proven a menace to our global
community. Our assertion is that
whoever he or she is, SoulSearch
will locate them within twenty
minutes.

MURMURS fill the room, followed by scattered APPLAUSE.

MAE (CONT'D)
Let's select that fugitive.

Pixel by pixel, the silhouette slowly becomes an actual person. When the selection is finished, squinting into a police camera is the hard-looking face of a WOMAN.

MAE (CONT'D)

(scans the information on-screen)

Okay, this is Fiona Highbridge. Forty-four years old. Born in Manchester, England. She was convicted of triple murder in 2004. She locked her three children in a closet and went to Spain for a month. They all starved. She was sent to prison in England but escaped, with the help of a guard who she apparently seduced.

Mae turns to see a COUNTER tick up to: 1,109,001,887.

MAE (CONT'D)

Over a billion people are watching. And now let's see how many we have in the UK.

A SECOND COUNTER spins, landing on: 14,028,981.

MAE (CONT'D)

The information we have says her passport was revoked years ago, so Fiona is probably still in the UK. Do you all think fourteen million Brits and a billion global participants can find Fiona Highbridge in twenty minutes?

The audience ROARS.

MAE (CONT'D)

Okay, everyone ready? Let's bring up the clock.

A giant six-digit TIMER appears, indicating hours, minutes, and seconds.

MAE (CONT'D)

Let me show you some of the groups we have working together on this -- like the University of East Anglia.

A FEED shows: hundreds of CHEERING STUDENTS in an auditorium.

MAE (CONT'D)

Let's see the city of Leeds.

A FEED shows: a public square, packed with waving PEOPLE, bundled up for cold and blustery weather.

MAE (CONT'D)
Everyone ready?

The two crowds CHEER.

MAE (CONT'D)
Good. Now on your mark, get set...
(draws her hand down)
...GO!

Next to the PHOTO of Fiona Highbridge is the COMMENT FEED -- the most popular comment reads:

Are we sure we want to find this hag? She looks like the Scarecrow from Wizard of Oz.

LAUGHS throughout the auditorium.

MAE (CONT'D)
Okay, time to get serious.

CUT TO:

ON SCREEN: 201 PHOTOS are posted -- most of them close to Fiona's face. VOTES are being tallied.

CUT TO:

ON SCREEN: Only FIVE PHOTOS from around the world left. Two of the photos are from the same town -- Carmathen, Wales. The images look exactly like Fiona Highbridge.

CUT TO:

THE AUDIENCE watches, riveted, as

ON SCREEN: a woman (GRETCHEN, 20s) using the VIDEO FUNCTION on her phone goes through a COMMERCIAL LAUNDRY.

MAE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Be careful, Gretchen.

GRETCHEN
(Welch accent)
I will.

ON SCREEN: Gretchen weaves between enormous steaming machines. CO-WORKERS glance curiously at the camera. Across the room, a THIN WOMAN feeds a bedsheet between two wheels.

MAE

checks the clock: 6 minutes, 33 seconds.

ON SCREEN: The thin woman notices the camera -- and runs!
Gretchen hesitates, filming as the woman disappears.

MAE (O.S.)
Follow her!

The camera jostles as Gretchen chases up the stairs, through a hallway, and through a door, revealing...

...FIONA HIGHBRIDGE, trapped against a wall, surrounded by a DOZEN PEOPLE -- most of them aiming their PHONES at her!

PERSON FROM THE CROWD
Gotcha, kid-killer!

Fiona collapses to the ground, covering her face.

ANOTHER PERSON FROM THE CROWD
Lynch her!

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE (O.S.)
She must be kept safe.

MAE (O.S.)
Keep her safe! Has someone called the police?

As if on cue, the sound of SIRENS.

CUT TO:

ON SCREEN: FOUR OFFICERS handcuff Fiona.

MAE

checks the clock in the Great Hall: 10 minutes, 26 seconds.

MAE (CONT'D)
I guess that's it.

Mae stops the clock -- as the audience explodes with CHEERS.

VOICE FROM AUDIENCE (O.S.)
Let's do another!

MAE
Well, we could...

Mae glances at Bailey, standing in the wings. He shrugs.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

Maybe not another fugitive. Let's try a regular civilian.

Mae thinks for a moment, has an idea, smiles, then says:

MAE

Okay, everyone.

Mae looks on her TABLET, finds a photo, and quickly transfers it to the screen behind her.

ON SCREEN: A PHOTO of Mae and Mercer, standing near the entrance of a coastal hiking trail.

MAE (CONT'D)

Okay, our second target today is not a fugitive from justice, but you might say he's a fugitive from, well...friendship.

Mae grins, acknowledging the LAUGHTER in the room.

MAE (CONT'D)

This is Mercer Medeiros. I haven't seen him in a few months, and I'd love to see him again. Like Fiona Highbridge, though, he's someone who's trying not to be found. Let's see if we can break our previous record.

The clock begins. PHOTOS begin to appear on screen.

CUT TO:

ON SCREEN: HUNDREDS OF PHOTOS of people that look similar to Mercer. Some are Mercer. Some include Mae (which amuses the audience). A ZING appears from Jasper, Oregon:

I've seen this guy at our local grocery. Let me check.

TWO ADDRESSES show up -- both in Jasper, Oregon.

CUT TO:

ON CAMERA

a CAR races up a winding driveway to a CABIN. The camera work is more professional and clear this time. Someone films a participant -- a grinning YOUNG WOMAN -- as she hurries over to the front door of the cabin and KNOCKS.

YOUNG WOMAN
(overly familiar)
Mercer? Mercer, you in there? You
in there making some chandeliers?

No answer.

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)
Mercer! I know you're in there. We
see your car.

The camera pans to the driveway, revealing: MERCER'S PICKUP
TRUCK -- as well as a DOZEN PEOPLE, decked out in baseball
hats and some in camouflage, all holding their PHONES.

CROWD
Mercer! Mercer! Mercer!

YOUNG WOMAN
Go around.

Another FEED goes to the back porch, peers in the windows.
Inside are a pile of antlers, books, dusty chairs, and on the
mantel: a PHOTO of a TEENAGE MERCER with his FAMILY.

CROWD (O.S.)
Mercer! Mercer! Mercer!

YOUNG WOMAN
(eyes wide)
There he is! Driveway!

Both cameras begin to move and shake as they run from the
PORCH to the DRIVEWAY, just as:

Mercer speeds backwards down the driveway in his truck!

A YOUNG MAN runs alongside the truck and attaches a SECHANGE
CAMERA on the passenger-side window of Mercer's truck.

CUT TO:

MAE

and the audience watch, riveted, while

ON SCREEN

Mercer speeds along the road. He glances furiously into the
eye of the camera.

MERCER
FUCK YOU!

MAE

glances at a clock: 11:51.

MAE
(joking "villain" voice)
Okay -- release the drones!

CUT TO:

ON SCREEN

The view from ELEVEN DRONES flying through the air! They swoop down through the trees, surrounding Mercer's truck. A smaller drone attaches itself to the driver-side window.

MAE

MAE (CONT'D)
Can someone get me on audio for the
drone called ReconMan10?

ON SCREEN

Mercer drives as fast as he can. Then he hears:

MAE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Mercer, it's me, Mae! Can you hear
me?

There's some faint recognition on Mercer's face. He squints, glances at the drone in disbelief.

MAE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Mercer, stop driving. It's just me,
Mae!
(almost laughing)
I just wanted to say hi!

The audience ROARS.

But Mercer doesn't smile. He doesn't stop. He looks straight ahead, determined.

MAE

MAE (CONT'D)
(mock authoritative voice)
Mercer! Stop the car and surrender.
You're surrounded.
(smiles)
You're surrounded...by friends!

LAUGHTER. But Mercer doesn't acknowledge the drone.

ON SCREEN

No longer woods. It's opened up. All blue. Mercer drives over a NARROW BRIDGE, connecting a MOUNTAIN to another MOUNTAIN, hundreds of feet over a gorge.

MAE

MAE (CONT'D)
Can we turn the microphone up at
all?

An ICON appears, indicating that the volume had been at half-power, and is now at full.

MAE (CONT'D)
(jokey ominous voice)
MERCER!

ON SCREEN

Mercer's head jerks towards the drone, shocked by the volume.

MAE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Mercer! It's me, Mae!

Mercer doesn't smile. He just slowly shakes his head, as if profoundly disappointed. Suddenly --

-- TWO NEW DRONES appear at the passenger side window.

MALE VOICE FROM DRONE
Mercer, stop driving!

Mercer's head swings towards the voice, and when he turns back to the road, his face shows real panic.

GREAT HALL

On the screen behind Mae, two SEECHANGE CAMERAS, positioned on the bridge, are added to the grid. A THIRD CAMERA comes alive seconds later, offering a view of the span from the riverbank far below.

FEMALE VOICE FROM DRONE
(laughing)
Mercer, submit to us! Submit to our
will! Be our friend!

ON SCREEN

Mercer turns his truck towards the drone, as if intending to ram it, but the drone adjusts its trajectory automatically and mimics his movement.

FEMALE VOICE FROM DRONE (CONT'D)
 You can't escape, Mercer! Never,
 ever, ever. It's over. Now give up.
 (laughing)
 Be our friend!

GREAT HALL

The audience CHEERS.

COMMENTS pile up on the screen, saying things like:

Greatest viewing experience of my life!

The cheers GROW...

ON SCREEN

an expression comes over Mercer's face, something like
 determination, something like serenity. His right arm spins
 the steering wheel --

-- and then he disappears from the view of the drones!

When the cameras regain their lock on Mercer, his truck is
 crossing the highway, speeding towards a CONCRETE BARRIER --

-- then the truck BREAKS THROUGH! Leaps into the gorge! Flies
 through the air! And then...

...the truck vanishes from view.

GREAT HALL

Mae SCREAMS at the top of her lungs. The audience GASPS. Mae
 turns to the camera feed on the riverbed and sees:

A tiny OBJECT dropping from the bridge and landing, like a
 tin toy, on the rocks below!

MAE

looks hysterically to the views from the other drones,
 hovering above, as though expecting to see Mercer standing on
 the bridge.

But the bridge is empty.

CUT TO BLACK.

Long silence. And then, finally:

BAILEY (PRE-LAP)
 You doing okay?

FADE IN:

INT. THE CIRCLE - OCHRE LIBRARY - DAY

CLOSE ON: MAE'S WRISTBAND. 28,554,201 people are watching.

Mae and Bailey are alone in the library -- except for Mae's millions of viewers.

NOTE: When Mae speaks now, it's measured, as though she's searching for the correct balance between raw emotion, quiet dignity, and practiced composure -- her idea of "presidential."

MAE

I am, thanks. I'm not sure it's hit me yet.

BAILEY

And it might not, not for a while. But I don't want you to be blaming yourself.

MAE

Well, it's sort of hard not to...

BAILEY

Mae, you were trying to help a very disturbed, antisocial young man. You and the other participants were reaching out, trying to bring him into the embrace of humanity, and he rejected that.

(beat)

I think it's self-evident that you were, if anything, his only hope.

MAE

Thank you for saying so.

A beat, then:

BAILEY

And your parents? They're okay?

Mae doesn't answer. Conspicuous silence.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

(knowing)

It must have been...very nice to see them at the service.

Mae nods.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

I know there's still some distance between you all, but it'll collapse with time.

MAE

It's okay.

Bailey paces, deep in thought.

BAILEY

You know, a few years ago, I had the idea that I would endeavor, in my lifetime, to know every person on Earth. To shake their hand or say hello.

(off Mae)

Can you feel the appeal of a notion like that?

MAE

Absolutely.

BAILEY

But there are seven-odd billion people on the planet! The best I could come up with was this: if I spent three seconds with each person, that's twenty people a minute! Pretty good, right?

Mae nods.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

But even at that pace, after a year, I would have known only 10,512,000 people. It would take me 665 years to meet everyone at that pace!

(beat)

Depressing, right?

MAE

It is...

BAILEY

So we have to content ourselves with the people we do know and can know. There are so many, and we have many to choose from.

(sighs)

(MORE)

BAILEY (CONT'D)
In your troubled Mercer, we've lost
one of the world's many, many
people, which reminds us of both
life's preciousness and its
abundance. Am I right?

Mae considers the question for a long beat, then replies:

MAE
You are.

Bailey, satisfied, changes the subject.

BAILEY
Now, speaking of people we care
about and don't want to lose, I
know you visited Annie yesterday.
How's she doing? Her condition the
same?

MAE
It's the same. But you know Annie.
She's strong.

BAILEY
She is strong. And she's so
important to us here. Just as you
are.
(right into Mae's eyes)
I know you both know it, but I want
to say it again: you'll never be
without the Circle, okay?

MAE
(on the verge of tears)
Okay.

BAILEY
Okay, then.
(smiles)
Now we should go. Stenton awaits,
and I think we could all --

Bailey indicated Mae and her watchers.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
-- use some distraction. You ready?

INT. THE CIRCLE - AQUARIUM - DAY

Mae and Bailey walk down a long HALLWAY.

BAILEY
(big smile)
There he is!

Stenton stands next to the aquarium with a new trainer -- VICTOR -- a tall man with a shaved head, dressed in all white. Stenton shakes Bailey's hand.

STENTON
(to Mae)
So good to see you again.

Stenton takes both of Mae's hands in his. He's in an ebullient mood, but his mouth frowns, just slightly, in deference to Mae's recent loss. He steps back and turns to --
-- the TANK. It's filled with a gorgeous, colorful array of live coral, seaweed, anemones, and sea sponges.

BAILEY
Beautiful. Just beautiful.

Bailey, Stenton, and Mae stand in awe -- Mae's CAMERA trained on the tank, allowing her watchers a deep look.

STENTON
And soon it will be complete.

BAILEY
Oh, there he is. I don't think
you've met Ty yet, have you, Mae?

Mae turns to find --

-- Ty, dressed in a wool cap and oversized hoodie (the "Ty uniform"). He extends his hand to Mae and they shake.

TY
(formal)
So good to meet you, Mae.

MAE
(hesitant)
Good to meet you, too.

Mae realizes she's still holding Ty's hand and pulls away.

Mae glances at her wristband -- over thirty-two million people are watching. And the number keeps rising.

BAILEY
Been a while since all three of us
were in one place!

TY

What are we about to see?
 (gestures to the water)
 I think I know, but I'm anxious to
 see it happen.

BAILEY

Okay...

Bailey claps his hands and wrings them in anticipation. He turns to Mae, who turns her lens to him.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

Here we have the octopus, the
 seahorse and his progeny, and most
 dramatically, the shark. Until now,
 our three stars have been kept in
 separate tanks.

Victor ascends a ladder holding a BAG OF SEAHORSES.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

We're about to see the three
 reunited here, as they were in the
 sea, so they can coexist and create
 a more natural picture of life in
 the deep.

Victor, now at the top of the ladder, gets a quick nod from Stenton and then slowly lowers the bag into the water, so it rests on the surface. The seahorses seem calm, barely moving.

Mae glances at her wrist: sixty-million watchers. She glances up at Ty, but he's focused solely on the aquarium.

At the back of the tank, Victor climbs the ladder holding a much LARGER BAG with an OCTOPUS in it.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

Well, this is very exciting. Now we
 see the octopus being carried up.

Victor lowers the octopus into the tank. He then points to the seahorses and gives a quick nod to Bailey and Stenton.

BAILEY (CONT'D)

Okay, it looks like it's time to
 release our seahorse friends into
 their new habitat. Now, I expect
 this to be quite beautiful. Go
 ahead, Victor, when you're ready.

Victor releases the seahorses -- and it is beautiful. The seahorses slowly drift down through the tank.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
(awestruck)
Wow, look at that.

The largest seahorse -- the FATHER -- quickly maneuvers his way down to the coral and vegetation and hides.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
That is one shy fish.
(to Victor)
We're ready?

Victor nods.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Well this is moving right along! It seems we're ready for the octopus now.

Victor opens the bottom of the bag, splitting it, and the octopus instantly spreads itself out, tracing the contours of the glass, feeling the coral and seaweed.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Look at that. Ravishing. What a stunning creature.
(amused)
He must have something like a brain in that giant balloon of his, right?

Bailey glances at Stenton for an answer, but Stenton just smiles slightly, his focus on the tank.

Victor now directs an ASSISTANT who's manning a FORKLIFT with a huge LUCITE BOX -- which holds the SHARK.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Now we have Victor and his helper bringing the real attraction.

From the top of the ladder, Victor arranges the lucite box on the surface of the water. The shark is absolutely still. The octopus below seems oblivious to the shark's presence.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Well, look at that.

Victor bring a BUCKET up the ladder.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
As you can see now, Victor is dropping some of our shark's favorite food into the tank.

Victor pours SIX LARGE TUNA into the tank.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
He's been feeding the shark all day, so it should be well-satisfied already. But these tuna will tide him over, in case he's still hungry.

The tuna shoot across the tank in diagonals, chasing the octopus and seahorses into the coral and fronds at the bottom of the aquarium.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
(chuckles)
Ah, look at them go.

Bailey smiles, taking in the peaceful, beautiful scene.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Well, this is plain gorgeous. A peaceable kingdom. Seems almost a shame to change it in any way.

Mae glances at Bailey, surprised at what he's said. Bailey exchanges a quick look with Stenton.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
But...we're striving here for a more holistic look at this world. And that means including all of the inhabitants of this ecosystem.

Victor struggles to open the container's bottom hatch. The shark -- still completely still, not thrashing -- begins to slide down the lucite ramp.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Now, for the last piece of this underwater family. When the shark is released, we'll get, for the first time in history, a look at how life at the bottom of the trench really looks, and how creatures like this cohabitate. We ready?

Bailey glances at Stenton, who nods brusquely.

Victor releases the shark --

-- who with lightning speed, darts downwards and devours a tuna! And then another. And another. And another.

Mae glances to the bottom of the tank, and can't see the octopus and seahorses, who're hiding in the coral.

The shark circles the tank, eating the final remaining tuna.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
(a flash of recognition)
Oh, no...

The shark now has its nose deep in the coral, attacking it with brutal force! The coral splits open and the shark plunges --

-- coming out with the octopus, which it drags into the open area of the tank...

...and begins to tear it apart...

BAILEY (CONT'D)
(hushed)
Oh, god.

...tentacle by tentacle, until it's a shredded mass of white matter.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
(horrificed whisper)
Oh, no. Oh, no...

And then the octopus is completely gone.

But the shark isn't finished. It goes back into the coral, machine-like, still hungry, always hungry.

Mae, with all her viewers, looks over to see --

-- Bailey WHIMPER, his hands against his eyes.

Above the tank, Victor looks tentative, tries to catch Stenton's eyes, to see if there's anything they should do. But Stenton just stares at the shark like a proud parent.

And then Mae watches in horror as --

-- the shark rips apart the remaining coral and goes after every single seahorse.

LATER

The tank is now completely empty -- except for the shark.

TY (O.S.)
Well, that was about what I
imagined would happen.

Ty shakes Stenton's hand, then Bailey's hand, then takes Mae's hand. Mae's eyes WIDEN, glimpsing down at her hand. Ty pulls away and leaves.

BAILEY
(whispers)
I better head out, too.

Bailey turns, dazed, and walks away.

Mae turns her attention to the shark, still circling, still ravenous. Alone in its tank.

Stenton watches in silence next to Mae. Finally, he says:

STENTON
Until next time.

Stenton nods to Mae, then the watchers, then leaves. Mae glances at her wrist: 100 million viewers.

INT. THE CIRCLE - BATHROOM - DAY

Mae sits in the stall. Lens trained on the door. She reaches down and raises something to her face, just above the lens -- a NOTE. She begins to read the note to herself.

TY (V.O.)
Mae, this is insane. We need to
talk.

INT. THE CIRCLE - UNDERGROUND ROOM - DAY

Mae walks into the underground room to find Ty waiting for her, next to the red box. He moves towards her.

MAE
No, stay there.

Ty stops.

TY
I'm not dangerous.

MAE
I don't really know anything about
you. What do you want from me?

TY

You have great influence here, Mae.
You have to help. You're the only
one who can slow all this down.

MAE

Slow what down? The company you
created?

TY

I didn't create all this. I was a
24 year old who built a clever
operating system. This --

Ty points to the red box.

TY (CONT'D)

-- is not my idea.

MAE

I'm leaving.

(turns to go)

And I don't see why you just don't
leave, too. Leave everything. If
you don't believe in all this, then
leave. Go to the woods.

TY

That didn't work for Mercer, did
it?

Mae stops in her tracks.

MAE

Fuck you.

TY

Sorry. But he's why I contacted you
now. There are going to be more
Mercers -- people who want no part
of the Circle. There used to be the
option of opting out. But now
that's over.

(beat)

Completion is the end. It's a
totalitarian nightmare.

MAE

And it's my fault?

TY

No, not at all. But you're now the
ambassador. You're the face of it.

(MORE)

TY (CONT'D)

The benign, friendly face of it all.

(off Mae)

Mae, c'mon. 90 percent of the world's searches go through the Circle. We have no serious competitors.

(beat)

How can anyone rise up against the Circle if they control all the information and access to it?

MAE

But there's a thousand protections to prevent all of this. It's not possible. I mean, governments will make sure --

TY

Governments who are transparent? Legislators who owe their reputations to the Circle? Who could be ruined the moment they speak out?

(beat)

This Demoxie, whatever it is, good god. Under the guise of having every voice heard, you create mob rule.

(off Mae)

It's brilliant, Mae. I mean, you're brilliant. You're what Stenton and Bailey have been hoping for from the start.

MAE

But Bailey --

TY

Bailey believes that life will be better, will be perfect, when everyone has unfettered access to everyone and everything they know. That this is what the world's been waiting for, the moment when every soul is connected. This is like his rapture, Mae!

(beat)

Knowledge is property and no one can own it. Infocommunism. And he's entitled to that opinion. But paired with ruthless capitalistic ambition...

MAE

So it's Stenton?

TY

Stenton monetized our utopia. He's the one who saw the connection between our work and politics.

MAE

And that's so bad? If everyone has equal access to services, to information, we finally have a chance at equality.

TY

So you think everyone should be tracked, should be watched?

MAE

I think everything and everyone should be seen. And to be seen, we need to be watched. The two go hand in hand.

TY

But who wants to be watched all the time?

Mae hesitates, replies honestly:

MAE

I do. I want to be seen. I want proof I existed.

TY

Mae...

MAE

We all know we die. We all know the world is too big for us to be significant. So all we have is the hope of being seen, or heard, even for a moment.

TY

Mae, please...

MAE

What do you want from me?

TY

When you have the maximum amount of viewers, I want you to read this statement.

Ty hands Mae a piece of PAPER with the message:

THE RIGHTS OF HUMANS IN A DIGITAL AGE

Mae scans it, catching a couple passages like:

NOT EVERY HUMAN ACTIVITY CAN BE MEASURED

WE MUST ALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO ANONYMITY

And at the bottom of the page, written in red ink:

WE MUST ALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO DISAPPEAR

Mae looks up at Ty, barely hiding her shock.

MAE

You want me to read all this to the watchers?

TY

Yes.

MAE

And then what?

TY

I have a series of steps that we can take together that can begin to take all this apart.

(beat)

I'm the only one who can do it, but I need your help.

MAE

And then what?

Ty takes Mae's hands, looks deep into her eyes.

TY

(achingly sincere)

Then you and I go somewhere. I have so many ideas. We'll vanish. We can hike through Tibet. We can bike through the Mongolian steppe. We can sail around the world in a boat we built ourselves.

Mae nods, fully grasping Ty's epic, romantic plan.

MAE

Are you sure we're not being heard?

TY
Of course not.

Mae nods.

MAE
Okay, good. I see everything
clearly now.

INT. THE CIRCLE - STAIRS - DAY

Mae hustles up the steps.

EXT. THE CIRCLE - LAWN - DAY

Mae crosses the lawn, glancing at CIRCLERS eating in the grass, tossing frisbees, reading tablets. Some of them glance up at Mae and wave to her.

INT. THE CIRCLE - HALLWAY - DAY

Mae strides down a familiar wood-lined hallway.

INT. THE CIRCLE - OCHRE LIBRARY - MOMENTS LATER

Mae walks into the library and sees...

...Bailey and Stenton sitting across from each other. They both look up at Mae, who reaches into her pocket --

-- and reveals the paper given to her by Ty.

CUT TO BLACK.

The sound of water LAPPING. And then electronic BEEPS.

FADE IN:

INT. THE CIRCLE - CLINIC - PRIVATE ROOM - DAY

A HIGH-DEFINITION IMAGE OF: The BAY where Mae kayaks. We CUT to another angle. And another. And another.

MAE (O.S.)
Isn't it beautiful?

Mae, holding a TABLET that displays the image of the bay, sits next to...

...Annie -- who is in a COMA.

Annie lies in bed with a BREATHING TUBE coming out of her mouth. An EKG MACHINE is next to her -- as well as a DIGITAL SCREEN with a growing list of supportive MESSAGES.

MAE (CONT'D)
(off the tablet)
It's so calm out there. So quiet.
If you close your eyes, you can
feel like you're the only person
alive.

Mae stares at Annie. Annie's face is blank. Reveals nothing. Mae lowers the tablet. She glances over at --

-- another MONITOR. Periodically, there are BURSTS OF COLOR. It is a real-time picture of Annie's brain activity.

MAE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
What are you thinking?

Mae reaches out and touches Annie's forehead.

MAE (CONT'D)
What's going on in that head of
yours, Annie?
(An idea occurs)
We need to know. We deserve to. All
of us.

Mae leans down to Annie's ear...

MAE (CONT'D)
(whispers)
You can't hide.

...and smiles.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END