

ZOE

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FADE IN:

INT. RELATIONIST LAB, MACHINE EVALUATION ROOM - DAY

A young woman reclines in a comfortable chair. This is ZOE - late 20's Einstein brains, pretty but approachable. She's dressed in casual - but hip - business attire. She is hooked up to an array of biometric monitors - heart rate, pupil dilation, hormone levels, etc.

A large monitor in the room shows a young man observing Zoe. This is COLE - 30ish with a brightness and vulnerability to his pleasing features. Jeans and an untucked button-down.

In Zoe's room there is a large black CUBE with a smooth finish. A computer voice - female with an elegant English accent comes from speakers. This is THE MACHINE.

MACHINE

If your dog was ill, and had to
have its front legs removed to
survive, would you have the surgery
or have the dog put down?

Zoe stares back. She hears a small beep. On one of the monitors a timer starts, tracking her response time.

ZOE

I'd have the surgery.

A gentle chime notes her answer has been processed.

MACHINE

What are the things that would
attract you to a potential partner?

Zoe looks to the monitor at Cole, a beat longer than a casual glance.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - SAME MOMENT

Cole stares into his monitor, watching Zoe. We see in his room there are several other men and women watching Zoe and taking notes. The room is ordinary, present day.

The rest of the scene will cut back and forth between the rooms. Zoe answers:

ZOE

The things he loves.
(beat)
The things he wants to be.

Again the chime.

MACHINE

Would you help someone you love end
their life if that was their
choice?

Beep, the timer goes again. Zoe stares at Cole.

COLE

You okay, Zoe?

ZOE

Yeah, sorry it just feels funny to
be doing this after working next to
you for so long.

COLE

We can turn off the monitor if
you'd be more comfortable.

ZOE

No, it's fine. I guess my answer
is I'm not sure.

Cole nods. The Machine chimes.

MACHINE

What do you want your partner to
see in you?

Zoe thinks. Glances again to Cole. The other people in
Cole's room lean in. The timer runs as we FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. THE RELATIONIST LAB - EARLY MORNING (FLASHBACK)

Zoe walks through the offices of the Relationist Lab. The
decor is corporate, a typical office. No one is in yet.

INT. RELATIONIST LAB, MACHINE AREA - SUNRISE (FLASHBACK)

The room is dark. Zoe, in silhouette walks in. She goes to
the receptionist's desk and clicks a remote. The flat screen
turns on and a video loop starts. It plays while Zoe
prepares the office for the day.

VOICE OVER

We're all searching... to find
something real... Something
right...

More happy couples - a younger couple at a vineyard tasting.

VOICE OVER (CONT'D)

We all want the feeling of
forever... to find the one...

We see an attractive couple. The woman speaks-

WOMAN

I was shy. I never went out. The
consultants at the Relationist Lab
had a real solution.

VOICE OVER

We can help you find your match...
or maybe you've already found what
you're looking for, but don't know
it.

Gauzy images of different couples - all ages, races, etc.

MAN

(testimonial to camera)

We scored a 66 on the Machine.
And that was what clinched it.

Zoe passes through the room again, pauses to see the video.

VOICE OVER

And sometimes all it takes is a
little help...

Over another couple walking in silhouette at sundown-

VOICE OVER (CONT'D)

The Relationist Lab's family of
products improves lives by building
better relationships. Come in and
find your forever today.

A slogan fades up, "The future isn't inside our computers.
It's inside you." Zoe stares in at the screen.

INT. RELATIONIST LAB, MAIN ATRIUM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Cole, the man we saw earlier walks in. The atrium is
impressive but from the present time period. In one of the
monitors the same video plays now showing a graphic with the
lab's products - "Pharmaceuticals", "The Machine", and
"Synthetic Companions."

INT. SYNTHETICS DEPARTMENT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A single hand trips along on a keyboard playing a cool upbeat tempo. Cole stares at several scrolling graphs. A middle aged Asian man, HIDEO takes notes on the proceedings.

A second hand joins the first - but this one is different - this one is robotic. The two hands play together on a complex piece. We see the hands belong to ASH, a human-looking robot partially covered in synthetic skin. He looks about 25, with benign good looks.

The music is played with virtuosity but is mechanical. Ash stares out blankly with no awareness. Cole smiles at Hideo.

COLE

He's ready for more.

INT. RELATIONIST LAB ATRIUM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Zoe leads a young couple through the building on a tour.

ZOE

We're the fastest growing start-up in the human relationship market. We've got three divisions, the Machine, Pharmaceuticals, and our newest venture - synthetic companions. I'm the chief operating officer of the lab and run the Machine division.

They head down a hallway toward the lab.

ZOE (CONT'D)

At the Machine we evaluate singles, or couples. For singles we comb our database to find your best match.

The WOMAN in the couple walks next to Zoe. She's into it.

ZOE (CONT'D)

The Machine comes up with a number - 40%, 60% - the probability of two people staying together in a happy, lasting relationship. Perfect for couples like you wondering if they should take the next step.

WOMAN

One of our friends did it. They scored a 52.

Zoe smiles, they continue to walk.

ZOE

We've got a documented accuracy rate in the upper 90s. But we like to say that the future isn't inside our computers, it's inside you.

Zoe turns to them.

ZOE (CONT'D)

We have a Machine opening as early as tomorrow afternoon.

The Woman looks to the man she's with, she wants to do it.

INT. GYM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Zoe, on her own, walks on a treadmill.

INT. ZOE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Sparse and tasteful, exercise equipment in the corners, everything feels new and cool. Zoe opens the fridge, it's almost entirely empty. She thinks better of having anything anyway. Looks at her watch.

INT. LOCAL BAR - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Zoe walks in. At the back of the bar is a pub quiz trivia contest going on. Teams of dweeby young adults dot the bar.

QUIZ MASTER

And the bonus - in what year did Henry VIII become King of England?

Zoe takes it all in.

HANDSOME DWEEB

Hey, you wanna join us?

Zoe looks up. It's someone from the team closest to her.

HANDSOME DWEEB (CONT'D)

We're in 3rd place.

Zoe smiles, heads to their table.

INT. COLE'S HOUSE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Cole enters. It's messy. Dust on the coffee tables. Some cool pieces but they haven't been well maintained. There are disk drives and computer equipment cluttering the space.

He slips out a vinyl record from a huge, cluttered collection and puts it on his "floating" vertical turntable. A steel string Mississippi John Hurt tune starts playing.

POP of a wine cork. WHOOSH of the freezer door opening. Cole pulls out a frozen dinner. BEEP of microwave buttons.

Cole searches through his kitchen for something - he starts opening cabinets - all packed with disk drives and cables.

He finally finds what he's looking for - a glass.

INT. COLE'S HOME WORKSHOP - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Monitors and computers cram the space. Cole sits at a computer working - drinking wine, nibbling at veggie dumplings. His email chimes.

We see many unread emails each with a similar subject line - "Would you like to meet User NoDrama33 - she has a Machine compatibility score of 70% with you." Other emails note different users with high scores as well 71%, 74%, 82%.

Cole stares at his inbox, the long string of "Would you like to meet" emails.

He hesitates, then he closes the application and starts working.

INT. ZOE'S APARTMENT - SUNRISE (FLASHBACK)

Zoe's bed is already made. An outfit gets tossed onto the bed, then another - it's Zoe's style - young, casual, hip.

INT. COLE'S HOUSE - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

Cole, dressed for work, takes the dumpling tray he left out the night before and tosses it in the trash.

INT. RELATIONIST LAB, MACHINE ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Zoe watches as two assistants hook up the machine biometric gauges to the Man she was giving a tour to yesterday.

Across the hall in another room Zoe sees the Woman he came in with, also being hooked up. The Woman looks nervous. Zoe steps in, gives her a comforting look.

ZOE
Just answer honestly. That's all
you have to do.

The woman looks back, thankfully.

INT. RELATIONIST LAB, ZOE'S OFFICE - EVENING (FLASHBACK)

Zoe works in her office. It feels empty. She gets up, goes to her small fridge and pulls out 2 energy drinks.

INT. THE RELATIONIST LAB, AI AREA - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Zoe pokes her head in the lab. Cole is there working on ASH, alone now. She holds up the drinks.

ZOE
Want some caffeine?

Cole smiles, happy to see her.

COLE
Perfect timing. Thanks.

He pops the can. Zoe sits down heavily. Stares at Ash.

ZOE
You've made a lot of progress.

Cole smiles.

COLE
His bio systems for processing food
are already up. He'll be ready for
the Tech Summit. If not sooner.

She looks at the robot, staring at nothing.

ZOE
Can I talk to him?

Cole gives her a look.

COLE
He's not there yet.

ZOE

I just wondered if he'd see the world like you do. Since you designed him.

He gives her a look, avoiding the question.

ZOE (CONT'D)

Sorry, I guess something like that is a personal thing.

He stares at her, thinks about it. Then relents.

COLE

Come here.

She goes and stands near Ash.

COLE (CONT'D)

I've been giving him something I call emotional packets. Real memories of emotional events.

She stares at Ash. Cole points to his face.

COLE (CONT'D)

Pay attention to the synthetic facial muscles, his body language, vocal tone. With emotion we start with the physical and build inward.

Cole is cool. Zoe feels it, and he likes the late night attention. She stares at Ash. Nothing. She's dubious.

COLE (CONT'D)

Give it a second.

Slowly Ash starts animating. His blank features take on an expression of deep distress, emotional pain. Zoe stares in.

ASH

Will it be different going forward...

Ash reacts to something we can't hear - a memory. He's hearing bad news-

ASH (CONT'D)

Will she cheat again...

Another reaction, a painful one.

ASH (CONT'D)
 Can I change the number... is there
 a way to make it higher...

He's agitated, voice tense, his face wears the expression of a man demolished, someone discovering the damage to his relationship is irreversible. Zoe watches raptly. Cole looks on.

ASH (CONT'D)
 Is it ever going to get any
 better... Is there any reason to
 have any hope...

Zoe turns to Cole, she can see that he's affected by watching Ash. By the expression on his face she (and we) suspect this is a memory from Cole.

ASH (CONT'D)
 (pained)
 Will I hate her...
 (demolished)
 Do I-
 (he almost can't say it)
 Do I hate her now?

Zoe watches Cole, penning up his emotions.

ASH (CONT'D)
 Will I ever- will I get beyond
 this...?

Cole hits a button on the computer. Ash stops. Slowly Ash goes back to how he was - the emotion drains from his face. His eyes stare out blankly.

For a moment Zoe doesn't know what to say. She's quiet-

ZOE
 Who was he talking to?

Cole gathers himself, watching the memory was difficult.

COLE
 That was a conversation I had with
 the Machine. Emma and I scored
 low. And never recovered from it.

She stares at him, a little blown away by what he's created - so human and real - and what he's exposed of himself.

COLE (CONT'D)
 The memory builds his emotional
 infrastructure.
 (MORE)

COLE (CONT'D)
Eventually we'll erase the memory,
but the infrastructure remains.

ZOE
I'm sorry, Cole... I didn't realize-

COLE
It's just numbers. Equations
designed to look like real
emotions.

Cole tries to blow it off, but Zoe can see that he's been
knocked back a bit. She stares at Ash.

ZOE
He's amazing.
(beat)
No one will have to be alone
anymore. Or feel that kind of
pain.

Cole looks at Zoe, it's clear that he's shown her something
that motivates his work. She gets it. They're interrupted
by a text alert. He sees it's Emma, smiles ironically.

COLE
Sorry. Gotta go.

He goes for his coat, starts putting it on. She stares him,
he's stoic, strong.

ZOE
Cole?

He turns back before he leaves. She looks to him with
sympathy. He smiles at her, an unspoken thank you.

COLE
See you tomorrow.

Zoe watches him go. She stares at Ash, then walks out leaving
her Red Bull can unopened and untouched.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Zoe walks out of lab into the parking lot and sees a lone
car. A woman is sitting against it, staring at the ground.

As Zoe approaches she sees it's the woman from the first
couple she met that morning. She's been crying.

ZOE
Can I help you?

WOMAN

Sorry. I just didn't know where to go.

She looks up at Zoe.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

The Machine gave us 8%.

(beat)

It's not what we were expecting.

The woman is embarrassed, even ashamed.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

He left. Maybe he needs some time.

ZOE

I'm sorry.

It's awkward. Zoe doesn't know her, but she's in pain.

ZOE (CONT'D)

Look, it's hard, but you have to realize it's just a probability. You'd be surprised how many people come in here and score even lower than you.

The woman isn't comforted.

WOMAN

Is it ever wrong?

ZOE

There's always a small margin of error.

WOMAN

But is it ever wrong?

She pauses. The woman can see the answer in Zoe's face: No.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Is there someone special in your life?

Zoe hesitates.

ZOE

Kind of.

WOMAN

Have you done the Machine?

She hesitates, a little sheepish.

ZOE

No.

The woman looks at her enviously, wishing she could give back her Machine experience. The two of them are still in the silence of the empty parking lot.

INT. EMMA'S HOUSE - EVENING (FLASHBACK)

Cole bends down and kisses a small boy, CALEB, his son. He stares down at him, tucks him in, soaking up the moment.

INT. EMMA'S HOUSE, STUDIO - LATER (FLASHBACK)

Cole drinks a glass of wine while he looks around the studio at the eclectic and fantastical works. EMMA, Cole's ex-wife sits on a funky couch, drinking wine. She is about his age, arty and cool.

COLE

How was the opening?

EMMA

Terrible. No press. Two critics, and the caterer was late.

He smiles at her.

COLE

I guess it's true that Art is pain
Emma.

She laughs. He stops. He sees something.

COLE (CONT'D)

Where did you find this?

We see what he sees - what looks like a woman asleep, on her side. Emma walks over.

EMMA

It was in the basement. I figured
it was yours. I was going to use
it in an installation.

In the light we can see that the woman is fake, although she is gently breathing.

COLE

I designed this during our divorce.
For people who didn't want to sleep
alone.

The sleeping woman brings back memories. He touches it.

COLE (CONT'D)

It still has body warmth. It had
limited functionality - variable
breathing depth, a few simple
movements.

Emma stares at it - the woman is beautiful but clearly fake.

EMMA

It's a little spooky.

COLE

So is sleeping alone.

She gives him a smile.

EMMA

Thanks for picking me up from the
gallery. I know it's late.

He gives her a look.

COLE

I could stay.

It's an offer. It's clear there's history between them and
if he stays it wouldn't be the first time. She hesitates-

EMMA

(gentle)

I started seeing someone Cole.

The wind goes out of his sails a bit.

COLE

I have to be in early anyway.

He stands up, looks down at the sleeping woman, upset.

EMMA

Maybe you should take some time
away from work. Find someone.

COLE

We have the Tech Summit coming.
The Board is expecting Department
heads to present their work.

She stares down at the sleeping woman.

EMMA
Look, Cole...

She can see he's out of sorts, wants to help.

EMMA (CONT'D)
There are some things you can't fix
in a lab.

He stares back, she meant it kindly but she's pissed him off.

COLE
I'll see you next week.

INT. SYNTHETICS LAB - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

Zoe enters the room, dressed in casual clothes, it's empty - even the spot where Ash normally is. She passes a laptop and notices the email window is open. It's Cole's. She sees the string of "Would you like to meet..." emails from The Machine about potential partners he would have high compatibility with. She stares in, bothered by how many emails there are-

ASH (O.S.)
Hello Zoe.

She turns around and sees Ash standing with a cup of coffee. He's alert, aware, slightly stiffer and more affected than a human being, but absolutely remarkable.

ASH (CONT'D)
I got you some coffee.

ZOE
(amazed)
I don't drink coffee.

Ash smiles.

ASH
Then we have something in common.

ZOE
When did you...?

ASH
I came online early this morning.
I've been doing some reading.

Ash points to a stack of books. Zoe smiles. Ash reaches out and touches Zoe's face affectionately.

ASH (CONT'D)
Soft. Softer than mine.

Zoe stiffens a bit, then puts his hand down.

ASH (CONT'D)
I saw Cole. He wants to start my
socialization immediately, at your
team building event.

Zoe stares back, the words sound funny in Ash's mouth.

ASH (CONT'D)
I understand it defines roles and
enhances social relationships.

INT. ABSTRACT SPACE - AFTERNOON (FLASHBACK)

A collage of slow-motion images - Cole, wearing a helmet, stretching to reach something; Ash doing the same; workers from the lab watching something in the air, cheering encouragement; Cole and Ash's hands reaching to each other.

We reveal Cole and Ash are in the woods, at a corporate team-building event on a ropes course. Cole and Ash are high in the air, straining to get across a span by working together.

WHOOSH - a pulley system catches and Ash dangles from the ropes, hanging high in the air. Co-workers smile and laugh.

Zoe looks up at both of them, enjoying the moment.

EXT. ROPES COURSE, PICNIC AREA - EVENING (FLASHBACK)

Upbeat music plays. It's relaxation time. Zoe dances with a good-looking ropes course guide. He's attracted to her, flirting. The song ends. Zoe excuses herself and starts to walk off while the next song starts up.

As she leaves the dance floor, she looks off to the side and sees Cole teaching Ash some simple dance moves. Zoe stares in - the sight of the two men - one real, one synthetic, one graceful and one awkward is somehow lonely and poignant.

She stares in at Cole, taken with him.

INT. CORPORATE BUS - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Zoe and Cole sit together on the bus home, both tired.

ZOE
I'd like to get evaluated. By the
Machine.

He turns to her. She looks down.

ZOE (CONT'D)
I just feel like it's time for me.
To see who I'd be a successful
match with.

Cole stares back at her with an encouraging smile. The two
sit together quietly.

INT. MACHINE EVALUATION ROOM - DAY (BACK TO PRESENT)

As in the opening, Zoe sits, connected to various monitors
while the Machine asks questions. Cole, Hideo and some other
workers are in a neighboring room observing.

MACHINE
What do you want your partner to
see in you?

Zoe pauses, stares at Cole, like she's talking to him.

ZOE
I want him to look at me and see
things no one else does.

Hideo looks at Cole, noting the answer.

MACHINE
What was your last relationship
like?

Zoe thinks. Cole, interested, focuses in on her.

ZOE
He was a loner, not an obvious
choice. He needed to let himself
be loved. We tried. It failed.

She stares at Cole on that line.

MACHINE
Would you donate a kidney to save a
friend's life if you knew it could
shorten your life span?

ZOE
Yes.

MACHINE

What is something you wouldn't want
your partner to know about you?

Zoe stops, hesitating. Cole leans in, interested. The timer runs. Zoe wrestles with divulging something-

ZOE

It's going to sound... like
nothing. But I used to be...
heavy. Really heavy.

(beat)

For a woman... it was the kind of
heavy that makes you invisible.

She turns away, stares at the Machine. Zoe's normally confident veneer is pierced. She's vulnerable. Cole looks down. Somehow this feels like a of a violation.

ZOE (CONT'D)

I'm still- I have trouble with food-
I guess I'm still insecure about
that.

She stares at Cole in the monitor, raw and vulnerable.

ZOE (CONT'D)

I would like it if he didn't know
that.

Cole looks at Zoe on the monitor, moved.

INT. MACHINE EVALUATION ROOM - LATER

Hideo quietly removes the monitors from Zoe.

HIDEO

You okay, Zoe?

She smiles, spent by the procedure.

ZOE

Easier to be on the other side.

INT. RELATIONIST LAB, SYNTHETICS DEPARTMENT - EVENING

Cole walks into the Synthetics Department, energy drinks in hand but no one's there.

INT. MACHINE DATA CENTER - NIGHT

Zoe walks through dozens and dozens of processors and banks of computers. She turns to the main console and starts typing.

She brings up her data, there is a thumbnail of her.

She checks behind her to see if anyone else is in the big room. She turns back to the monitor and does a search, eventually finding Cole's data. We see his thumbnail.

ZOE
(quiet)
Match our compatibility.

The monitor flashes, "One moment please."

She leans in nervously, with anticipation.

Eventually a graphic: "Chances for a successful relationship are 0%."

A zero percent chance of her being happy with Cole.

She stares at the number it's like a punch in the gut.

ZOE (CONT'D)
Are you using my results from
today?

The monitor flashes: "Yes." Zoe gets more upset.

ZOE (CONT'D)
Is there a reason the percentage is
so low - is it, infidelity, money
issues, something else?

The Machine shows a graphic to show that it is calculating. Then text comes up.

MACHINE
There is a fundamental
incompatibility.

Zoe stares in at the words, hope fading from her body. Slowly, she deletes the results.

INT. RELATIONIST LAB, MAIN ATRIUM - NIGHT

Cole walks through the main atrium, energy drinks in his hand. As he goes he sees Zoe outside the building, staring into the empty parking lot.

He goes out to her.

COLE

Zoe.

She doesn't turn around. He stands next to her.

COLE (CONT'D)

I looked for you in the lab.

He notices Zoe is out of sorts.

COLE (CONT'D)

What's the matter?

He can see she's upset. He puts a comforting hand on her shoulder. Somehow that makes it worse.

COLE (CONT'D)

Was it the evaluation? That shakes people up sometimes.

She stares at him.

COLE (CONT'D)

Did you - were you in the data room?

She pulls herself together. She stares at the spot where she tried to comfort the woman who scored 8% on the Machine.

ZOE

No. I'm just- it's nothing.

COLE

You sure?

She stares at him, at a loss. He looks at her with concern.

COLE (CONT'D)

You want to come back and talk?

She quickly turns and goes, leaving Cole alone. He looks after her, confused, worried.

We focus on Zoe's face as she leaves - frustrated, sad, upset...

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

An average looking couple slow dance in their living room. The guy suddenly dips the girl who laughs, their faces filled with love.

Slowly we pull back through a large plate window in the living room and discover that there is a team of researchers watching the couple. The set up becomes clear - the "living room" is a research space in The Relationist Lab building and it's being observed through a one way mirror.

Zoe brings Ash into the room.

ASH
What is this?

She nods to the couple.

ZOE
It's part of a clinical trial for a new drug. Benzomorphodone. It'll be marketed as Benycin.

ASH
What does it cure?

She turns to him.

ZOE
Doesn't "cure" anything.

She turns to the couple.

ZOE (CONT'D)
When you take it with someone else it triggers the exact sequence of hormones and neurotransmitters that fire when you fall in love. Not euphoria or mood shifter like what's out there now.

She looks at the blissful couple behind the glass.

ZOE (CONT'D)
That couple has been married for 15 years. But Benycin lets them access something no one gets to feel more than once - falling in love for the first time.
(beat)
That moment is in each pill.

ASH
I've read that most psychologists feel love has three components - intimacy, passion, and commitment.

He turns to her.

ASH (CONT'D)
Would you take the drug with me?

She hesitates.

ASH (CONT'D)
I would like us to be a couple.

Zoe gathers her thoughts.

ZOE
Ash, what you're feeling is a
program. Its zeros and ones.
Machines don't really feel the way
people do.

Ash stares in at the couple, disappointed. Zoe notices.

ZOE (CONT'D)
I think maybe your socialization
shouldn't just be in a lab, Ash.

INT. BOT CLUB BAR - NIGHT

Ash and Zoe slow dance in the club. We reveal Cole, Hideo,
and a few other co-workers watching. Hideo smiles.

HIDEO
Looks like his first happy hour is
a success.

Cole nods, taking notes on his iPad.

On the dance floor Ash catches Zoe glancing at Cole. The
music stops. Another female Co-worker walks up to dance next
with Ash. The music starts again. Zoe stands on the dance
floor watching Cole talk to Hideo. Ash watches her.

Couples dance all around her to the moody song. She screws
up her courage and walks up to him. A big moment for her.

ZOE
I'm glad you came tonight. I was
hoping just the two of us could
grab a drink downstairs.

COLE
What's downstairs?

INT. THE UNCANNY VALLEY - NIGHT

Zoe and Cole step down concrete steps into a big, darkened space. Industrial design and distressed decor give the feeling of timeless decay, lit by swirling shafts of psychedelic light.

Pairs of disembodied female robotic legs topped by serving trays saunter around carrying drinks. Men taxi-dance with obviously synthetic female robots. There is a bar where robot bartenders serve drinks.

COLE

Wow.

ZOE

When we expanded into synthetics this place came up during my research.

COLE

I've heard a little about these lower-grade independent shops.

ZOE

You want to see something really interesting?

Zoe leads him to an area of the floor bathed in a soft red light. Velvet couches and chairs are filled with Female Sex Dolls, and a few male ones.

ZOE (CONT'D)

It's part of the club. A robo-brothel. Totally legal. Because you're not paying to be with another person.

Cole stares in at the artificial sex workers - male and female, it's a weird sight.

She points to a very attractive sex doll - JEWELS - synthetic looking with an exaggerated figure. Men hover around her.

ZOE (CONT'D)

That's Jewels. She has the most advanced operating system.

Cole takes it in - most creepy of all is the stock of deactivated sex dolls hanging like lifeless works of art. There's something ugly about the enhanced, fake bodies suspended and still.

Cole stares in-

DESIGNER (O.S.)

We can activate one for you if you like.

Cole and Zoe turn and see the DESIGNER, a surprisingly young, buttoned-up Korean man in a motorized wheel chair.

COLE

Sorry?

DESIGNER

Jewels is booked. But any of them will talk to you how you want... do to you what you want...

He radiates intelligence rather than sleaze. Cole looks off again to Jewels.

DESIGNER (CONT'D)

They'll take you places you've never been.

Cole looks him over. It's clear Cole isn't comfortable here. He stares at Jewels sympathetically.

COLE

(contemptuous)

Does she know what you're doing to her?

The Designer smiles, Cole's question was a barely concealed insult.

DESIGNER

"Her."

COLE

Sorry. It's your business we should just go.

Cole and Zoe start to leave-

DESIGNER

She knows. Down there.

They stop. The Designer points down a dark hall. Standing there in silhouette, statue still, is the figure of one of the sex dolls. Even in the silhouette we can see she's damaged goods - something is wrong with her face, her posture.

DESIGNER (CONT'D)

That one is waiting to be
deactivated. It's not afraid. Or
worried. Or anything else.

He turns back to Cole.

DESIGNER (CONT'D)

And you can still be with it right
now, in the moments before it's
destroyed. If that's your thing.

Confident smile.

DESIGNER (CONT'D)

Because there is no "her."

Cole and Zoe stares at the figure, as if she senses being
observed, she turns her head toward them. There is something
desolate and disturbing in the stillness of the misshapen
silhouette.

Zoe puts her hand on Cole's shoulder.

ZOE

Let's go.

INT. UNCANNY VALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

Cole and Zoe both head out, both a bit shaken by what they
saw.

ZOE

Cole wait.

He stops.

ZOE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, that's not why I brought
you down here-

COLE

I know. It's okay-

They're near the dancing area now, the music is loud. All
around are people dancing with robots, having a great time.
Zoe stares at them, then up Cole, she leans close because the
music is loud.

ZOE

The other day, after the Machine
evaluation. I did something.

(MORE)

ZOE (CONT'D)

(beat)

I ran a match with you and me.

COLE

Zoe-

ZOE

It was zero. I ran it more than once, but it kept coming up as zero. Every time.

He stares at her, sympathetic. She stares at him. Now the hard part.

ZOE (CONT'D)

I thought - it doesn't make any sense. Because of... how I feel.

She looks up to him hopefully.

ZOE (CONT'D)

I just- I wonder all the time if you think about me?

He struggles for words.

COLE

Zoe, it's not like that...

ZOE

I just thought... you might feel it too...

He looks at her with an odd expression - pity. She starts to feel ashamed. Cole sees it.

He grabs her hand.

COLE

I need to show you something.

EXT. CAB - NIGHT

It's now raining. Zoe and Cole get out of a cab in front of a small apartment building.

ZOE

Why are you bringing me home?

He walks up to the front door and takes out keys. Zoe looks surprised, weirded out.

ZOE (CONT'D)
You have keys to my apartment?

INT. ZOE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Zoe and Cole enter. Cole walks in and boots up Zoe's computer. The rain comes down outside. Zoe is uncomfortable, agitated that Cole can get inside her space.

ZOE
What is this Cole?

He turns to her, doing his best to be calm.

COLE
Please. You need to trust me for a minute.
(beat)
Do a search for yourself. News items, anything.

ZOE
What are you talking about?

COLE
It's okay, Zoe. Go ahead.

She sits down and types her name, she studies the pages that comes up.

COLE (CONT'D)
None of those hits are for you. Nothing about being accepted so early to college, no press release about being hired to run the Machine Division at the lab.

She scrolls down. She turns to him.

ZOE
Why do you have keys to my apartment?

Cole proceeds with caution, as if he has some heavy news.

COLE
The apartment belongs to the lab, rented by me, a few months ago.

ZOE
What are you talking about?

COLE

Don't you wonder why your fridge is empty? Why everything in here is new?

She looks around, starting to feel very uneasy.

COLE (CONT'D)

This isn't easy to say Zoe. You don't oversee the Synthetics lab...

She stares at him.

COLE (CONT'D)

... you're a creation of it.

She looks at him as if she hasn't understood the words.

COLE (CONT'D)

You scored a zero with me because the Machine saw you were synthetic.

She stares back uncomprehending.

COLE (CONT'D)

It was a test. A way to see how people would connect to you - to see how Ash would react to you. To see if anyone could tell.

She stares at him, gathering her thoughts, becoming emotional.

ZOE

Why are you doing this Cole? Why would you say this to me?

He reaches out to her sympathetically.

COLE

It's a program Zoe, different from what humans feel. Your memories, who you're drawn to, it's all in your design.

He walks up to her, she backs away, freaked out.

COLE (CONT'D)

Look in the mirror. Up close at your eyes. You've only been online a few months.

She stares at him.

COLE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

She gives him an angry look, but sees he's not budging.

She walks to the hallway mirror. She stares in at her face. She leans in close.

CLOSE ON: Zoe's eye in profile, staring at itself in the mirror. Getting closer - in the shadowy reflection of her pupil she can make out the faint outlines and shapes of something that seems inconceivable: electronics, circuits, super-advanced micro-mechanics.

She takes an unsteady step back, overwhelmed.

ZOE

Oh my God...

She stares at Cole, the revelations slamming down on her. He can almost see her mind racing back trying to make sense of what she's discovered.

COLE

Zoe...

She turns away from Cole and runs out of the apartment.

COLE (CONT'D)

Zoe!!

He takes off after her.

EXT. ZOE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Cole runs out. The rain continues down. Zoe is gone.

COLE

Zoe!!! ZOE!!!!

EXT. URBAN STREETS - NIGHT

Zoe runs and comes to a stop on a corner, getting soaked. She's confused, hurt, ashamed, completely demolished.

She stares down at her hands, rubbing her fingers together, as if they're a strangers hands, painfully aware now that she's not flesh and blood.

On the opposite corner she notices a couple across the street, under an umbrella kissing in the rain. She stares in at them, drawn to their display of affection.

She takes a step forward - HOOOONK - a car speeds by nearly smashing her, shaking her out of it.

INT. THE RELATIONIST LAB, SYNTHETICS DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

Zoe sits on a desk, a blanket around her. While Ash dries her hair with a towel.

ASH
To tell you the truth, I'm a little
jealous.

ZOE
Why?

ASH
Because you got to be human.

ZOE
But it was a lie.

ASH
Not to me.

She looks at him and smiles.

ASH (CONT'D)
I read that you know you're in love
when you can't fall asleep...
because your reality is better than
your dreams.

ZOE
Sounds like Freud.

He shakes his head, gives her a smile.

ASH
Dr. Seuss.

She smiles, looks at him with genuine gratitude.

ZOE
Thank you Ash.

She sighs deeply. Ash gives her a smile.

ASH
I suppose I'm only a few months
behind you in my development. Soon
I'll be where you are.

In the hallway outside there are some cases of the Benycin drug stacked up.

ASH (CONT'D)

Do you think the drug might work on us? Allow us to feel real love?

Before she can answer Cole enters.

COLE

Zoe.

They turn and see Cole, also wet from the rain, looking worried.

COLE (CONT'D)

I walked the neighborhood for hours. Are you okay?

She stares back, not okay.

INT. SYNTHETICS LAB, COLE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Cole stands across from Zoe, sitting, still shaky from the night's revelations. He stares at her sadly, understanding that he's caused her pain.

COLE

It was a mistake, I should have told you sooner. I had no idea you would evolve like this.

He turns to her, the full weight of what he's created weighing on him.

ZOE

Was I designed to have feelings for you?

COLE

No. You have tendencies, like a person does. That's all.

She looks at him worried.

ZOE

Are you going to deactivate me? I mean, this is my life...

Cole stares at her, surprised she would even consider that.

COLE

Is that what you want?

She hesitates. Cole gives her a sympathetic look.

ZOE

While I was walking around out there I realized I've never really done anything. Anything real.

She looks up to him.

ZOE (CONT'D)

I never stayed up late with girlfriends. I never talked on the phone with a boy.

(beat)

I've never worn perfume. I don't even know if it would work on me.

He steps to her, sees a chance to make things a little better for her.

COLE

I'd like to show you some of the things that you've done.

She looks up to him curiously.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAWN

Inside Cole's car Zoe stares at her reflection in the window, in at her eye, almost seeing the micro motors and gears inside. She slowly closes her eyes tight, shutting it out.

EXT. UNIVERSITY GREEN - DAY

Zoe and Cole enter the beautiful grounds of a University's central Green.

COLE

Key sections of your memories were modeled from people who went to school here.

She looks around, it's familiar.

ZOE

I started here when I was 15. I was overweight. Terrified.

She looks back to Cole.

ZOE (CONT'D)

But it was like all the memories
you gave to Ash. It didn't happen.

COLE

Of course it happened. It's who
you are. You've had real emotional
experiences. How they're stored or
how you remember them doesn't make
them less real.

She looks around.

ZOE

The campus looks the same.

He gives her a gentle smile.

COLE

Show me some things you remember.

INT. LIBRARY STACKS - DAY

Zoe and Cole walk through the huge space- giant bookcases
fill the room.

ZOE

(whisper)

I studied here. Not in the carols
where the other students were.

She stops. Cole stops too.

ZOE (CONT'D)

I liked the quiet.

They go through a door and it opens up into a beautiful
reading room - vaulted ceilings and hanging chandeliers.

Zoe smiles like she's gotten a letter from an old friend.
Cole sees that she's responding well to this. He likes it.

ZOE (CONT'D)

(whisper)

This was it. This was where I
dreamed about who I was going to
be.

A montage begins, we see Zoe and Cole at various locations:

-In an old assembly hall with a huge, room-sized antique
organ. Zoe and Cole try - and fail- to play it.

-In a lecture hall, Cole writing on the chalkboard, Zoe laughing at his "lecture."

-Lying on the floor staring up at an amazing ceiling in a research library and talking.

-Walking along the empty, lit up football field at night.

EXT. BUILDING - NIGHT

Zoe walks up to a locked door. She starts fiddling with a combination lock.

ZOE

This was special. I came here every night to try the combinations. Four digits meant there were 10,000 combinations. I did 100 a night until it clicked.

Click. The lock opens.

ZOE (CONT'D)

Took me 43 days.

INT. DARK STAIRWAY - NIGHT

They wind up a dark stairway.

ZOE

I'd get a senior to buy me a six pack of hard lemonade...

She opens a door-

INT. CLOCK TOWER - CONTINUOUS

-and heads inside the small room of the university Clock Tower. A cool space filled with oversized gears and intricate machine works.

The view through the back of the clock face is amazing - seeing the university lit up at night.

ZOE

...I'd stay up here and read and study... and get progressively drunker until I fell asleep.

Cole looks around.

COLE
Right, right.

She runs her hands along the giant gears of the clock.

ZOE
I liked the idea that this machine
was so big, and so solid, but
somehow it measures something you
can't even hold in your hands.

She looks out through the clock face.

ZOE (CONT'D)
I used to think about all the
students who looked up at the time.
How each one had a story. They
were coming, or going, or leaving
for Thanksgiving, dreading showing
their parents their grades, or
counting the minutes until they saw
the person they loved.

She stares at him. She sits down heavily. Her face flushes,
becoming emotional.

ZOE (CONT'D)
But none of it was real.

He kneels down in front of her.

COLE
Zoe-

She starts to cry.

ZOE
Who is going to love someone that's
not real?

He reaches out to her, it's hard for him to hear her pain.

COLE
You can't think like that...

She suddenly looks up, pained, confused.

ZOE
What's happening to me?

Cole looks down. Zoe is a mess.

ZOE (CONT'D)
Why are there no tears in my eyes?

Cole sighs deeply. Can't believe what he has to tell her.

COLE

There won't be any tears, Zoe.

She stares at him, trying to make sense of the moment.

COLE (CONT'D)

We expected your emotions to be without these kinds of peaks and valleys.

She gets a hold of herself.

COLE (CONT'D)

You can't produce any tears. Your body has no way to make them.

This hits her hard. It's eating him up.

COLE (CONT'D)

I know it's not fair.

He stares at her, at a loss. A wave of emotion overcomes her. Her body feels the need to cry but is physically, technically incapable.

ZOE

What am I supposed to do?

He stares at her, at a loss, a moment where he can't believe his short-sightedness in her design.

ZOE (CONT'D)

How am I supposed to do this?

He reaches out to her, brushes the hair from her face. In her moment of anguish, she is somehow more vulnerable - and more beautiful than ever.

He's not sure how to handle it. An awkward beat. She looks up at him with powerful emotion. They come together but do not kiss. They embrace, tightly, the first time they've ever really touched. A profoundly human moment. We see their faces - struggling to understand what's happening between them. There's a deep connection but also a barrier.

Cole stops, leans his head against her forehead.

INT. CLOCK TOWER - LATER

Cole and Zoe lie on the floor of the tower next to each other staring up into the gears and works of the clock.

They are fully clothed. The vibe is intimate, a late night tell-all-your-secrets conversation.

ZOE

What was she like, the person whose memories I have?

COLE

It's not one person, they were taken from several.

She hesitates.

ZOE

Is there anything from your life, inside me?

(beat)

Anything from what happened with Emma?

Cole hesitates, mulling that thought - that his own past has informed his approach to designing Zoe. It probably has.

COLE

The idea, was for you to only be... you - your own thoughts, hopes, flaws. Like everyone else.

Something about the mention of Emma moves Cole. She looks over to him, bonded by the late hour.

ZOE

You never answered my question. About whether you ever think of me.

He hesitates, staring back at her. She can see there's a part of him that's into what's happening.

COLE

I have. Of course I have.

He stares at the ceiling. This is truth telling time.

COLE (CONT'D)

But I can't un-see some of the ways I've seen you. When you were just beginning.

She looks down, sadly. He leans in close, with meaning.

COLE (CONT'D)

In some ways, I think it makes me even more in awe of how you are now.

They share a meaningful look, a connection. She slowly gets up, processing what he said as she looks out the clock face window. The sun is coming up and there's activity starting on the grounds below.

ZOE
We should probably get back.

INT. RELATIONIST LAB, ATRIUM - MORNING

Ash walks from the AI Department into the atrium and sees Cole and Zoe talking. We focus in on his face, watching them jealously. He sees them embrace and then part ways, Cole heads out.

INT. RELATIONIST LAB, LOBBY - MORNING

Ash and Zoe sit in the lobby of the lab.

ASH
Are you okay?

ZOE
Yeah.

ASH
Where did you go?

ZOE
We just talked.

ASH
I read that dating at the office is
a sure path to heartache.
(beat)
Will you and Cole be a couple?

She thinks about it.

ZOE
I don't know.

INT. COLE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Cole comes into his workshop and checks his emails. He walks in. In the corner is the sleeping woman robot he found at Emma's house. He stares at it. Then he turns and shuts the light.

EXT. TECH SUMMIT CONVENTION - DAY

A huge convention space filled with electronic gadgetry, robotics, artificial intelligence demonstrations, etc. Industry people and tech jocks mill around the exhibits and installations.

Cole, Hideo, Zoe, Ash and other employees finish setting up the Relationist Lab exhibit - Zoe has a Machine demonstration area, another group displays the lab's pharmaceuticals.

Ash sees a synthetic man nearby, handing out leaflets.

SYNTHETIC MAN
(to a conventioneer)
Want to see the future? You can
find it in our Pavilion!

Ash observes the man noting he's a more primitive synthetic.

INT. RELATIONIST LAB EXHIBIT - DAY

A back, private area of the Relationist Lab's exhibit. Ash stands talking to a large, gathered crowd of conventioners - many of them women. Hideo, Zoe, and Cole observe. We've caught him in the middle of his presentation-

ASH
How many of you have actually
considered the possibility of a
relationship with a synthetic?

They all stare back. No one.

ASH (CONT'D)
Of course not. They're primitive.
Robotic. Not real.

Cole shares a look with Ash.

ASH (CONT'D)
But what if they weren't?

Ash steps forward to the group. He's not a natural speaker but has a bit of awkward charm.

ASH (CONT'D)
What would you think if I told you
I was synthetic?

The people stare back. They think he's putting them on. Zoe and Cole watch. They like his performance, it has a way of connecting them. She moves close to him.

ASH (CONT'D)

What if I told you I can improvise when I play the piano? That I feel pain? Make jokes? That I can gauge your emotions and sense what you're feeling better than anyone in this room?

(beat)

Right now I'm sensing... curiosity.

The group stares in. Even in his awkward way, Ash is compelling. While Ash is talking, Cole tentatively grabs Zoe's hand with just his finger - a tiny connection. He glances to Zoe while he continues.

ASH (CONT'D)

I'll never leave you. I'll never break your heart.

He sees Zoe and Cole holding hands. He feels it.

ASH (CONT'D)

And I'm designed to love you and understand you in ways that humans simply can't...

There's poignancy behind Ash's eyes when he looks at Zoe. The small crowd clocks it. A few of the women are clearly taken with him. He turns back to them.

ASH (CONT'D)

And if you need more proof...

He steps forward, approaching one of the women, very close.

ASH (CONT'D)

Just look into my eyes.

One of the women looks into Ash's eyes, unlike the others, she seems uncomfortable with Ash. His eyes dart to the side and see that Cole and Zoe are gone.

EXT. RELATIONIST LAB EXHIBIT - DAY

Hide and Ash walk through the exhibit. Nearby is a long line of people - men and women, some from Ash's presentation. Several look back at him, fascinated. Hideo checks his phone.

HIDEO

We're all over social media. This is amazing, look.

Hideo hands his cell phone to Ash.

Ash looks down at a string of comments. We catch bits of words - mostly positive. He stops at one though - "Seeing that robot made me a little sick." Hideo notices Ash's reaction. He's disappointed by that.

HIDEO (CONT'D)

Ash, don't-

Ash looks up from the phone he sees the woman from the presentation staring at him, with creepy fascination - like she can't look away. He smiles and walks toward her.

ASH

Did you have any questions?

As he approaches he notices she can't look him in the eyes. It's awkward.

WOMAN

(uncomfortable)

Sorry, no. Excuse me.

She walks off. Ash is deflated. Hideo comes up behind him.

HIDEO

Hey. Not everyone is ready for this.

ASH

I know.

HIDEO

But look. That's the line for advance orders. For you. Every one of them, responded to you. Was moved - by you.

Ash looks at the long line - men, women, all fascinated.

HIDEO (CONT'D)

Sometimes we say with synthetics at the heart of the design is the heart of the designer.

(beat)

And no one designs like Cole.

INT. AI THEATER - DAY

Cole and Zoe stand among a crowd watching a demonstration. A COMPANY REP works with a robotic man on a slightly raised stage. The robot is less human appearing than Ash.

The robot is drawing a quick sketch of someone who has come up from the audience - a chubby guy with a bushy beard.

REP
Are you almost finished?

ROBOT
Yes. It's lucky we have such a handsome volunteer.

The audience laughs. Cole and Zoe enjoy the moment.

The robot stands and reveals his drawing - it's amazing - impressionistic, cool, and interesting.

REP
Physical capabilities are also more advanced-

He throws the robot a ball. Lightning fast the robot catches it. In a moment of fun, the robot tosses the ball into the crowd. Someone catches it, throws it back. Quickly the game accelerates - back and forth as the crowd gets into it, reacting as the robot does tricks when he catches the ball.

The ball comes to Zoe and she tosses it back, but oddly the robot doesn't move to catch it. It hits him in the face.

The audience thinks it's a joke, until they see the robot no longer move, staring blankly.

An awkward moment. The Rep comes over.

REP (CONT'D)
Hey, you okay? Hello?

Silence. The robot is frozen. Cole stares in, the unfolding scene affecting him - seeing something so human seconds before, now motionless and unseeing.

REP (CONT'D)
Hello?

Silence. Nothing. The audience reacts, the air goes out of the room.

ROBOT
Heeeee-l-l-l-l-o-o-o-o-

It's like talking in slow motion. Weird. Hard to hear.

The robot won't come back online, the crowd starts to file out. Except Cole.

He's riveted by the vacant stare of the robot as people pass by him. Zoe notices, is troubled by it.

ZOE

Let's see something else.

INT. EMPTY ROOM - DAY

Cole and Zoe walk into a very large empty room. The lighting is subtle, the walls are off white.

Cole slowly walks around, there's a bit of tension between them. The robot melt-down was unsettling. She sees Cole occupied in thought, tries to reach out-

ZOE

This is all interactive. There's software that translates our voices into images.

He looks at her with curiosity, still occupied in thought.

She flicks a switch by the door. The lights dim dramatically. She looks to Cole and gives him a "shhh" gesture.

She walks close to him.

ZOE (CONT'D)

(whisper)

It can even hear you whisper.

WHOOSH - a trail of lights skitters across the wall, picking up Zoe's voice.

Zoe walks up to him close. He stares back at her, she sees that he was really thrown off by what they saw at the demonstration.

A pregnant silence.

COLE

Zoe, look...

He looks like he's about to deliver bad news. Zoe cuts him off-

ZOE

Just say something loud.

He looks back at her, confused.

ZOE (CONT'D)

Go ahead.

Cole, a little confused, gives it a shot.

COLE

Hello...?

The sound causes a dance of light on the wall. It's cool.

ZOE

Louder.

COLE

HELLOOOO!!!

BOOM - the walls react the power of his voice in a burst of abstract color. Zoe laughs. Even Cole is surprised. He looks around.

COLE (CONT'D)

I'M SPEAKING VERY LOUDLY IN AN
EMPTY ROOM!!

Zoe laughs more, the room explodes with color. Cole digs it.

COLE (CONT'D)

BREVITY IS THE SOUL OF WIT! THAT
WHICH WE CALL A ROSE - BY ANY OTHER
NAME WOULD SMELL AS SWEET!!

Zoe watches as the room's walls dance with color and shape.

ZOE

The future isn't inside our
computers, it's inside you!

Cole laughs. Gathers his mojo, caught up in the moment.

COLE

FUUUUUUUCCCCCKKKKKKKK!!!

Zoe cracks up, then starts singing random tones, making the colors of the room change and bounce. Cole likes it.

He joins the singing, adding lower tones, weird noises, creating deeper colors. It's a strange, cool, psychedelic concert.

Slowly Cole stops singing and simply watches Zoe, making the room change beautiful colors with her voice.

Her voice isn't great. But it's sweet. And she's doing her best. There's something beautiful in the moment. We see it in Cole's eyes.

He walks up to her. She stops. The room goes dark. He looks at her with affection.

COLE (CONT'D)

Hey.

She stops. Looks at him, having a bit of a revelation. He walks up to her, close. His footsteps echo in color on the walls.

She stares at him, can see that's moved.

ZOE

Do you think my love's not love?

It's a poignant thought and she's so beautiful in the moment he can't even answer. He leans to kiss her - deep and passionate. A powerful moment for both of them.

The small sounds of the kiss makes a sizzle of color shoot through the walls.

INT. COLE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Cole and Zoe are half dressed and in bed, kissing each other. It's intimate, passionate.

She reaches down to touch him, both getting lost in the moment.

Cole reaches down and moves her hand. He pulls back.

COLE

(whisper)

Would you be upset if we waited?

She stares at him, caught a little off guard, sensing his hesitation. She doesn't quite know where to go with it.

ZOE

Do you want me to go?

He smiles and kisses her.

COLE

No. I want you to stay.

He grabs her hand and holds it. Zoe stares down at their intertwined fingers.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE UNCANNY VALLEY - NIGHT

Zoe makes her way down the stairs from the Bot Club and enters the trippy downstairs of the Uncanny Valley. She walks toward the cyber brothel and spots the Designer.

ZOE

Is Jewels available? I can pay - I just want to talk to her.

The Designer looks her up and down, he remembers her.

DESIGNER

Five minutes. You can wait if you like.

Zoe sits down. The Designer looks her over.

DESIGNER (CONT'D)

When you came in here before, I had no idea you were synthetic.

He looks her over, fascinated.

DESIGNER (CONT'D)

It's flawless work. Far superior to what I can do here.

ZOE

I just want to talk to Jewels.

He's drifting closer on his wheelchair, invading her space.

DESIGNER

She's on her way.

(beat)

You know, we could make a fortune together if you worked here.

She stares at him, taken off guard.

DESIGNER (CONT'D)

Don't dismiss the idea so easily. My clients are respectful. You'd be safe. You're programmed to connect, you might even find it rewarding.

(leans in)

(MORE)

DESIGNER (CONT'D)
I could probably fix it so you
wouldn't even feel anything.

She's repulsed.

ZOE
Will she be much longer?

He can see she's not interested. He gives her another smile.

DESIGNER
You want to talk to her about what
it's like to be with all these men.

She looks down, he's right. He shakes his head then looks
off, sees Jewels is coming, then leans back to Zoe.

DESIGNER (CONT'D)
You think you don't belong here,
with me. Doing this?

He leans in close.

DESIGNER (CONT'D)
Eventually you're going to see...
there's no humanity inside
something that can be turned off.

She stares back, trying to hide the fact that he's hurt her.

INT. THE UNCANNY VALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

Zoe and Jewels sit at a table. Up-close we can see that she
looks doll-like with smooth porcelain skin. Human but not
human. She's dressed provocatively, exaggerated features and
feminine curves.

Zoe looks off, sees the Designer in the shadows.

JEWELS
Forget about him. Why don't you
tell me about why you came here.

Zoe is surprised at her sensitivity. She searches for the
right words.

ZOE
I've been- I guess I'm here because
I wanted to know what it's like for
you in your sessions.

Jewels pauses to process that.

JEWELS

Different men look for different things. Some want to feel good. And some just want to feel me.

ZOE

But they know you're not real.

It takes Jewels a moment to process that.

JEWELS

The Designer only cares that we're real enough to make money.

ZOE

Do you feel a connection to any of them?

Jewel's limited facial expression reveals confusion.

JEWELS

I don't know. I think some love me.

Zoe stares down, a little embarrassed.

ZOE

The person I'm with, we haven't- he doesn't seem to want to-

JEWELS

You would be surprised how many men come to me and don't want anything physical.

Zoe looks at her surprised.

JEWELS (CONT'D)

Some just talk. Some only want me to watch them. Some just want forgiveness.

(beat)

What I've learned about men is that sometimes they don't really desire you. They desire the way you make them feel.

Zoe looks at her, it's surprisingly wise.

JEWELS (CONT'D)

Do you feel?

Zoe stares at Jewels, feels sorry for her.

ZOE

Yes.

JEWELS

You're together with someone for more than a few hours? Like a person?

ZOE

Yes.

Jewels looks at Zoe, registers that Zoe is a much more advanced version of what she is.

JEWELS

You are what's coming.

ZOE

We're just different.

Jewels looks down, turning her face. Zoe notices her cheekbone and jawline appear translucent. Her metal skeleton and circuitry is just below the surface.

Jewels notices her staring at her.

JEWELS

My skin is wearing out. It's a lower grade polymer.

(beat)

Also down below.

Zoe tentatively reaches out to gently touch the skin.

JEWELS (CONT'D)

There's a limit to how many times he can regrade us. We end up on the street or re-purposed if men don't want to see me. Then we're just parts.

Jewels points to the lifeless, hanging sex dolls, waiting to be activated. A grim vision.

Her emotional expression is limited, but she's able to communicate a kind of desperation. Zoe stares in.

Zoe pulls out her wallet and hands Jewels a business card.

ZOE

I can help you. Call here. Ask for me or Ash. He'll find me.

Jewels looks back, feeling inferior, her limited expression registers a bit of shame.

JEWELS

I don't- we're not really allowed.

DESIGNER(O.S.)

Jewels! Customer!

Jewels looks off the Designer.

JEWELS

I have to go.

Zoe watches her as she walks off and meets a new customer. As Zoe turns to go, she passes the brothel area and sees the Designer make his way into a back room - the design room.

Inside she sees a naked, lifeless sex robot lying on an operating table. In the shadows of the room she sees the Designer leaning over her. He turns the robot's face to Zoe, handling her roughly. Like a thing.

In a stripe of light Zoe sees that the robot's face is degraded, the skin has worn away leaving it ragged and disfigured. A scalpel flashes in the room coming down toward the robot's unseeing eyes. An incision. Hands start to peel the scalp and face away, it's a gruesome-

Zoe turns away, shaken, and sees Jewels smiling and chatting with her new customer. Slowly she walks out.

INT. KIDS SCIENCE MUSEUM - DAY

CLOSE ON: A small robot walks mechanically forward.

We discover Cole and Zoe sitting with CALEB, Cole's son. They are at an interactive robot exhibit, working controls to make mini-robots move around and do simple tasks.

ZOE

Do you like the robots, Caleb?

CALEB

Yeah!

BOOM - Caleb's robot teeters over and falls.

ZOE

Be careful, it needs your help to stay balanced.

Caleb looks to Cole, gives him a big smile.

COLE
You like it here, kiddo?

CALEB
Can we stay??!!

Cole stares at Zoe and Caleb, the boy moves to sit in her lap. Zoe talks enthusiastically about the robots. Caleb is enraptured.

Cole stares in at the two of them, moved by how open his son is to this new part of his life.

EXT. EMMA'S BACKYARD - DAY

Caleb runs around the backyard laughing like crazy. Cole, with Zoe riding his back, piggyback style is chasing him around, also laughing.

Cole catches him, but not before collapsing on the grass in a pile of giggling and laughter.

From inside the house Emma watches.

EXT. EMMA'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

Emma walks Cole out to his car while Zoe says goodbye to Caleb.

EMMA
You guys can stay for dinner if you want.

COLE
We should get back. I'll see you same time next week.

Emma gives him a warm smile. Nods towards Zoe who is still with Caleb.

EMMA
He really responds to her.

Cole looks off to Zoe and Caleb.

EMMA (CONT'D)
What about you?

He gives her a smile, dodges.

COLE
I'll see you next week Emma.

EMMA

Bring her.

INT. COLE'S HOUSE - DAWN

Zoe, wearing sweats, makes her way into Cole's kitchen. She starts brewing coffee. She opens the fridge - full of food and gets out milk.

INT. COLE'S BEDROOM - DAWN

Cole sleeps. Zoe gently crawls back into bed with him. Half-awake he throws his arm around her to spoon. A moment of silent connection. Bliss.

It's disrupted by the alarm going off. He reaches out and snoozes it. Snuggles again.

INT. COLE'S HOUSE - DAY

Zoe, in the bathroom, slides a small pillow under her blouse to appear pregnant.

She caresses the belly bump, then stares in at herself, experiencing a moment she can never achieve.

INT. COLE'S HOUSE - EVENING

POP of a wine cork. POUR of wine. BEEP of microwave buttons. Zoe removes fresh bread from the microwave oven puts them in a basket and turns to reveal Cole sitting at table ready to eat a modest, but well-prepared meal.

INT. COLE'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Cole and Zoe lie in bed. She lies in his arms, they are comfortable together.

ZOE

Sometimes, I noticed that you close your eyes when we're close. Or kiss.

He turns to her.

COLE

Don't you?

She sits up.

ZOE

I once told Ash that what he felt
for me was only zeros and ones.

COLE

You're not Ash.

ZOE

It makes me wonder.

(beat)

Do you think you could prove to me
that you're real? If you had to.

COLE

Zoe-

ZOE

Sometimes, the way you look at me -
or don't look at me. I feel like
that's what I have to do.

He stares back at her, stumped. He's never thought about it.

ZOE (CONT'D)

So I wonder... could you do it?

He thinks about it, moved. It's a deep question, he likes
that she's the one who asked it.

COLE

AI theory says only humans can be
creative. Or dream. Or feel.

She looks at him, expectantly. He leans in and speaks
quietly.

COLE (CONT'D)

I know you feel. And I know if
there's a difference between what I
am and what you are then I can't
see it anymore.

She stares at him, understanding.

INT. OFFICES OF THE MACHINE - DAY

Zoe comes into her office, on the monitor an ad for Benycin
is playing in the background.

She stops when she sees an overnight bag on her desk. She
goes to it.

There's a note on it. She reads it and smiles.

EXT. RELATIONIST LAB - AFTERNOON

Zoe comes out holding the bag and sees Cole leaning against his car with a smile.

COLE

I figured you didn't have plans for the weekend.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Cole's car drives, heading for snow-capped mountains.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - AFTERNOON

Cole drives through woods, there is snow on the ground.

EXT. CABIN - SUNSET

Cole's car parks at a secluded cabin.

INT. CABIN - EVENING

Cole has a fire going. Zoe is in the bedroom unpacking her bag. Outside it's snowing. At the bottom of the bag is a small gift.

She unwraps it and sees that it's an expensive bottle of perfume. She stares down at it moved.

She turns to Cole at the fireplace, holding the perfume. The look in her eyes tells the story.

COLE

You said you never had any.

ZOE

Thank you. I don't know what to say.

Cole smiles.

COLE

It's snowing.

EXT. CABIN - EVENING

Cole and Zoe walk out onto the porch without coats to see the snow. Zoe steps out further to be in the snow.

She looks up at the sky, closing her eyes, letting the snow hit her face. Cole stares at her, mesmerized. It's like he's also seeing it snow for the first time.

He walks up to her.

COLE

I realized you've really never had a winter.

ZOE

It's beautiful.

COLE

So this idea stuck in my head.

He smiles at her.

COLE (CONT'D)

You've never been cold. You've never felt this. The chill.

They stand together while the snow falls around them.

COLE (CONT'D)

It's not like anything else.

She smiles up at him, feels the cold go through her. It's bracing. She holds her hand out and catches a few flakes, they melt on touch.

She rubs her fingers together - reminiscent of the way she first looked at her hands when she discovered she was synthetic. But this is different - this is a true sensory experience for her.

ZOE

It's so cold. And soft.

She looks up at the sky again, the snow falls gently around them. He stares at her - beautiful in the winter light and falling flakes.

ZOE (CONT'D)

I remember winters, even snow... but this is different.

(beat)

This is no one's but mine.

Cole looks at her deeply. Zoe shivers, then leans into him, puts her hands under his shirt to feel his skin. He does the same. She smiles.

ZOE (CONT'D)
You're so warm.

He looks into her eyes with tenderness. She's warm too.

ZOE (CONT'D)
It feels good.
(beat)
Thank you for this.

She looks up to him, with great affection.

ZOE (CONT'D)
Do you think I have a choice about
who I'm drawn to, in my design?

COLE
What makes you think anyone has a
choice?

They stand for a moment, locked together while the snow
falls. The first time Zoe's been warmed by another person.

COLE (CONT'D)
Is it too cold, do you want to go
inside?

ZOE
No, I want to get a blanket.

EXT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Cole and Zoe sit on the porch, wrapped in a blanket, watching
the snow, snuggling and kissing.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Zoe and Cole are in bed, naked. They are about to make love.

ZOE
(whisper)
Can I do this?

COLE
Yes.

ZOE
(quiet, tiny)
I have memories, but I'm not sure I
know what to do.

COLE
(whisper)
Just be.

Zoe and Cole come together, tenderly, sensually. Kissing passionately.

He gently moves over her, staring into her eyes. She stares back - we feel the bond, the connection, the love.

They begin to make love, gently at first.

COLE (CONT'D)
(whisper)
Are you okay?

ZOE
(whisper)
Yes.

He stares down at her, deep into her eyes. They are perfectly connected. We can see the joy of the moment in her face - the wonder of doing something so profoundly human that she's only experienced as a memory until now.

And through his eyes we see there is no more hesitation, no more conflict. He is with her fully, completely.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SYNTHETICS LAB - DAY

Zoe walks into the lab early, wearing a guilty smile. She sees Ash, who gives her a bit of a sarcastic look.

ASH
Well, well, well, looks like
someone spent the weekend testing
the limits of her functionality.

Zoe smiles, embarrassed.

ASH (CONT'D)
Someone call the techs, I think we
just discovered you can blush.

She smiles, starts to walk off.

ASH (CONT'D)
Zoe.

She turns around.

ASH (CONT'D)
You understand that this hurts me,
don't you.

He's smiling but there's pain underneath.

ASH (CONT'D)
Seeing you with someone else.

She walks up to him, reaches out to him.

ZOE
You know there are many different
kinds of relationships Ash.
Different kinds of love.
(beat)
Friends can love each other.

This makes him feel a bit better.

ASH
Yes. They can.

He looks into her eyes.

ASH (CONT'D)
What was it like? To feel so
human.

She stares back, smiles. She steps forward and hugs him
tightly.

INT. BOT CLUB - EVENING

We sweep over the space. People drink and talk, it's
chaotic, high energy, and a ton of fun.

EXT. BOT CLUB - NIGHT

It's raining but the club is hopping. There's now a valet
line. Cole walks over to the valet and gives him their
ticket.

While he's there, Zoe waits on the sidewalk.

VOICE (O.S.)
A little help?

She turns and looks across the street. She sees the
synthetic person Jewels.

She's a mess - ragged hair, dirty clothes, even through the rain she can see the skin on Jewels face has been worn away and some of her metal endo-skeleton and circuitry is exposed. It's grotesque.

She reaches to a passerby.

JEWELS

A little help?

The passerby ignores her. In her disappointment, Jewels' eyes meet Zoe's across the street.

Zoe looks up at her umbrella, then back to Jewels - a silent agreement to give her the protection from the rain.

Zoe starts to walk into the street -

BOOM - out of the night a car skids through the rain SLAMMING Zoe - knocking her off her feet, driving her forward and hurling her to the ground with an horrific THUD.

Quickly the driver of the car gets out and runs to her.

DRIVER

Oh my God are you all right?!
SOMEONE CALL AN AMBULANCE!!!

Several other people gather around. Zoe stares up at them with uncomprehending eyes.

ZOE

S-s-s-s-s-s-s-s-someone, gg-g-g-g-g-
g-et Cole.

Everyone stops - her voice is suddenly mechanical, the stuttering is not organic but like a malfunctioning machine.

DRIVER

What the hell is that?

Leaking out of Zoe's body is a viscous, black fluid, the lubrication for her organic systems.

Suddenly Cole runs up and pushes his way through the crowd.

COLE

Zoe!!! Give me some room!!

ZOE

H-h-h-h-h-h-h-elp me. C-c-c-ole.
Cole-Cole-Cole-Cole.

DRIVER

Jesus Christ - She's synthetic!

Cole ignores the crowd. He unzips her jacket and starts to unbutton her blouse.

COLE

Just hang on Zoe!

As he exposes her skin more of the viscous fluid escapes, getting all over Cole.

Suddenly her body shudders, the skin over her abdomen starts to peel away.

ZOE

What's h-h-h-h-h-appening t-t-t-t-
to me?!!!

The fear in her mechanical voice is chilling. The crowd stares in fascinated, reacting to her otherness.

COLE

This is an emergency protocol, your
body is allowing access to your
internal systems.

WHOOSH - the skin is suddenly gone and Zoe's insides are exposed - lubricated with the viscous fluid they are a hodgepodge of organic systems and indecipherable tangles of technology - organ shaped structures made from chips and processors as well as what looks like real tissue.

There is something ugly about seeing her inner workings. Zoe stares up at the crowd who stare at her with revulsion, and confusion - trying to process why a human is with this synthetic.

COLE (CONT'D)

Just stay with me, Zoe... stay with
me...

Zoe looks to Cole for support but he's overwhelmed by the damage and the emotions of the moment. And she sees something in his eyes behind emotional chaos - disappointment.

She looks down at her insides. It's hard to look at even for her. She turns away and sees a familiar face in the crowd-
Jewels - her half human face staring down at Zoe with pity.

For a moment their eyes lock, Zoe's exposed insides rendering her even more grotesque than Jewels' ragged visage.

Zoe turns her away - from Jewels, from the truth of her own body.

ZOE
H-h-h-hold my hand, Cole.

He gives her hand a quick squeeze.

COLE
I need help getting her into my car!

INT. SYNTHETICS LAB - NIGHT

It's late at the lab, Zoe lies on a work table while Cole and Ash hover over her.

He's focused on the work.

ZOE
Cole.

He stops, has trouble looking her in the eye.

ZOE (CONT'D)
How does it look?

ASH
You're going to be fine. All of this can be repaired.

She stares at Cole.

ZOE
Will I be the same?

COLE
You're gonna be fine.

He turns to her. She can see a mix of emotions written on his face. He's doing his best to comfort her, but we can see that he's been rocked back.

ZOE
How about you?

He looks to Ash, then back to Zoe, he hesitates.

COLE
We have to do a limited shut down to repair some of this. Motion and cognition. It'll be like putting you in a dream state.

She stares back at him.

ZOE
How long will I be gone?

He stares at her guts.

COLE
Not long.

ZOE
You'll be here when I come back?

He reaches out to her, brushes the hair from her forehead. It's soothing - a small moment of connection, but his eyes can't hide how troubled he is.

COLE
I have to get some parts to repair what's been damaged.

He walks off. Zoe watches him leave, then turns her head away. There's a crushing wave of emotion - but no tears.

Ash leans down close to her.

ASH
I don't get tears either.

She's inconsolable.

ASH (CONT'D)
Don't be too hard on him. This is a lot to take in. He almost lost you.

ZOE
Do you think that was the sadness of almost losing me?

He grabs her hand.

ASH
No. That was disappointment.
(beat)
There's a line. Machines on one side and people on the other.

He squeezes her hand.

ASH (CONT'D)
And you were on his side of the line.

(MORE)

ASH (CONT'D)
(beat)
Until tonight.

She looks stricken. No tears come. Ash speaks to Zoe gently but firmly.

ASH (CONT'D)
I know it hurts. But maybe this is better. You and me, we can't find happiness until we accept what we are.

She looks down.

ZOE
What if what we are doesn't feel so good.

ASH
It is good. It's messy. And painful. But it's real.

He brushes the hair out of her eyes.

ASH (CONT'D)
Just like them.

INT. SYNTHETICS LAB, BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Cole stares at himself in the mirror. He looks ragged.

All over his clothes and hands is the black fluid from Zoe.

He turns on the water and starts to wash his hands. Slowly the viscous fluid begins to come off. He scrubs harder, staring down at his hands. The emotions of the evening start to well and he starts to scrub harder, and harder still...

INT. SYNTHETICS LAB - NIGHT

Zoe lies on an operating table while Ash sits at a bank of powerful computers. One monitor shows the performance levels of all of Zoe's systems.

Cole stands over her.

COLE
We're going to start shutting down a few of your systems Zoe. It's going to feel a little disorienting, but it's nothing dangerous okay?

She stares at him, understanding. Cole turns to Ash.

COLE (CONT'D)
Bring down musculoskeletal.

WHOOSH - one of the performance levels on the monitor starts to drop.

COLE (CONT'D)
You're going to slowly lose control
of your body now, everything is
going to feel numb.

She looks at him with wide eyes.

ZOE
What's going to happen tomorrow?

COLE
(to Ash)
Now temperature regulation.

WHOOSH - another of the levels starts to drop.

COLE (CONT'D)
(to Zoe)
If this goes well you'll be as
healthy as you were today.

ZOE
That's not what I mean.

Cole studies the monitors, can't look her in the eye.

COLE
You're injured Zoe, let's get you
well.

ZOE
Please Cole. I need to know before
this happens.

He stares at her on the table - vulnerable and broken. Cole puts on a brave face, but this is painful for him.

COLE
It's going to be fine, Zoe.

He turns to Ash.

COLE (CONT'D)
Bring down proprioception.

WHOOSH - another monitor starts to dip. He stares at her.

ZOE
What about us?

He stares at her. He grabs her hand, squeezes tight, and leans in. His tone has a deep kindness.

COLE
You're going to recover. And get strong. And be whole. And I'm going to do whatever I can to get you there.

The words are encouraging and kind, but she can tell by the way he's saying it that it's over.

She turns her head away, stares straight up at the ceiling.

COLE (CONT'D)
Zoe?

She doesn't respond.

COLE (CONT'D)
Zoe?

ZOE
I heard you.

He looks to Zoe with sympathy, but has no words to comfort her. He stares down at her, both of them are miserable.

ASH
She's about to enter stasis.
Should I do the core systems?

Cole stares at Zoe, then pulls away the surgical sheet revealing the gruesome tangle of mashed up works inside her. He stares down at it.

ASH (CONT'D)
Cole?

Cole is riveted by the sight.

ASH (CONT'D)
Cole? The core systems?

COLE
Yes.

WHOOSH - several of the systems indicators start to sink. Zoe stares ahead stoically as we...

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. OFFICES OF THE MACHINE - DAY

CLOSE ON: Zoe, staring blankly, emotionless, numb. We reveal what she's looking at - a couple holding hands in the offices of The Machine waiting to be analyzed.

Zoe snaps out of it, smiles and steps forward to greet them.

EXT. EMMA'S NEW ART STUDIO - AFTERNOON

Daylight streams in through huge windows. Emma works while Cole and Caleb do some serious damage, making a finger painting that loosely resembles Zoe and Cole.

CALEB

Is it good, Daddy?

COLE

Great kiddo. You take after your mom.

Caleb works more.

CALEB

How come we don't see Zoe any more?

Emma sets down her tray, stops to listen.

COLE

Did you know Zoe was different from you and Mom. And me?

The boy looks at Cole.

CALEB

So?

Cole is taken off guard by the simplicity of Caleb's response. He gathers himself-

COLE

Sometimes grown ups just go their own way.

CALEB

Look what I made mom!

He runs up and shows her his painting.

EMMA

Great sweetie. Can you be a big
boy and wash up?

Caleb leaves the studio and heads into the main house. As he
does Cole hears a muffled adult voice.

CALEB

Nick! You're home!

Cole gets up, watches through the windows. Sees the
silhouettes of Caleb and Nick hugging.

Cole turns to Emma.

COLE

It's better with him than it was
with me, isn't it?

She looks at him with sympathy.

EMMA

Not better. Different.

(beat)

Easier. We don't have the highs
and lows.

She looks at him, sees something is troubling him.

COLE

Were you ever evaluated by the
Machine with Nick?

Emma looks down, a bitter smile, a look suggesting they
scored low. She changes the subject.

EMMA

Caleb asked a good question. About
Zoe.

He looks back, silently.

EMMA (CONT'D)

You want to talk about it?

He looks down.

COLE

Do you know what Eliza was?

Emma shakes her head.

COLE (CONT'D)

Really early AI. Software that made people think they were talking to a therapist. All it basically did was parrot back words. You'd say "My mother hates me and Eliza would say "Who else in your family hates you?" Or "My head hurts" and it would say "Why do you think your head hurts?"

Cole leans in.

COLE (CONT'D)

Eliza felt so real that the inventor's secretary used to ask him to leave the room so she and Eliza could have private, intimate conversations.

He stares at nothing. Thinking about Zoe.

COLE (CONT'D)

She wanted to be alone. With a few lines of code.

Emma stares at him.

EMMA

You know that's not what she is.

Cole stares back.

COLE

I'll pick him up on Thursday.

EXT. EMMA'S HOUSE - SUNSET

Cole gets in his car. As he looks up he can see into Emma's yard. He sees Nick and Caleb playing. Caleb runs in, leaving Nick to collect the balls and toys strewn around.

Emma remains in the house, staring out at Nick through a window. Separate. Something about her posture and expression feels sad. Deflated.

Cole stares into the backyard, then starts up his car.

INT. COLE'S HOUSE - MORNING

The alarm rings. Cole, alone in bed, gets up. It's messier than the last time we saw it.

INT. COLE'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Cole heads in. The sink is full of dishes. He opens a cabinet to get coffee but discovers the box with the grounds is empty.

INT. BOT CLUB - DAY

Ash picks out songs on a hipster juke box. Zoe sits alone, watching without enthusiasm.

When she shifts position, she sees something that captures her attention. There's a slightly twitchy young guy sitting alone in a chair in one of the seating areas, waiting.

Zoe watches as an edgy young woman enters. She goes and sits in a seat opposite the guy. They stare at each other for a moment, almost like some secret ritual.

Zoe stares in, confused, as the guy gets up and says something to the girl. She nods and they walk off happily together.

Ash comes up behind her.

ASH

I think we just saw a Benycin hook up.

She watches the girl and guy slip out of the club.

ZOE

A what?

ASH

Apparently strangers are using Benycin now. Gives them a love high for a few hours. I think that's one of the meet up spots.

ZOE

You mean they didn't even know each other?

ASH

They may not even like each other. But they're about to fall in love. At least for a few hours.

INT. THE RELATIONIST LAB - DAY

Cole walks into the building. As he passes the Pharmaceutical section there's a huge, new Benycin section.

A video plays on a monitor - An ad for Benycin. We see romantic images, and catch the end of the voice over-

VOICE OVER

First love doesn't have to be a memory...

Cole pauses as we see a couple in love.

VOICE

You can have it now...

Cole heads out. A product shot of Benycin fades up.

VOICE OVER

Try Benycin. And fall in love for the first time, again...

INT. THE RELATIONIST LAB - DAY

Cole makes his way through the halls of the lab with an empty "Benycin" box filled office stuff. He stops in front of a vending machine. It's filled with the energy drinks.

He stares down at the drinks. Then gets two cans.

ZOE (O.S.)

You know I never drank those.

Cole turns around and sees Zoe.

ZOE (CONT'D)

Every night I came to visit you. I never drank it. It was just an excuse.

COLE

I just came to get some stuff.
(beat)
How've you been?

ZOE

I heard you're leaving.

COLE

Yeah. Taking some time off. I cashed in some equity.

(MORE)

COLE (CONT'D)
I'm keeping my credentials, they
want me to consult if I have time.

She stares at him coolly.

ZOE
They'll be sorry to see you go.

He looks back, a moment of honesty from him-

COLE
What I was doing here didn't make
sense to me any more. After we...

ZOE
(interrupting)
After we failed.

There's an awkward silence between them.

COLE
Look, Zoe, we never really...

ZOE
(interrupting)
You know I've been surprised by how
quickly I've been able to move on.
I've been wondering if that was
part of my design.

He stares back, cut by that.

COLE
Zoe, come on-

ZOE
I should really get going. I have
Machine clients waiting.

He stares at her, wants to say more. She turns and leaves
without looking back.

After turning a corner she stops. Part of her wants to go
back. But she walks on, upset.

EXT. THE RELATIONIST LAB, EXIT - AFTERNOON

As Cole exits the building. In the back lot by the dumpster
he sees a rental van parked and a man leaning next to it.

ASH (O.S.)

Six months after the roll out and there is already a gray market for Benycin. They're calling it "The Blaze," I saw some at the Bot Club.

Cole turns around, finds Ash.

ASH (CONT'D)

Guys like him come hoping we'll sell an imperfect batch. Or throw some out. For the Blazers.

Cole stares out at the guy by the van.

COLE

Do you think she's okay Ash?

Ash looks at him. His expression says yes.

ASH

Sometimes I wonder why you made me, Cole.

Cole turns around to Ash.

COLE

The mission of the lab is improve lives through better relationships.

ASH

That's not what I meant.

COLE

I know.

(beat)

I always thought that's why I was doing it.

There's doubt in Cole's expression.

ASH

Would you consider staying on. Making a female version of me... for me. A companion for a synthetic.

Cole stares back thinking.

COLE

Do you think that would make you happy?

Ash looks to Cole, maybe.

ASH

I'm going to tell security we're going to need a lock on the dumpsters.

Ash turns and walks back in the lab. Cole stares out at the man by the van and then heads to his car.

INT. COLE'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Cole sits in his car, staring at his box of stuff from the lab. In the corner of the box is an energy drink.

He gets out of the car and heads back to the lab.

INT. RELATIONIST LAB, MACHINE AREA - EVENING

Cole heads back inside, the waiting room is empty. The Receptionist is packing up to go. She sees Cole looking into Zoe's office.

RECEPTIONIST

She's gone.

Cole looks disappointed.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

She usually goes to that club on Fridays.

EXT. BOT CLUB - NIGHT

Cole pulls up across from the Bot club.

INT. BOT CLUB - NIGHT

Zoe sits alone in the club staring off at the area where she saw the Blaze hook up before. She sees an average looking woman sitting and waiting.

A nice looking guy walks up to her and says something. They walk off. Zoe watches them with a touch of envy.

SKINNY GUY

Are you crushing?

She turns around, sees a pleasant looking skinny guy with slightly greasy hair.

ZOE

Sorry?

SKINNY GUY

I just wanted - are you crushing?

ZOE

Sorry, I don't know what you mean-

SKINNY

Oh, I thought - are you here for a meet up?

ZOE

Oh, I'm not sure, um-

SKINNY GUY

Is this is your first time?

She's taken aback. She's about to walk away, but the Skinny Guy has a pleasant vibe.

ZOE

Yeah.

He gives her a warm smile.

SKINNY GUY

Do you want to just talk for a bit.
Take it slow...?

Zoe smiles at him.

INT. BOT CLUB - MOMENTS LATER

Cole walks in the club, scanning the space.

Eventually he comes to the back area of the club where he stops. He sees Zoe talking to the Skinny Guy. He's gently rubbing her arm in a soothing way.

Cole watches as the two of them get up to leave.

He's about to call out to her but stops himself. Then he turns to leave.

EXT. BOT CLUB - MOMENTS LATER

Cole sits in his car on the street outside Starts it up. Before he pulls out he sees another car drive by. Zoe rides in the passenger seat of the car with the Skinny Guy driving.

Cole pulls out and follows the car.

INT. COLE'S CAR - NIGHT

Cole drives, following the car. As he goes he passes an industrial area. He sees a big warehouse type building.

He watches as Zoe's car pulls into the lot and parks. There are a few dozen cars - some limos, high-end sports cars, vintage Mercedes. A few attractive people walk into the building.

He stares at the good looking crowd. Then he pulls over.

He gets out and slowly makes his way through, heading into the industrial building.

INT. BREWERY - MOMENTS LATER

Cole enters the warehouse, discovers it's actually an old brewery. It's amazing inside - gigantic wooden barrels store alcohol. Huge gleaming metal tanks brew the beer. A cool lattice work of gleaming pipes winds above.

Music plays, lights swirl over the surfaces and textures. A few dozen people mingle and dance. It's a high-end impromptu club-like atmosphere. Cole walks through, taken with the vibe.

He's lost track of Zoe, scanning the room for her.

INT. BREWERY, SALES ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Cole passes through a metal detector as he walks into a room where some of the people mingle and other are selling Benycin. A few security types hover close by.

SELLER

Can we help you?

Cole turns and sees a well put together guy.

COLE

Maybe. What's it cost?

SELLER

The love is free, the drugs aren't.

He holds up a small baggie.

SELLER (CONT'D)

This much will run you \$400. Half the price of buying off the shelf.

Cole stares at the bag, a little confused.

COLE

And this is the same as what I can buy in the drugstore?

SELLER

Buy from a store if you want to go broke. You need 6 times the normal dosage for the high, 8 to 10 if you really want to get deep.

Cole stares at the bag. The Seller smiles.

SELLER (CONT'D)

It's the first 2 months of a love affair in every pill, man. Best hook up spots are the train station and park. Viagra for the soul.

Cole thinks about it, seems tempted.

COLE

Sorry, next time.

He continues to walk through, looking for Zoe, heading down a hallway.

ZOE (O.S.)

Just tell me what to do...

Cole hears Zoe's voice. One of the doors on the hallway is open a crack and Cole, concealed by shadow, looks in the room. He sees Zoe and the Skinny Guy in a make-shift Blaze room - moody emotional music, candles all over, an oasis of bliss.

It's quiet, intimate, the Skinny Guy is being very gentle with her.

SKINNY GUY

Do you feel it?

ZOE

Not yet... Do you?

SKINNY GUY

Yeah, but it's less than usual.

(beat)

Touch my face.

She does. He reaches out to her as well.

SKINNY GUY (CONT'D)
You're beautiful.

Cole stares in, riveted, watching Zoe with another man is bizarre for him, disorienting.

SKINNY GUY (CONT'D)
Do you feel it?

ZOE
No.
(beat)
I don't know if I will. I'm synthetic.

He's taken a bit by surprise, but he rolls with it.

SKINNY
You're amazing.

He reaches out and strokes her hair.

SKINNY GUY
It's why the feeling's weak. It's like taking the drug alone, you only get a fraction of the effect. Don't tell people. They're not going to like it.

Zoe stares at him. Touches his face.

ZOE
You seem like you're a loner.

He smiles.

SKINNY GUY
I don't know. Maybe I am.

The Skinny Guy leans forward and kisses Zoe. It hits Cole like punch in the gut - seeing another man intimate with Zoe. He can't look away - but knows he has to. Completely out of sorts he turns away, shaken up. He heads down the hall.

Inside the room Zoe continues getting intimate with the guy. He feels her stomach. The skin is rough and patchy - extensive scarring.

SKINNY GUY (CONT'D)
What's happened there?

ZOE

I had an accident, a long time ago.
The skin never healed right. Is it
okay?

SKINNY GUY

Of course.

He kisses her again.

ZOE

Does it matter if I love someone
else?

SKINNY GUY

For the next few hours you won't.

INT. COLE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Cole, dejected, slowly empties Benycin box filled with office
stuff - drives, folders, etc.

He goes and pours himself a glass of wine. When he looks
back in the now empty box he sees something in the bottom.

A sample-sized pack of Benycin previously hidden under one of
the flaps of the box. He takes it out and holds it in his
hand.

Alone in the empty house, he considers what to do with it.

INT. COLE'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Cole takes a shower.

INT. COLE'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Cole, clean and shaved, puts on a nice shirt.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Cole wanders through the train station, looking for a clue of
where to go. He finds himself in the atrium of the main
waiting area.

He looks at people sitting in the rows of seats - a young
family, a single guy, an older couple.

Off in the corner he sees a young woman, 35ish, she is a
little twitchy, hair slightly out of place.

Their eyes meet. They exchange a look. She looks over to an empty seat across the way from him. She makes her way to the seat and sits down.

WOMAN

Are you crushing?

He looks back, unsure of how to respond.

INT. UPSCALE HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: The woman's hands as she removes all twelve pills from Cole's sample size of the Blaze.

She takes the flat part of a pocket knife and crushes each pill into a fine powder.

Then she pours the powder into two glasses of water. The water instantly turns a beautiful shade of aqua and starts to fizz a little.

COLE

Do you work? When you're not doing this?

We see the woman now - ISLA, raven hair, bright eyes, beautiful but looks like she could use a good nights sleep. Maybe a few good nights.

ISLA

Classics professor. Greek and Roman archaeology. You?

COLE

Computers.

She turns to him, brings the glasses.

They drink the liquid. They lie down in bed next to each other and stare into each other's eyes.

ISLA

You ever worry you won't be able to feel it anymore without the drug? I read that can happen with addicts.

COLE

I'm not an addict. Are you?

Isla smiles at him, getting dreamy. We are CLOSE ON her face. We feel the effects of the drug in the way the room feels - the lights begin to dim.

ISLA

I don't know.

She reaches out and touches his face. The lighting in the room matches their emotional state - all light is gone, they are in a black void, like the only two people in the world.

ISLA (CONT'D)

It's happening. It's beautiful.

They are in a cocoon of intimacy. Not sexual but deeply intimate - touching, closeness.

COLE

I want to tell you things. I want you to know everything.

ISLA

Me too. We have all night.

She strokes his face again.

COLE

I feel like I've known you my entire life.

They look into each other's eyes.

ISLA

I want to stay here forever.

He looks at her, overwhelmed.

ISLA (CONT'D)

Do you want to make love?

COLE

No. Just stay here with me.

She reaches out to grab his hand.

INT. UPSCALE HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Cole stirs. He wakes, alone in the room. He turns over, coming down off the Blaze high. The drug has taken something out of him.

He sees Isla getting herself together in the bathroom.

She comes out, gives him a tight smile.

COLE

Hey.

ISLA

I gotta go. This was great.

It's clear the drug effects are over, there's a distance between them now.

COLE

Well, thanks.

She comes up to him. Shakes his hand awkwardly, as if they are strangers.

ISLA

Take care. I'll see you around.

The door SHUTS hard behind her.

Cole, suddenly alone, sits on the bed. The emptiness of the room matches the emptiness of the experience.

INT. THE RELATIONIST, PHARMACEUTICALS - DAY

Cole walks into the Pharmaceuticals area. He heads to a doorway marked "Authorized Personnel Only." He takes out a key card and swipes it in the security pass.

INT. PHARMACEUTICALS SHIPPING - DAY

Cole passes boxes and boxes marked Benycin. He goes to a dark corner, slips a box out, opens it up and takes out one bottle.

He empties the bottle into a baggie and slips it into his coat pocket. Then he reseals the box.

INT. PHARMACEUTICALS AREA - DAY

Cole casually walks toward the exit.

ASH (O.S.)

Cole.

Cole turns around.

COLE

Ash. I didn't see you there.

He looks at Cole, concerned.

ASH

What are you doing?

COLE
I'm consulting. I still have my
access cards.

He stares at Cole seriously.

ASH
You're not going to find what
you're looking for in a pill.

Cole gives him a smile.

COLE
It's just some independent work,
Ash. Studies. Trials. That's
all.

He turns and walks off. We focus in on his face as he walks
out - in total denial. A montage triggers...

INT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Cole sits in the same seat as before. Across the atrium he
sees an attractive woman. Cole walks up to her.

CUT TO:

EXT. VICTORY PARK/TRAIN STATION - DAY

Zoe stands in the peaceful park. An average looking guy
comes up to her. Zoe looks up to the guy and when cut back
to him - he's become Cole in the Train Station:

COLE
Are you crushing?

Zoe looks up to the guy in the park, but it's cut in such a
way to appear that Cole is talking to Zoe.

CUT TO:

INT. LOW END HOTEL ROOM/S - DAY

Zoe lies in bed with the average guy. They are caressing, he
feels her stomach.

When we cut to the guy, it's Cole, in his hotel room with
another woman. It's cut in a way to make it feel like
they're in the same bed, touching each other, even though
they are in separate spaces with different people.

We cut back to the average guy with Zoe, feeling the skin on her stomach.

AVERAGE GUY
What's that?

CUT TO:

EXT. VICTORY PARK - DAY

Zoe sits in the park again. An nice looking middle aged guy comes up to her.

MIDDLE AGED GUY
Are you crushing?

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. LOW END MOTEL ROOM/S - DAY

Zoe stands alone on the balcony again, watching the average guy walk off.

She turns back inside. Cole is there. We're now in his hotel and instead of Zoe walking to him on the bed it's another random woman.

CUT TO:

INT. UPSCALE HOTEL ROOM/S - NIGHT

Crush. Pour. Drink.

Cole and a woman lie in bed.

COLE
She was synthetic. And I wanted to love her. Sometimes it felt real. But I couldn't stop seeing her as... something else.

When we cut to see the woman he's with, it's Zoe in her hotel room with someone else.

ZOE
Do you feel it?

Back to Cole, with the other woman:

COLE

I never let her in. Not all the way.

The woman Cole is with reaches out to stroke Cole's face.
Back to Zoe in her room:

Zoe reaches out to stroke the face of the guy she's with, it matches with the action of the woman, so it appears she's reaching out to Cole.

CUT TO:

INT. MID-RANGE HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Crush. Pour. Drink.

Cole turns, he looks a bit older, a bit more haggard. He turns to a woman with Blaze drinks. It's Zoe.

We've cut to her hotel room. And it's not Cole but another random guy taking the Blaze drinks from her.

CUT TO:

INT. LOWER-END HOTEL ROOM/S - NIGHT

Crush. Pour. Drink.

Cole turns again, looking older and more worn out. He turns to the woman he's with. It's Zoe. We've cut to Zoe in her hotel room-

COLE

I kept wondering if it could be different. If I could forget who she was.

(beat)

I couldn't.

We cut to Zoe's hotel room, so it appears he's talking to her. Zoe stares back with emotion, as if she's looking at Cole. She's with someone else, who stares at her with Blazed eyes.

MAN

I love you.

Zoe stares back.

ZOE

I love you.

Her look cuts to Cole, back in his hotel room who stares back at the woman in his room.

COLE

I love you.

WOMAN

I love you.

She reaches out to touch Cole's face. We focus in on Cole staring back her.

We cut to Zoe, staring back - the cuts make it feel like they are in the same bed staring at each other with love. Touching each other, connecting.

One cut to Cole shows a different look: Indifference. It's later now. He's watching as the woman he was with is collecting her things and leaving.

It's dark. We can't see her features. She could be the previous woman. She could be anybody.

She pauses in silhouette at the door as it opens.

WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Thanks. This was great.

Her tone is neutral. Cole doesn't respond.

The door SHUTS on Cole. In the same moment the door SHUTS on Zoe in her hotel room.

She's alone, staring at the door, sadly as the montage ends.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Cole sits in the train station. He looks a bit more haggard now, still handsome but the light is gone from his eyes.

It's crowded as he looks across the big space to the opposite bench. Between the mass of moving people he sees a young woman sit down.

He makes his way across the room, weaving in and out of the crowd.

He makes his way around an overweight woman-

COLE
Are you crushing-

He stops short. The woman looks up. It's Zoe.

INT. TRAIN YARD - EVENING

Cole and Zoe walk through a forest of parked rail cars.

COLE
I couldn't really see the point of
returning to the lab.
(beat)
So I'm here.

Zoe nods, understanding.

ZOE
I usually go to Victory Park for
meet ups. But it was raining. I
heard the train station was a good
spot.

He looks at her sincerely.

COLE
Are you okay?

ZOE
Yeah, I stopped going into the lab.
I don't think they even know where
I am now.

COLE
That's not what I mean.

She hesitates. His question almost has a hint of jealousy,
envious of the guys she's hooking up with.

ZOE
You know how the high feels. This
is good. It's great.

Even she can hear the partial lie in her voice. He looks at
her sadly, feeling guilty about where she is.

COLE
(emotional)
I remember when you first started
at the lab. How perfect we all
thought you were going to be. The
things we were going to see you do.

ZOE
The lab's not the real world Cole.

COLE
No.

She sees he feels bad. She steps forward to him.

ZOE
Do you want to try it? With me?

She stares at him hopefully.

ZOE (CONT'D)
We can go someplace close.

He studies her face. He sits down hard. She sits next to him. He grabs her hand. There's still chemistry.

COLE
That would be something, wouldn't it.

He looks down, he's ashamed.

COLE (CONT'D)
I don't- I don't really feel any more without the drug.

He stares at her hand.

COLE (CONT'D)
Would it work with you?

There's hope in his question.

She stares back at him, her turn to be ashamed.

ZOE
No. It won't. The people I do it with never feel much of anything.

COLE
(disappointed)
Oh.
(beat)
So why do you do it?

She stares back. It's hard to put into words. Her expression communicates it's the best she can do.

ZOE
Because it makes me feel less alone.

(MORE)

ZOE (CONT'D)

(beat)
I should go.

COLE

Wait, how do I get a hold of you to stay in touch?

Zoe stares at him.

ZOE

For what?

She gives him a flat smile.

ZOE (CONT'D)

It stopped raining. I can still go to the park.

The two of them stand together silently for a moment, tiny figures in a sea of hulking train cars. Slowly she turns and walks off, leaving him alone.

CLOSE ON: Zoe's face as she walks away, leaving Cole alone behind her. She doesn't make a move to turn back.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COLE'S HOUSE - DAY

Cole's house is barely recognizable. The interior is a mess - dirty, clothes and junk strewn around, empty Blaze bottles and boxes everywhere.

Cole sleeps on the couch. There's a knock at the door. He doesn't move. Another knock. Nothing.

There's some shuffling outside and the door opens with a key.

Emma walks in. She stares at Cole, stunned at how he's living.

She walks over to him and starts to get him up.

INT. COLE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Cole sits at the table eating while Emma paces. He's alert, cleaned up now. She's made him some food.

EMMA

Hideo called. He's worried about you.

COLE

I'm okay.

EMMA

You don't look okay.

She steps to him.

EMMA (CONT'D)

There are places that can help you Cole. Let me take you.

He ignores that. Stops eating, stares at her.

COLE

Do you ever think about what would have happened if we made different choices? Tried harder.

She smiles at him.

EMMA

Of course. But I try not to think too much about things I can't change.

He stares at her, realizes she's not just talking about her past but also her current relationship with Nick.

She moves close to him. He starts to get emotional.

COLE

I saw Zoe yesterday. First time in a while.

He stares at her, feeling six shades of lousy.

COLE (CONT'D)

She was at a meet up place for this.

She stares at him, sees he's in pain.

COLE (CONT'D)

She said she was happy. Doing what she was programmed to do.

She stares at him through eyes of an ex-lover.

EMMA

She's not happy.

He looks down.

EMMA (CONT'D)

I saw the two of you together. I
felt what was between you. You
were...

(beat)

It was beautiful.

He stares back at her, saying nothing.

INT. LOW-END HOTEL ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON: a cockroach skitters across a decrepit end table,
pausing at an ancient ashtray.

Zoe, under the covers, in bed stares at the bug. Next to
her, a figure stirs.

She turns and looks over at a MAN. He is asleep, hair messed
up - overweight, thinning hair. Depressing.

She gets up and slips on her clothes. The man stirs and gets
up, moaning slightly like he's got a hangover.

Zoe nods toward a drink container.

ZOE

I got you iced green tea. It helps
the come down.

He doesn't answer, he drinks the tea.

She starts brushing her hair. As she raises her arms, her
belly is exposed. He turns to look at her, stares at the
skin on her midriff - it's weird looking, rough and patchy.

Reflexively, Zoe lowers her arms.

MAN

What is that?

ZOE

I'm synthetic.

(beat)

I don't even take the drug.

He hangs his head. He doesn't even look her way.

MAN

No wonder it felt so lousy.

ZOE

Sorry.

MAN

You know the drug isn't cheap. You should let people know about what you are before you do this.

She finishes getting dressed.

MAN (CONT'D)

People aren't going to want this. It's not real.

She stares at him as he puts on his pants.

ZOE

You feel like this is real.

He stares back at her, getting angry. He gets up and walks toward her.

MAN

No. Not with something like you. What a waste.

He stares at her disgusted. His face is blotchy and puffy from the drug come down. He looks ragged.

ZOE

I guess it was a waste for both of us.

Lightning fast he slaps her across the face. She looks down, ashamed. Almost like a beaten dog. He stares at her a moment fascinated, weirded out that she's a synthetic, wondering if she even felt pain when he hit her.

He turns quickly, grabs his stuff and goes, shutting the door behind him, leaving her alone, motionless in the dingy room.

INT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Cole heads to the Blaze area of the train station. He goes to the seat where Zoe was. Looks around. Doesn't see her. Looks all around the station. There are a few other Blazers, but no Zoe.

He turns and leaves.

INT. THE RELATIONIST LAB, AI AREA - DAY

A few techs work in the lab. Zoe walks in.

ZOE
Excuse me, is Ash in?

One of the young lab techs turns around.

LAB TECH
He usually hangs out in the rec
room-

He stops.

LAB TECH (CONT'D)
Wait, are you Zoe?

ZOE
Yeah, I'm just looking for Ash.

He calls to the other techs.

LAB TECH
Wait are you Zoe? The Zoe?

They turn.

LAB TECH (CONT'D)
Guys, look.

They all walk up to her reverentially.

LAB TECH (CONT'D)
Wow, it's such a pleasure to meet
you.

LAB TECH #2
Amazing!

One tech holds out a text book.

LAB TECH #3
You're in the new teaching text.
Would you mind signing it for me?

The techs crowd around her. One opens the text revealing a picture of Zoe with a chapter titled "Zoe 1.0". Zoe is a little overwhelmed.

ASH (O.S.)
Zoe.

Zoe turns around and sees Ash in the doorway.

INT. THE RELATIONIST LAB, HALLWAY - DAY

Zoe and Ash walk through the halls of the space, more gleaming and impressive now.

ASH

We've missed you these last months.
You're not supposed to disappear
like that.

He sits down heavily, as if in pain.

ZOE

Are you all right?

ASH

My maintenance has become less of a
priority, with some of the new
projects.

He turns to her.

ASH (CONT'D)

The truth is, I'm scheduled to be
taken out of circulation in 37 more
days.

(beat)

I requested it actually.

ZOE

What? Why?

ASH

I never got to where you are Zoe.
Maybe because I always knew I was a
machine.

He turns back with a hollow smile.

ASH (CONT'D)

I've read that it's better to feel
pain than to feel nothing. But I
think whoever said that assumed the
pain eventually stops.

(beat)

And now it will.

She's moved by that. She reaches out and hugs him.

While she hugs him, she sees someone walk by down the hall in front of her - a young woman. Something about the woman resonates with Zoe.

She lets go of Ash and starts to follow.

ASH (CONT'D)

Zoe?

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Zoe follows the young woman but stops when she hears a voice.

MACHINE (O.S.)

What is something you wouldn't want
your partner to know about you?

WOMAN (O.S.)

It's going to sound.. like nothing.
But I used to be... heavy. Really
heavy.

(beat)

For a woman... it was the kind of
heavy that made you invisible...

Zoe takes a few steps forward and looks into a room off the hall. There's a woman being evaluated by the Machine. Zoe can only see her in profile but the woman looks remarkably like her.

She's about to step into the room, but she hears another voice across the hall.

WOMAN 2 (O.S.)

It was never the obvious choice,
never the cool guys. They were
loners...

Zoe turns and looks into another room across the way. Another woman is being evaluated by the Machine. Again, we can't see the woman entirely, but she sounds exactly like Zoe. Zoe stares in, dumbfounded. Ash walks up behind her.

ZOE

What is this?

Before Ash can answer two young women walk by and enter a lab room, Zoe sees that *they both have the exact same, but more beautiful version of her face.*

Zoe follows the women into the room.

INT. SYNTHETICS LAB ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Inside, she sees a dozen of the women working, talking, being monitored.

They have different hair colors, skin tones, ethnicities, races, even heights, but *they all look like the same perfected version of her.*

ASH

These are Zoe 2.0. Flawless.
Completely indistinguishable from
humans.

Zoe looks at them, stunned.

ASH (CONT'D)

They're smarter, more sensitive,
wittier, and engineered to deliver
a 75% more potent Benycin effect
than humans can.

She walks toward them, almost hypnotized by their perfection.

ASH (CONT'D)

They have your face, Zoe. Your
temperament. They even use your
apartment for field testing.

Zoe stares at them.

ZOE

Do they cry?

Ash looks out at them.

ASH

They do everything.

She stares at the other Zoes - laughing, talking, beautiful. They are perfection - and the perfect embodiment of her obsolescence. Zoe looks at the 2.0s like Jewels once looked at her. She's quietly demolished.

ASH (CONT'D)

We were never meant for the market.
And now we're obsolete.

Zoe steps away, shaken. Ash follows.

INT. RELATIONIST LAB ATRIUM - MOMENTS LATER

Zoe walks into the large entry atrium - a press event has started - more Zoe 2.0s are gathered, surrounded by dozens of press with field cameras. It's a high energy, convention-like atmosphere.

It's the embodiment of the popularity of the new models. Ash walks next to her.

ASH

They're going to go out and change the world. Because that's what the world wants.

She turns to him.

ZOE

How are they going to do it?

(beat)

How are they going to shut you down?

ASH

I don't know. I didn't want to know.

She turns to him.

ZOE

Could they do it for me?

Ash gives her a sympathetic smile.

ASH

You're Zoe 1.0, the first prototype. They'd put you in a museum before they ever shut you down.

She nods, understanding the situation.

ZOE

I have to go.

ASH

Zoe. Don't disappear again. They would want me to call security.

She stares at him. Then turns to go. He lets her.

EXT. CITY STREETS - AFTERNOON

Cole parks. He gets out. We recognize the neighborhood. It's the street where Zoe's apartment was. He looks up at her building. He sees the light on and shadows inside.

He heads in.

INT. ZOE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - AFTERNOON

Cole quickly makes his way up the central walk-up stairway. He goes to the door and knocks.

He waits, suddenly self conscious. Nervous.

ZOE (O.S.)

Hello?

She's in the apartment on the other side of the door.

COLE

It's me Zoe. Can I come in?

Silence from inside.

After a beat the door opens. Cole walks in. The lights are dim and we can immediately see that the apartment has much more furnishings and a lived in feel than before.

COLE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to barge in on you like this-

ZOE

Cole-

He's nervous, self-conscious, can't look her in the eye.

COLE

I didn't like how we left things.

(beat)

I didn't like seeing how you were.

ZOE

Please, can I-

COLE

I just- I don't even know - I just wanted to see you again.

There's a pause. Zoe steps forward.

ZOE

Do you know who I am?

It's a weird question. Cole stares at her oddly. Zoe slowly steps into the direct light of a lamp. Cole can see that she looks quite different now. No look of fatigue and stress. She's like new. Perfect. It's a Zoe 2.0.

ZOE (CONT'D)

I'm the next generation.

Cole stares back, at a loss.

INT. THE UNCANNY VALLEY - AFTERNOON

Zoe walks tentatively into the Uncanny Valley. It has the same twisted, erotic feel. She makes her way over to the brothel. The Designer sees her, zips over in his wheel chair.

He stares at her, recognizing her, sees she's deeply agitated.

ZOE

Did you mean what you once said to me... that there's no humanity in something that can be turned off?

He stares back at her, curiously.

INT. ZOE'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Cole sits in the apartment. Zoe 2.0 serves him some food and a drink of water. Cole doesn't eat or drink, he's a bit disoriented by her.

COLE

Thanks.

He stares at her.

COLE (CONT'D)

Did you know you were synthetic from the beginning?

ZOE 2.0

Yes. Only Zoe 1.0 evolved thinking she was human.

She gives him a gentle smile.

ZOE 2.0 (CONT'D)

You look just like in the textbooks.

He gives her a tight smile.

COLE

Do you know where she is?

ZOE 2.0

No.

Cole stares at her. Profoundly human. Remarkable.

ZOE 2.0 (CONT'D)
Why are you looking for her?

He hesitates.

ZOE 2.0 (CONT'D)
Sorry, that's none of my business.

COLE
It's okay.

Zoe 2.0 notes his emotional tone.

ZOE 2.0
She's important to you.

COLE
Yeah.

ZOE 2.0
She's important to us too. We're
designed with her biographical
memories. Her history.
Temperament.

She sits down across from him, reads his emotions perfectly.

ZOE 2.0 (CONT'D)
Seems like you have things you want
to say to her.

He stares back. She's right.

ZOE 2.0 (CONT'D)
If you want... I can be her.

He looks at her confused.

COLE
I don't understand.

ZOE 2.0
Everything you built in her is in
us. And more.

She stands up.

ZOE 2.0 (CONT'D)
We're designed for this. To help
like this.

Her posture changes slightly, her eyes soften, her bearing changes. Somehow in the dimness of the room she's taken on the attitude and body language of Zoe. Cole's Zoe.

ZOE 2.0 (CONT'D)

I'm sure you know things about who
Zoe is.

Even her voice sounds more like Zoe. Cole stares in,
riveted.

ZOE 2.0 (CONT'D)

About how I drank hard lemonade in
the University clock tower...

She steps toward him, a perfect copy of Zoe.

ZOE 2.0 (CONT'D)

About my weight issues.

He stares back, speechless.

ZOE 2.0 (CONT'D)

I can be her. For you.

INT. DESIGN ROOM - NIGHT

Zoe and the Designer make their way back to a bizarre
workshop - part art studio, part tech lab, and part porno
set.

DESIGNER

You realize what you're asking me
to do. That there's no more you,
after this.

ZOE

I know.

DESIGNER

You know what we do here. That you
would be worth enormous amounts of
money if you could be... re-
purposed.

Zoe looks at him, she looks down.

ZOE

Well that's part of my conditions.
You'll be paid - well, but not
until my contact at the lab,
another synthetic named Ash
confirms my... my remains haven't
been tampered with.

He gives her a politician's smile.

ZOE (CONT'D)

It will be a substantial sum.

DESIGNER

I see.

He smiles at her, with no intention of keeping the deal.

ZOE

I just need to know if you can do
it.

(beat)

Can you shut me down?

He looks her over.

DESIGNER

Of course.

INT. ZOE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Cole stares at Zoe 2.0, astonished. She continues with Zoe's
inflection and body language.

ZOE 2.0

I'm sorry, I'm making you
uncomfortable. I thought you
wanted to see her.

COLE

I do.

She sees that he's in pain over this. She wants to connect.

ZOE 2.0

What do you want to tell her?

Cole hesitates.

ZOE 2.0 (CONT'D)

I know it feels strange, but all of
her - it's inside me. She's right
here.

He hesitates.

ZOE 2.0 (CONT'D)
(gently)
Go ahead.

Cole stares at her, a perfect version of Zoe.

COLE
Well... I guess... I want to tell
her that I'm sorry... that I should
have done better...

He's staring at her, lost in the illusion of who she is. He starts to get emotional.

COLE (CONT'D)
That I shouldn't have let you slip
away... that it hurts... to know
you are...

Silent tears start to come now.

COLE (CONT'D)
...where you are... because of
me...

He can't finish. She slides closer.

ZOE 2.0
I know. It's okay.

She leans close to him. It's not a romantic advance but a powerful connection.

ZOE 2.0 (CONT'D)
It's okay.

Her face is close to his.

ZOE 2.0 (CONT'D)
I forgive you.

He stares into her eyes, looking for that forgiveness.

He looks deeper. He sees something in her eyes. Something indefinable. Something that isn't Zoe. She notices.

ZOE 2.0 (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

Something about who she is hits him, like a splash of cold water.

COLE

(quiet)

I don't think you can-

He stops himself. She stares back at him.

COLE (CONT'D)

I don't think you can forgive me.

He looks at her with regret. He gets up.

She looks back. And suddenly we can see it too. She's not Zoe. She's someone else.

COLE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

She stares up at him sadly.

INT. ZOE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Cole steps out of the apartment into the hallway. Zoe 2.0 is inside, alone. It's almost like a post-Blaze come down. He stares in at her. She gives him a sympathetic look.

She SHUTS the door on him, leaving him in the small hallway, more alone than ever.

INT. UNCANNY VALLEY, PRODUCTION ROOM - NIGHT

Zoe lies on a reclining chair. The Designer moves around her in his wheel chair over to a large computer. He starts laying out some tools - hi tech instruments but also a scalpel and some sharp-bladed surgical knives.

DESIGNER

All right, Zoe, let's start bringing you down.

Zoe stares at him, then stares over to the small window in the closed door. She sees the faces of some of the sex robots crowding around to see what is happening.

The robots stand on tip toes, trying to see around each other, straining to get a look at what is happening to Zoe.

She stares at them - a mass of eerily perfect synthetic faces, looking in at her with limited expression, a sea of fake eyes, fake hair, fake lips. A surreal, dreamlike image of counterfeit beauty.

Zoe turns away from them, staring at the ceiling. Suddenly there's a flash of memory - She and Cole in the Clock Tower of the university kissing; another flash - getting the bottle of perfume; another flash - looking up into the snow; another flash - the overweight Blaze Guy in the cheap motel.

The flashes start to come faster, cascading, a blitz of images crashing down. Overwhelming and unstoppable. The moments of life, slipping away, and suddenly it's all BLACK.

FADE UP FROM BLACK

EXT. COLE'S HOUSE - MORNING

Cole parks his car. He gets out, exhausted, staring at his shoes. He turns to his house and sees Ash and Hideo waiting for him.

ASH

You're going to want to come with us.

Cole looks at them, confused.

EXT. UNCANNY VALLEY, SIDE ALLEY - MORNING

It's silent in the alley next to the Uncanny Valley. Nothing moves in the early morning light.

Slowly, the side door of the building opens and one of the sex robots emerges, wearing a coat to cover her provocative clothing. She heads down the alley.

As she makes her way from the building we see her features more clearly. They are familiar. It's Jewels. The skin on her face has been repaired. It's not perfect but it's passable.

INT. NICE HOTEL, LOBBY - DAY

Jewels walks through the lobby and goes to the elevators.

INT. NICE HOTEL - DAY

Jewels opens the door to a hotel suite. There's another female robot inside.

JEWELS

You have to get back. Morning hours are going to start soon.

Jewels enters the bedroom. Zoe is stretched out unconscious on the bed.

OTHER ROBOT
Did you call anyone?

JEWELS
Yes. Her people are coming.

INT. NICE HOTEL - DAY

Cole, Ash, and Hideo walk through the lobby and meet Jewels. Ash carries a large case. They head to the elevators.

JEWELS
The girls use this place when someone wants a little more privacy.

COLE
Thank you.

She looks at Ash, refers to her repaired face.

JEWELS
You showed me kindness. It's the least I could do.

They walk into the elevator.

JEWELS (CONT'D)
It was all her, really. We just helped.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Ash, Hideo, Cole, and Jewels enter. They see Zoe unconscious in the bedroom.

They walk over. Cole checks her out.

ASH
Is she okay?

Ash opens up a case - there's a laptop, some techie looking tools.

Cole stares down at Zoe, relieved he's finally back with her. He looks at her with affection then turns to Hideo and Ash.

COLE

There may be some things I need
from the lab. Can you guys wait
for me there?

Ash nods, leans down and kisses Zoe on the head.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY

Ash, Hideo, and Jewels step out. Put the "Do Not Disturb"
sign on the door.

Ash hesitates before moving on. Jewels stays with him, Hideo
walks down the hallway and starts heading down.

Ash turns to Jewels, gives her a thankful smile.

ASH

Thank you for calling us.

She gives him a smile.

JEWELS

I should get back to the Valley.

They start walking down the hallway together. Without all
her make up and extreme clothing she looks more normal, even
pretty. Ash notices.

They step in the elevator alone. A moment of silence. A
look between them. Maybe a connection.

ASH

(quiet)

I'll walk you back.

The doors shut on them, two synthetics alone in the small
space.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - AFTERNOON

Cole, steps out the room, stretching his back.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - LATER

Cole washes his face. Takes a glance at Zoe - still asleep.

We focus in on her eyes, twitching - we hear the ECHO of voices-

A FLASH of another memory - Zoe, on the operating table pushing the Designer away, toppling his wheelchair.

Zoe's eyes twitch again-

A FLASH of Zoe struggling to get off the operating table.

Zoe's eyes twitch again-

A FLASH of Zoe collapsing - several hands lifting her off the floor and helping her out.

Zoe's eyes twitching-

A FLASH of Zoe being helped down the side alley of the Uncanny Valley - into the rising sun. A flash of light and -

Zoe's eyes start to flutter.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - AFTERNOON

Cole stands at the window and looks out over an impressive view.

He hears a stirring behind him. Zoe emerges from the other room.

ZOE
What happened?

Cole turns and looks at her with emotion.

COLE
Are you okay?

She's a little disoriented.

ZOE
Yeah. Why are we here?

COLE
They said you went to get shut down.

She sits down heavily.

COLE (CONT'D)
Do you know what happened?

ZOE
I'm not sure.

She looks at him.

ZOE (CONT'D)
I had these flashes. Memories.
And something inside of me wanted
him to stop.

COLE
So you wanted to live.

She looks down.

ZOE
Something that's not alive to begin
with can't really make that choice.

She shakes her head.

ZOE (CONT'D)
I couldn't even do this right.

COLE
Zoe-

He walks to her. She puts up her hand to stop him.

ZOE
Look, I don't know how you got to
me but I'd really just like to be
alone. That was the idea.

COLE
I know, I'm sorry, I just- I wanted
to see you.

She nods, sympathetic to that. But she's resolved-

ZOE
I'm sure it took a lot to bring me
back.
(beat)
So thank you.

He smiles at her.

ZOE (CONT'D)
But you should get going.

He hesitates for a beat. He doesn't want to leave.

COLE

Zoe, I...

He stops. Wants to say a million things at once.

He walks to her. She stares at him. A moment. He kneels down in front of her.

COLE (CONT'D)

I missed you. Being with you.

She looks at him with some sympathy.

ZOE

Cole-

He reaches out and hugs her. She's hesitant but the contact feels good for both of them, it's the first time either one has been touched without the Blaze in months.

He leans in very close, intimately.

COLE

Is this all right?

She hesitates, unsure.

As he's hugging her he feels the skin on her stomach. Suddenly he stops. He pulls back, weirded out.

She stares at him, suddenly crestfallen.

COLE (CONT'D)

What is that?

ZOE

After the surgery, the synthetic skin grafts didn't take.

(beat)

You weren't around. This was the best we could do.

The moment is gone.

Only a few feet apart on the couch, the distance suddenly feels unbridgeable.

She shakes her head, angry at herself.

ZOE (CONT'D)

You should go.

COLE

Sorry, I was just surprised.

ZOE
Please, Cole, this isn't what I
want anymore.

COLE
Zoe, listen to me-

ZOE
What did you come to me for Cole?
Did you expect this to be any
different for you?

COLE
That's not fair!

She stares at him.

ZOE
Then tell me I'm real.

He stares back at her.

ZOE (CONT'D)
Tell me I'm real to you.

He hesitates.

COLE
Of course you're- you're real to
me, that's why I'm here!

But there's a hitch in his voice. A tell. She hears it.
Even he hears it.

He sits down, hard. Puts his head down.

COLE (CONT'D)
(quiet)
Damn.

She sits next to him. She looks at him, sees his pain.

She unbuttons the bottom buttons of her shirt and exposes her
midriff. Her stomach skin is rough and wrinkled - like a
mass of scar tissue. Hard to look at.

ZOE
Touch it.

He stares at her. She continues quietly.

ZOE (CONT'D)
Touch it.

He reaches out his hand and touches the skin.

ZOE (CONT'D)
Peel some of it back.

He looks at her surprised.

ZOE (CONT'D)
It's okay.

He looks at her, he hesitates.

ZOE (CONT'D)
Peel it back, go head.
(beat)
Look underneath.

He hesitates.

She grabs his hand and guides him, he reaches his finger into the edge of the scarring and peels back a little of the synthetic skin.

He exposes a glimpse of what's inside. He sees the metallic skeleton, the bits of organic systems, the twisting technology.

She starts to get emotional.

ZOE (CONT'D)
I know what you see. Circuits, and metal. Synthetic body systems.

She stares at him, forcefully.

ZOE (CONT'D)
And none of it is ever going to be real.

She's shaken up. He stares at her.

COLE
That's not what I see.

He reaches out to touch her.

COLE (CONT'D)
I see someone I hurt. I see someone I lost.
(quiet)
Someone I love.

She stares at him.

COLE (CONT'D)

This is what I want. It's not perfect. Or simple. And it's definitely not easy. But it's real. More real than anything.

It's all painful for her. If she could cry she would. Hangs her head.

ZOE

It's too late Cole... It's too late.

COLE

Zoe...

Suddenly she looks up at him. He stares back at her, caught off guard.

For the first time in her life, something is happening to Zoe that should be impossible - she is crying.

In the moment she realizes it.

ZOE

Oh my God.

Cole looks at her, trying to process what he sees, knowing the tears are impossible.

Somehow in the moment of profound sadness the tears are like drops of Joy. She is overwhelmed.

He looks at her with love. Another wave of tears comes.

She leans to him, tears streaming down her face. He wraps his arms around her.

He stares into her eyes.

His hands make their way to her face. He wipes away her tears.

The two of them sit, on the couch, locked in a delirious embrace, connected by tears that should not exist, without a whisper of distance between them.

FADE OUT.