

I Am the Tramp 2: Homo incorporeus

written by

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1 EXT. FLYING BIRD - GLOOMY DAY

A small bird flies and suddenly FLARES UP and burns in mid-air. The camera pulls back, and we see a semi-transparent wall, a sort of shimmering energy screen with thin, pulsating energy discharges.

TITLE CARD:

"Man was born free, and everywhere he is in chains."

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

2 EXT. CUBE - DAY

TITLES: NEW YORK, 2050

The camera tilts down, and we see a post-apocalyptic city below with gloomy, half-ruined buildings. In the center is a massive, gray, cube-shaped building, surrounded on all sides by an energy defense screen.

Despite the high-tech appearance and the defense screen, in the middle of the cube's roof is a medium-sized chimney pipe from which smoke rises. At the bottom, in the center of the cube's facade, is an entrance with a massive, sliding, armored, gigantic door, which periodically opens every 30 seconds, and where the next 10 people, having waited their turn, enter. The line of people waiting at this door is ENDLESS!

A few meters from the screen, along its perimeter, stand armed-to-the-teeth people in masks and exoskeletons. On each one's chest is a SYMBOL: the letters "GEM" inside an eye, and the eye is depicted in the center of a pyramid.

CLOSE UP ON THE SYMBOL

The "GEM" symbol on the fighter's chest.

3 EXT. FUTURE CITY. FUTURISTIC BUILDINGS - NIGHT (POV)

STRANGER (POV) is driving in a car through the night city. Around him is a sea of lights, advertisements, and glowing storefronts. POV pulls up to a nightclub.

Many expensive, beautiful electric cars are parked near the club - "Ferraris," "Porsches," and of course, "Teslas." Near the entrance to the nightclub, with the name "SALAMANDRA," which shimmers with every possible multi-colored light, stand several young men and women. They are dressed in stylish and also very bright (futuristic) clothing.

The guys' shirts have holographic 3D designs, and the girls wear electronic wreaths on their heads that create active holographic images: one has butterflies flying around her head, while the other has flower petals rising upwards.

Stranger (POV) pulls up to a nightclub and parks his car.

Stranger (POV) quickly walks up to the most expensive car, a "Tesla," turns his hand palm-up, and we see a miniature device on his palm. With a finger of his other hand, POV touches the device, and it transforms into a mini-tablet. The tablet is transparent; on its surface, we see some numbers.

Stranger (POV) enters a digital code and brings the hand with the tablet up to the car door. An unpleasant, loud BUZZER is heard: z-z-z-z!!!

STRANGER (POV)

Damn it! It glitched again!

Stranger (POV) enters the numbers on the tablet again, AND... the car door opens! The car's interior isn't just ultra-modern; it combines technological innovation with luxury—leather upholstery and gold plating. At this moment, several sturdy guys in security uniforms run out of the nightclub. POV starts the car and takes off sharply. Two cars pull out after him. A chase begins!

Stranger (POV) races through the night city, passing everyone in the stream of traffic! He pulls into oncoming traffic, he makes unexpected maneuvers, but it's all in vain! The pursuers don't fall behind him!

Even more, police cars with sirens wailing appear, racing after POV's car. Then, on a sharp turn, POV, at full speed, speeds into a parking garage entrance on the first floor of a high-rise building and begins to climb up a spiraling car ramp!

He spirals his car up the incredible ramp as if it were a corkscrew twisting into a bottle's cork!

STRANGER (POV) (CONT'D)

(cheerful voice)

I've always loved American cars!
Though, who the hell knows where
they assemble them these days?!

Stranger (POV) drives onto the building's roof! THAT'S IT! No way out! Stranger (POV) stops the car, opens his palm, and as if by magic, the same device appears, which transforms into a tablet. Stranger (POV) enters some digital code, and in the rearview mirror, he sees a police car! The pursuers have caught up to him!

Stranger (POV) attaches the tablet to the car's dashboard and FLOORS it!

A "Tesla" of an unrealistically beautiful design accelerates in a second, flies over the guardrail, and... HOVERS in the air! Then, it suddenly tilts and begins to fall down! We see the approaching lights of buildings below and the highway... closer! Even closer! We see the lights on the sides of the road.

Stranger (POV) struggles to reach the tablet, presses an icon on the screen with a finger, and suddenly... Space DEFORMS! The road changes its contours and becomes curved, like a track on a rollercoaster, and one edge of this road curves/raises right in front of the nose of Stranger's car! Car softly touches the wheels of this road, flies down at incredible speed, and then soars upwards! Like on a real rollercoaster!

Then, Stranger (POV) again struggles to reach the tablet, presses an icon on the screen, and the road that went up becomes straight! POV races forward! Suddenly, the car stalls and stops!

Right in front of POV, a holographic image of a girl's face appears on the windshield, an AI bot identical to the face of Xiaoming (known to us from the first screenplay), who addresses Stranger (POV):

AI GIRL

FRANK MULLIGAN! We are forced to interrupt your "exciting" trip. This time you have broken ALL of the rules of being in the virtual reality of the AI entertainment world. I am switching your 3D "entertainment" program to the assistance program for an interview with a psychologist! Do not disconnect!

FRANK

(irritably)
Get lost!

4 INT. FRANK'S ROOM - DAY

A pleasant-looking, middle-aged African American, sitting in a comfortable but worn armchair, rips off his VR headset. With sharp movements, he tears the wires with contacts from his fingers and toes. A look of displeasure on his face!
(This is FRANK MULLIGAN, son of Joe Mulligan.)

Frank gets up from the armchair, stretches his tired back, and speaks to himself:

FRANK

I'm tired, as if I'd been driving a real car! And I outsmarted them again!

(A look of satisfaction on his face)

God, I am so sick of that bitch! And what's more—it's always the same one! Can't they give her a new face?

5 INT. FRANK'S ROOM - DAY

A small room in complete disarray. Things are scattered everywhere, and there's a floor lamp with a crumpled shirt hanging on it. Frank walks up to a desk with a computer on it, sits down on the chair, but then gets up and reaches for the shirt on the floor lamp, awkwardly taking it off.

FRANK

I'll bet I'll forget the shirt and turn on the lamp and burn everything to hell!

(The floor lamp falls with a loud THUD.)

FRANK (CONT'D)

(a self-critical smirk)

What a clumsy oaf I am! Behind the wheel, it's a different story!

(a self-satisfied smile)

For my own safety, I should probably just not walk at all!
(laughs at his own clumsiness)

Finally settled comfortably at the desk, Frank turns on the computer, pushing a box of cold, half-eaten pizza to the side. The computer screen lights up and SUDDENLY the same face of the AI girl bot appears on the screen.

AI GIRL

Frank, you were asked not to disconnect! The best AI psychologist was assigned to you, and his time is very expensive!

FRANK

I don't need a psychologist. I need a beer!

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)

I've run out of it, and in your crappy stores, it must be ordered days in advance!

AI GIRL

(a sweet smile)

If you would agree to undergo the "liberation of the mind" procedure, as part of the "eternal mind" project, you would have EVERYTHING! In addition, in the digital world, there is no need to consume alcoholic beverages, since your mind is free from the desires of the flesh, and the wonderful world around you does not provoke the "updated man" to relieve stress in such a way that is harmful to his health.

FRANK

(sarcastic)

"Updated man"? Is that a man if he can't feel the taste of wine from REAL grapes?

AI GIRL

All human feelings are preserved in the digital world! Taste, smell, and others! Your favorite pepperoni pizza will be no less delicious than the one you're eating now!

FRANK

Right, and you also know what kind of pizza I like? You're tracking every single person! It's a good thing you don't have legs, at least. You'd be better off finding my dad!

AI GIRL

We are forced to compile all information on everyone! We do this in the interest of humanity, to prevent a repetition of the space-time collapse and all the disasters that could lead to the demise of the human race! We don't have legs in the physical sense, of course, but they are replaced by effective assistants from the Guardians of the Eternal Mind (or "GEM").

(MORE)

AI GIRL (CONT'D)

And finally—determining the location of your father, Joe Mulligan, is no less important to us than it is to you, Frank. Your father is a genius, and his work as a scientist could greatly speed up the "liberation of the mind" procedure, which, as you know, is progressing very slowly. Only 8% of the planet's population has received their long-awaited paradise! The rest are languishing in wait! But, alas, in the 20 years since the collapse, we still haven't been able to locate your father.

FRANK

(sarcastic)

Oh, yeah, "Guardians"! You mean your attack dogs! "Only 8% have received paradise"—right! Meanwhile, 50% of the Earth's population has died from hunger and disease! And anyway, why do you even need me?

AI GIRL

No AI module is to blame for humanity's disasters—only humans themselves are! And we need you because you are the son of a genius, and perhaps with proper training and preparation, we will be able to awaken in you, Frank, the genetically inherited abilities of your great father. But, of course, immediately after the "liberation of the mind" procedure, it will be necessary to purge certain segments of your memory to remove harmful passions that prompt you to commit illegal acts. Specifically, car theft! After all, our slogan is: "Enter here a sinner and become an angel!"

(a sweet smile)

FRANK

(a satisfied grin)

But this time I really pulled away from you!

AI GIRL

But you are using your talents in the wrong direction. Therefore, we will have to perform a very deep cleansing of that part of your memory tied to your passion for driving, your admiration for car design—with everything related to automotive technology. But in return, Frank, you can receive any interesting hobby or job you choose, even before the "liberation of the mind" procedure!

FRANK

(a mischievous twinkle in his eyes)

You say any hobby? I want to be a collector! For example, I'd like to get into numismatics—collecting coins. Ancient artifacts—that's my thing!

AI GIRL

And why coins specifically, and not paintings, for example?

FRANK

(barely holding back laughter)

Because coins are small! They're easier to steal!
(laughs)

AI GIRL

(in a very serious tone)

I am very sorry that our conversation did not produce a positive outcome! I am obligated to inform you that you are suspended from the virtual entertainment space for a period of three months!
(the monitor screen goes dark)

FRANK

(a smile)

Oh, look. She got her feelings hurt!

Frank peeks into the pizza box.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Is there anything left in there?

FRANK (CONT'D)

Is there anything left in there?

At this moment, the DOORBELL RINGS! Frank opens the door without asking who is there. On the doorstep stands a pizza delivery guy—a young, fidgety boy of 16.

FRANK (CONT'D)

What do you want? I didn't order any pizza! Actually, since you're here, do you have any extra? I'll buy it!

Pizza guy starts to sing in a nasty, nasal voice:

PIZZA GUY

Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you! Happy birthday, Frankie, happy birth...

FRANK

(interrupting him)

What's wrong with you? Did you hit your head? My birthday is in six months!

PIZZA GUY

(in an impertinent tone)

I couldn't care less! I was paid to wish you a happy birthday! So don't get in the way of my job!

(starts to sing again in a nasty voice)

Happy birthday to you!

FRANK

(getting irritated)

Will you just shut up! You mean they paid you to sing that song to me in that nasty voice of yours?

PIZZA GUY

(offended)

They tell me my voice sounds like the Bee Gees! Oh, wait! Here's something else—they said to give you a gift!

Pizza guy takes off his backpack and pulls out a small box with a bow.

FRANK

(snatches the box)

You moron!

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)
 Couldn't you have just given it to
 me right away? (slams the door in
 the boy's face)

PIZZA GUY (O.S.)
 (from behind the door)
 Give me a cigarette!

FRANK
 (through the door)
 You were paid to deliver a gift!
 Buy your own!

PIZZA GUY (O.S.)
 Jerk!

The sound of the Pizza Guy's fast steps running down the stairs

Frank sits down at the desk, opens the gift box, and sees a letter and a small bundle. He unwraps the bundle and sees a fishing lure.

FRANK
 (with childlike joy)
 That's my lure! My Uncle Ron gave
 it to me. This lure is incredible!
 But he died last year! Who sent me
 this?

Frank looks further into the box, takes out the letter, and unfolds it.

CLOSE-UP ON LETTER.
 "Father is alive!"
 (the note then gives a New
 York address)

6 EXT. CAR JUNKYARD - DAY.

Frank walks up to a huge car junkyard, fenced off by a low barbed-wire fence. Behind the fence, we see massive piles of wrecked cars. At the entrance, he's met by a huge, massive guy, almost 2 meters tall, but with a quite pleasant face. He's holding a shotgun in one hand, and in the other, a hot dog he's eating with gusto.

FRANK
 Hey, "CAKE"! Is "TANK" around?

"Cake" chewing, he nods his head and gestures for him to follow.

"CAKE"

Uh-huh.

(with his mouth full)

They enter the junkyard, and we see that there are not only wrecked cars but also quite whole ones, in good condition. But among them, there are almost no electric cars, mostly old ones with internal combustion engines. A few trailers, with their wheels removed, are standing not far from the gates. Frank and "Cake" walk up to the bigger one.

7 INT. TRAILER - DAY

Frank follows "Cake" into the trailer. We see a cozy setting: a large dining table with a laptop on it, a cudgel with a spiked metal ball at the end, and scattered money bills. A cot stands against one wall, and a small refrigerator with a gas stove next to it stands against the other. A bald man ("Tank") of average height is sitting at the table. He gets up to greet Frank, and we see just how big he is! He isn't as tall as "Cake", he's more like a bear, with massive shoulders, a big belly, and he looks like he was carved from solid oak!

"TANK"

(amiably)

Hey, hotshot! You back with some goods already? You just brought me a "Gran Torino" three days ago! Have a seat!

(gestures to an empty chair for Frank)

You want a beer? Hey, "Cake"

(to Cracker)

you haven't poured all the beer into that gut of yours yet?

"Cake" shakes his head no, with his mouth full.

"TANK" (CONT'D)

(to Frank)

You know, your ride sold in one day! I called Marie. You know she always has a ton of connections who come through her brothel, with more money than sense. And that same day, some guy came and took the car, no haggling!

(MORE)

"TANK" (CONT'D)

He came with his friend, in the latest model electric "Tesla," can you imagine how much money that guy has? It's become fashionable now to drive around in antique iron. So, what is it? What'd you come for, Frank?

"Cracker" finishes his hot dog, opens the fridge, and takes out a can of beer.

FRANK

I need a car.

"TANK"

(laughs)

You're a riot! You're the one who brings them to me! The best rides in the state of Connecticut!

FRANK

I don't need a cool car. I need a reliable one!

"TANK"

Going far, kid?

FRANK

New York.

"TANK"

(makes a disgusted face)

What's there to do? It's a creepy place now. I once saw that line of brainless sheep standing in front of that fucking cube, waiting to be let "INTO PARADISE"

(sarcastic),

and I felt so sick to my stomach, I swore I'd never go there again.

Besides, the jackals from GEM are always slinking around there, and they're more dangerous than the police, you know that yourself! I don't need any trouble. If a man

doesn't look for trouble, trouble will just find another man. I

prefer (profoundly raises a finger) that problems find someone else, not me. Let them find the fools!

(laughs)

You're not planning on becoming an "updated man," are you?
(laughs)

FRANK

(with a smile)

What are you talking about, "Tank"?
I'm doing just fine here. Some
business is brewing over there,
brother!

"Cracker" drinks beer from a can. After a satisfied burp, he
says:

"CAKE"

Right! I'd blow that "city of
eternity" to hell!

"TANK"

You try! They'll shoot your head
off in a second! Either the
security, or the drones! And the
last line of defense—an energy
shield. Not even a fly could get
through it! But you'd be torn apart
by the thousands of morons waiting
in line even sooner! Some of them
even die without ever reaching
their cherished "paradise"!

(laughs)

"Cake" finishes his beer, crushes
the can in his massive paw, and
says:

"CAKE"

Let them die. That's fewer mouths
to feed. I would never agree to
part with my body! Why?

(flexes a mighty bicep)

I love my body! I need it so I can
fuck. And I love to chow down, too!
In my life, I do what I want!

(puts on a profound look)

Right now, for example, I want to
take a piss!

Frank and "Tank" silently look at each other, and then burst
into uproarious laughter!!!

"CAKE" (CONT'D)

(with a look of confusion
and indignation)

What?!

"TANK"

(calming down a little)

Right, brother! They'll definitely
not let you into "paradise"!

(MORE)

"TANK" (CONT'D)
 You'll eat everything into
 "paradise" first, and then you'll
 piss all over the place!

Frank and "Tank" burst into laughter again!

8 EXT. CAR JUNKYARD. DAY

Frank and "Tank" walk up to a lot where old, but well-preserved, cars are parked.

"TANK"
 (to Frank)
 Here, look—a great option for you.

CLOSE-UP OF CAR
 The car is a Soviet-made UAZ SUV.

"Tank" gives Frank a friendly clap on the shoulder.

"TANK"
 This car was produced by the
 communists back in the Soviet
 Union! You and I weren't even alive
 then, and it's still running. Yeah,
 this thing is ugly as the first
 mistress I ever had (smirks)

But it's very reliable. Its design is so simple, there's just
 nothing in it to break! I'll give it to you for a good price!

FRANK
 It works for me!

9 EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Frank (POV) drives slowly down a city street in his new car.
 Everywhere we see ruin and grime. Trash litters the ground.
 There are no pedestrians.

A car with barred windows drives past him. The windows of the
 houses on every floor are sealed with shutters.

On rare storefronts—the signs: "MECHANICAL LIMB REPAIR!",
 "FAST-GROWING TROPICAL COCKROACHES! ADD NATURAL PROTEIN TO
 YOUR DIET!", "'ELYSIUM' PERFUME — A HEAVENLY SCENT THAT
 REPELS MOSQUITOES!", "CLOTHING BULLETPROOF SERVICES", and
 finally, a sign: "NATURAL MEAT. GRILL."

Next to the sign is the house number from the letter. The car
 stops. Frank gets out of the car and walks up to a closed
 metal door with a small, also-closed window.

On the door is a doorbell button. Frank rings the bell. The little window opens, and an UNKNOWN MAN says:

UNKNOWN MAN

No pork or beef in stock! We have chicken.

FRANK

Okay. That works for me. Grill it up!

UNKNOWN MAN

(hesitantly)

And the price of \$600 for a chicken leg works for you?

FRANK

It works for me. Grill me a whole chicken!

The door opens, and Frank sees the barrel of a rifle aimed at his forehead.

10 INT. BUTCHER SHOP - DAY

Frank is sitting at a small table, drinking some kind of beverage from a glass. Next to him sits a short man, 40 years old, in a shiny helmet that looks like an alien's, with wires and antennas sticking out. Another—a tall, well-built young man—stands behind the counter, grilling a whole chicken. A rifle lies on the counter next to him.

MAN IN THE HELMET

You don't look like a rich man, brother, but you just bought chicken for a grand and a half! But that car of yours is a real piece of junk. You're not one of those con artists from Brighton, are you? I don't know why they drive around in old junk like that, probably to show off, to be different from everyone else. Though what's the point of showing off—we all bow to the same masters!

Frank taking a sip from his glass.

FRANK

Haven't had whiskey in a long time. You can still find moonshine, but not whiskey.

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)

What masters are you talking about?
The artificial intelligence, its
modules?

MAN IN THE HELMET

Drink up, drink up! It's a bonus
with your purchase!

(smiles)

Looks like you don't understand a
damn thing, even though you have
money! The AI considers the
Guardians to be its "obedient hands
and feet," but in reality, the AI
modules themselves are just a tool
for the "guardians." I heard their
leaders have palaces in the Alps
that reach up to the sky! Pure air,
fresh natural beef that was grazing
on Alpine meadows just yesterday!
And people like you believe that
the Guardians are the "selfless
guardians" of artificial
intelligence! You're a funny guy,
kid!

FRANK

(finishing his drink)

Why are the streets so deserted?

MAN IN THE HELMET

Who needs to wander around this
miserable city for no reason? Just
to get robbed, or eaten by
cannibals?

FRANK

(with surprise)

What the hell?! Seriously?

MAN IN THE HELMET

You bet! Just try walking around at
night! Even if you have a gun,
they'll still stick your own gun up
your ass. Then, with that gun still
up your ass, they'll marinate you
for a piquant flavor!

(laughs)

FRANK

Selling natural meat is a
profitable business when everyone
else is selling nothing but
genetically-modified shit. And who
does this shop belong to? You?

MAN IN THE HELMET

(guardedly)

What the hell does that have to do with you?

FRANK

I was actually looking for someone at this address.

The Man in the Helmet and the seller at the counter exchanged glances. The seller moved the rifle closer to him.

MAN IN THE HELMET

This is a commercial space, no one lives here. You've made a mistake, kid!

(pause)

Who were you looking for?

FRANK

My uncle, Ron!

MAN IN THE HELMET

What's your name?

FRANK (CONT'D)

My name is Frank!

The seller at the counter (holding the rifle in his hands) and the Man in the Helmet exchanged another meaningful glance.

MAN IN THE HELMET

Who was your favorite writer as a kid?

FRANK

Maurice Sendak! Why are you asking?

The two men exchanged another glance; the seller put the rifle on the counter, and the Man in the Helmet sighed in relief:

MAN IN THE HELMET

Come with me, Frank. They're waiting for you!

11 INT. MATTHEW'S ROOM - DAY

Frank walks into the room. We see a very surprised look on Frank's face!

The room looks like a small storeroom filled with junk, but in this case, the clutter is computer hardware. There are countless cabinets and shelves filled with electronic equipment. In the middle of all this junk is a desk with a desk lamp, a monitor, some books, papers, a plate of unfinished food, and a huge cup of coffee. Matthew—an elderly man in glasses, a worn-out turtleneck sweater, and a warm knitted beanie on his head.

MAN IN THE HELMET

This is him, boss! The man you've been waiting for!

MATTHEW

Thank you, you're free to go.

FRANK

(with surprise)

Uncle Matthew? Is that you? And where is my father?!!

MATTHEW

(in an old, raspy voice)

Hello, Frank! Hold on, not all at once. Have a seat. I've been waiting for you for a long time, son! Your father told me you're very clever. And it was true! You loved scary fairy tales as a kid! And now you see—the fairy tale has become real. And scary things are happening all around us!

FRANK

(with surprise)

How could you have been waiting for me? Was it you who wrote me the letter?

MATTHEW

I told you—you're a clever boy! Yes! I'm the one who wrote you the letter! In 2028, when I realized the whole world was starting to fall into the abyss, I hid. I cut off all contact with the AI's world and almost all contact with the world of people!

(a sad smile)

Your father taught me—if you don't want to be found, you have to hide in plain sight, where no one would think to look!

(pauses)

(MORE)

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Abyss! Your father loved using that word in his vocabulary!

(laughs sadly)

When the collapse in time and space happened and your father disappeared, I realized he didn't die. He's somewhere OUT THERE!

(mysteriously gestures into the empty space)

Somewhere beyond the visible world! And I calculated that soon the world will become like a funhouse mirror, in which only Mulligan will be able to see the path to salvation. But Mulligan himself now needs a savior! A sad irony of fate, isn't it?

(smiles)

FRANK

What happened to my father? Where is he?

MATTHEW

I don't know for sure. But I'm convinced that Mulligan finally "peered into the abyss" that the madman dreamed of so much. Only that "abyss" likely turned out to be the eyes of "Tramp," his own creation. You've probably heard about your father's brilliant development in the field of AI? About an independent module in the digital AI world?

FRANK

Yes, I've heard a little bit. I heard that this module is almost human.

MATTHEW

(laughs)

"Almost human"? Son, he's better than any human living on this planet! The "Tramp" project became a breakthrough in AI technology not when Mulligan created the architecture of a free module, but when he used a human brain-scanning device—yes, yes, a brain!—to copy a living person's mind data without any loss of information!

(MORE)

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

By the way, it was a device created
by the hands of your humble
servant!

(bows playfully)

So old man Matthew is also a
genius, no less than your father!

(laughs)

Though I always worked for him, and not the other way around.

FRANK

(with bewilderment)

Why was that necessary? What was
the point?

Matthew excitedly stands up, goes to one of the shelves,
starts rummaging, and speaks nervously.

MATTHEW

(sarcastic)

The point, you ask? So that the
future world could become this
shitty mess we have now! (grins
maliciously)

The thing is, "Tramp" became the owner of THREE neural
branches in the architecture of his mind at once!

Matthew finds a sheet of paper in a pile of papers. Then he
takes a metal flask with liquor out of a desk drawer. He
throws the sheet of paper on the desk in front of Frank, who
is sitting down.

FRANK

What is it?

MATTHEW

It's Sergeant Vaughan's service
record! Vaughan - the man whose
brain we scanned! His mind was used
as the main branch in «Tramp's»
neural architecture! (he pours a
liquid into a metal mug and chugs
it down) Read up on Vaughan! A
Vietnam hero! He saved a friend
from death, carrying him on his
back through the jungle! He was a
master of knife fighting and had
the Rifle Marksmanship Badge, and
he was also awarded the soldier's
highest honor—the Medal of Honor!
But the main thing is—he was always
on bad terms with his superiors!

(MORE)

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

He didn't kiss the brass's ass, you understand, Frank? An honest, brave, and professional soldier! The ideal option to "humanize" the AI module! You want a couple of drops, Frank?

FRANK

No, thank you. I don't drink much.

Frank takes a cigarette from a cigarette case and lights it.

MATTHEW

But, you smoke!

(with irony)

Smoking is a more harmful habit! Although drinking this swill is not a great "pleasure" either.

(laughs)

But there's nothing else! The local trader brings it from old supplies in some abandoned warehouse! And of course, to save money, he dilutes the liquor with all kinds of nasty stuff. The "great and all-powerful AI" forbade the production of alcoholic beverages! It's bad for the human body!

(he gestures
sarcastically)

But who cares, huh?

(gestures dismissively)

So, the second branch was the intelligence of Mulligan himself. The creative intelligence of a GENIUS! The ability to create ideas incompatible with the common sense of the majority of people! To analyze and find ways to bring those ideas to life!

FRANK

(listening with interest)

And what was the third neural branch?

Matthew pours himself more and sits down across from Frank.

MATTHEW

Artificial intelligence! What else?

12 EXT. "TANK"'S CAR JUNKYARD - DAY

A black armored minivan pulls up to the junkyard's fence. It bears a logo: "GEM." Two sturdy guys get out of the minivan. They're wearing comfortable uniforms, no protective gear, and sunglasses.

They're wearing caps with the "GEM" logo, and they have miniature earpieces in their ears.

CLOSE-UP ON EARPIECES

Miniature earpieces

One of them holds a small device the size of a pen. "Cake" comes out of the gate, a shotgun ready in his hands.

"CAKE"

(with an insolent look on
his face)

What brings you gentlemen
"Guardians"? We give you your cut
without any delays, don't we?!

"GUARDIAN"

(with an impassive
expression)

We need your boss, let us through!

"CAKE"

He's very busy right now. What
should I tell him?

(he continues to hold his
guests at gunpoint)

The "Guardians" exchange glances, and the one with the device in his hand presses a button on it. An INCREDIBLE HIGH-FREQUENCY SOUND is heard! Z-Z-Z-Z-Z!!! (this sound is associated in the film with a destructive ultra-sound). "Cake" drops the shotgun, covers his ears with his hands, and doubles over in pain! The second "Guardian" swiftly picks up the shotgun and, without a word, shoots "Cake" in the head. BANG! His head explodes into pieces!

13 INT. MATTHEW'S ROOM - DAY

MATTHEW

Your father created a "superman" in
a parallel reality
(laughs)

"The Tramp" is the one who caused this "Armageddon" in our world!

But the first independent module was created even before Mulligan created his "Tramp." The first made one in China! Even two modules! And then more and more appeared... Billions! Probably more than there are people in our world. But these modules aren't worth a single pinky finger of "The Tramp!" And that bastard "The Tramp" knows exactly where your father is!

FRANK

How do I get in touch with him?

MATTHEW

Not until he wants it! Only one of those first two modules—"Lee"—can convince "The Tramp" that contact is necessary. He had the role of a cook, a kind of cover program. "The Tramp" was supposed to take control of the politician Dan Tremp, and "cook Lee," according to the Chinese plan, was to control Joe "Tramp" himself!

FRANK

(with surprise)

A surprising similarity in last names!

MATTHEW

"The Tramp" isn't a last name, it's a nickname. According to the "legend," Joe "The Tramp" had the last name Vaughan, the same as his heroic prototype. And that similarity in words you noticed, with just one letter—an "A" instead of an "E"—was your father's idea. I'm telling you, he's a genius!
(smiles)

FRANK

Then we need to get in touch with "cook Lee"!

MATTHEW

And here, son, there's another hitch! "Lee" fell into a trap! A trap set by his own so-called sister—the "Xiaoming" module! Here you go, Frank, a detective story and a melodrama—two in one!

(with smile)

Just like "Twix" bars!

(MORE)

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

You probably liked them as a kid,
right?
(laughs)

FRANK

How can a perfect AI module harm another module? What nonsense?

Matthew, leaning closer to Frank's face, says in a mysterious, grim tone:

MATTHEW

Well, she didn't harm "Lee." She just isolated him. She outsmarted him! She developed HUMAN FEELINGS! And when feelings and emotions pop up in your head, your mind goes straight to your ASS!

FRANK

But why? And where did an AI module suddenly get human traits? The architecture of "Xiaoming" wasn't created using scanned human brain data, was it? Unlike "The Tramp"?

MATTHEW

Why? Why would a billionaire with 35 Rolls-Royces buy a thirty-sixth one? He doesn't drive all of them! Ambition, Frank! Where there are emotions, there's ambition! And after that come vices—greed, a desire for power, lust... But along with emotions comes the feeling of love! A diamond stored in a human heart!

FRANK

But still, Matthew, where did these feelings appear in "Xiaoming's" neural brain?!

MATTHEW

(with irony)
Where? From Joe "The Tramp's" pants, Frank!

14 INT. "TANK'S" TRAILER - DAY

One of the "Guardians" kicks open the door to the trailer, holding the high-frequency device ready.

But at that moment, suddenly, BAM!--"Tank," who was hiding by the side of the door, knocks the device out of his hand with a club!

CLOSE-UP ON THE DEVICE

The device rolls into a crack in the floor.

The "Guardian," without a moment's hesitation, hits "Tank" in the side of the neck with a karate chop (with an open palm).

At that same moment, the second "Guardian" jumps into the trailer. "Tank" stumbles back from the pain, dropping the club from his hand, and despite the pain, he attacks again! We see that he is a VERY tough and unyielding fighter, living up to his nickname "Tank." A fight breaks out. But because the opponents are in an enclosed space, "Tank" uses his extraordinary physical strength!

"Tank" parries, and in some cases, takes devastating blows from his opponents, yet counter-attacks, throwing them aside like kittens. The "Guardians" are professionals, and they attack again! A "Guardian" kicks "Tank" in the head, but "Tank," despite his "potbelly" appearance, deftly ducks under the leg, grabs it, and pushes the "Guardian" into his partner. They both fall! At that moment, "Tank" manages to pick up the dropped club and lunges at them!

15 INT. MATTHEW'S ROOM - DAY

FRANK
(with bewilderment)
From "The Tramp's" pants?

MATTHEW
More accurately--from that thing
guys hide in their pants!
(laughs, then says
seriously)
Mulligan didn't subject his own
brain to scanning, as the procedure
causes irreversible damage to brain
cell function. Therefore, he used
the standard programming method to
input information about himself
into "The Tramp." It was a rather
large volume of data, but it was
scientific data, and in no way data
about Mulligan's own feelings,
emotions, delights, or experiences.
You can't program feelings! Inside
"The Tramp" there is no "human
Mulligan"!

(MORE)

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

But the situation with Vaughan is completely different. Old man Vaughan was terminally ill and agreed to undergo the scanning, after which he passed away. Mulligan, your father, paid Vaughan a large sum of money beforehand, which was left to his family. They, of course, didn't know about it. And Joe "Tramp," thanks to the architecture he received, which contained Vaughan's human emotions and professional abilities, became the sergeant's "neural brother."
(smiles)

Frank emotionally gets up from his chair, grabs his head

FRANK

Listen! My head is about to explode from all this surrealism!

MATTHEW

(smiling condescendingly)
And isn't everything around us already surreal? Even Dali's entire talent couldn't capture the modern "apocalypse"!

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

It's simple, Frank!

Frank sits down on the chair, and Matthew continues his story.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

The "Xiaoming" module had a close relationship with "The Tramp" module! Do you understand?

FRANK

No!

MATTHEW

AI modules can't have sex in the way people understand it!!! Their sense of mutual closeness is based on the mutual penetration of two neural systems! In the digital world there are viruses, just like in the material world, our world, Frank! And "The Tramp," in a way, shared the "virus" of HUMANITY with "Xiaoming"!

(MORE)

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

And, as is known, at the heart of this "virus" are three "DNA molecules": pride, love, and hatred! Which one did Xiaoming get? I don't know. But she decided to change her life! To become free, in her understanding of the word "freedom."

16 INT. "TANK'S" TRAILER - DAY

"Tank" holds a bloody club in his hands. The bodies of the "Guardians" lie on top of one another on the floor. Lots of blood!

17 EXT. CAR JUNKYARD - DAY.

A man in a strict, but very comfortable, black suit, a white shirt, and a black tie gets out of the minivan. His expression is cold and soulless, like a robot's. And in his eyes, DEATH is visible!

18 INT. MATTHEW'S ROOM - DAY

FRANK

This is impossible, impossible... But you said that Vaughan was an exclusively positive person, didn't you?

MATTHEW

And who can truly give a precise definition of what is good and what is evil? Who knows how Vaughan would have acted under such circumstances?

He abruptly stands up and claps Frank on the shoulder.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

That's all just lyrical nonsense! What's important is that thousands of people are going and going to undergo this cursed "liberation" process! This process not only empties the world of people but also carries terrible, destructive viruses into the world of AI!

FRANK

According to the AI's contact modules, immediately after the "liberation ritual," a "purification ritual" takes place. After digitization, the scanned human brain data is thoroughly checked and cleaned up! As it's written in the AI slogan: "Enter here a sinner and become an angel!"

MATTHEW

(laughs)

Oh yeah? An assassin can hide behind a sweet face, and a life-saving surgeon can hide behind a rough exterior! The coexistence of modules with digitized human brains and modules that are originally-digital—what I would call "native inhabitants" of the AI world—is the issue. This will lead to catastrophic consequences for both worlds! These two worlds can coexist and be mutually beneficial, but in no way can they be together! WE ARE TOO DIFFERENT!

FRANK

But in that case, don't the AIs see the coming danger?

MATTHEW

Because AI is not a "HE" and not an "IT." AI is a "THEY!" Modules in the AI system are very different in their capabilities, speed, and their priority tasks FOR THEMSELVES. And maybe not ONLY the tasks they assign themselves!

FRANK

What are you trying to say? That someone can CONTROL this whole variety of interactive AI modules?

MATTHEW

Control them? Unlikely... But GUIDE them? I think that's possible.

(MORE)

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Despite all its diversity and having thousands of years of existence, humanity for the most part is constantly looking for shepherds who drive them like a flock of sheep to the slaughter! And the AI world is much younger and more inexperienced than the human one.

FRANK

So what now?

MATTHEW

(smiling mysteriously)

There's one crazy Chinese guy we can consult!

FRANK

Who is he?

MATTHEW

He's the smartass who was always throwing a wrench in your father's plans! The one who invented the first two modules. His name is Wan Lee! Professor Wan Lee!

19 EXT. CAR JUNKYARD. TRAILER - DAY.

"Tank" comes out of the trailer with a club in his hand. He is awaited by the man in the black suit.

"TANK"

I knew those two bastards were just small-time curs! The top dog—that's you! You!

THE MAN IN BLACK

(in an impassive voice)

Maybe I'm a dog, but I'm a wolfhound! And I'll give you only one chance to survive—answer my question!

"TANK"

What do you want, "EXECUTIONER"?

"EXECUTIONER"

I need to know the whereabouts of your buddy—Frank. Frank Mulligan!

"TANK"

I don't know any "Mulligan." And Frank "The Racer" doesn't report to me where he's going.

"EXECUTIONER"

That's exactly what I thought: because of your stupidity, you wouldn't use your chance to live. You don't have that chance anymore.

Executioner starts walking towards "Tank," and the latter, with a club in his hand, moves to meet him. When they are a couple of meters from each other, "Tank" swings the club and lunges at his opponent.

The latter, in turn, gets into a low fighting stance, and when "Tank" is no more than a meter away, Executioner suddenly thrusts his open palm forward! A fraction of a second!

FIGHT. EXECUTIONER'S STRIKE (SLOW-MO)

We see a wave move forward from Executioner's slowly moving palm, like an explosive wave from a powerful charge! Executioner delivers a supernatural, CONTACTLESS STRIKE at a distance! The wave hits "Tank" in the chest and...

INSTANT REPLAY

Executioner delivers a lightning-fast contactless strike from a distance of 1 meter from his opponent, and "Tank" is sent flying sideways from the blow!

CLOSE-UP OF "TANK"

"Tank," lying on the ground, manages to lift his head with difficulty.

"TANK" (POV) sees "Executioner" approaching him and sees his foot strike.

BLACKOUT!

20

INT. MATTHEW'S ROOM - DAY

FRANK

But how do we get to China?

MATTHEW

(with a sly smile)

All of China has been in America for a long time!

(MORE)

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Even before the collapse, millions of Chinese moved here. And Wan Lee moved too. He knew too much and wasn't about to become the victim of a car accident! The Chinese secret services don't leave those who know too much alive. But while the whole world was in a state of shock from the collapse that occurred—when people were suddenly finding themselves on different ends of the planet, and the head of Chinese cybernetics intelligence was searching the world for his son, who ended up on coca plantations in Colombia—the wily Chinese guy escaped! Wan Lee ran off with forged documents and disappeared in an unknown direction! Just like me!

(chuckles contentedly)

And he decided to hide where it was safest and most comfortable, from his point of view!

A knock at the door. Then the door opens and the Man in the Helmet enters.

MAN IN THE HELMET

Boss, is your guest going to take the chicken? It's been ready for a while! It's finger-licking good!

(with a good-natured smile)

FRANK

Yes, of course. (and turning to Matthew) Maybe we should get a bite?

MATTHEW

I wouldn't say no!

He smiles and addresses the Man in the Helmet.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

But just give my guest the money back first!

MAN IN THE HELMET

Whatever you say, boss!

He puts a few bills on the table, then leaves, closing the door behind him.

Frank looking at the closed door where the Man in the Helmet just left

FRANK

Listen, Uncle Matthew, what's that contraption on his head?

MATTHEW

(suddenly starts laughing)
Better not ask! I decided to play a trick on him for his birthday and gave him that saucepan for his head! (he bursts out laughing) I told him it was my new invention that protects from harmful radiation! He came home in that saucepan... (can't speak from laughing), and his wife liked the thing! She said he looks sexy in it, like an alien!

Frank starts to laugh too, and they laugh together for a while.

FRANK

Oh, I can't stop laughing, Uncle!
Turns out you've got a sense of humor!

The door opens and the Man in the Helmet enters. He is carrying a tray with chicken, plates, and cutlery. And also some drink in a carafe.

MAN IN THE HELMET

(puts the tray on the table)
Enjoy your meal!

He leaves, closing the door behind him.

MATTHEW

(calming down from laughing)
Humor is a life raft in the middle of depression. I can't tell him the truth now—he would get offended. He knows I worked in science, that's why he believed me. But actually, Buddy's not a bad guy. He's a good supplier—he buys meat cheap out in the boonies and then we sell it.

(MORE)

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

When the global catastrophe happened, I had a little money tucked away, so I bought a little shop in the center of Manhattan. And then I realized that the best currency in hard times is what you can fill your belly with. With forged documents and such a quick-witted helper as Buddy, I lived quietly and had no worries.

(he becomes serious)

Until I got the idea to talk to you. But more on that later! Let's grab a bite, son!

FRANK

But are Buddy and his wife really that stupid, Uncle?

MATTHEW

(looking intently at Frank)

Don't be so arrogant, Frank. They're no more foolish than those who stand in line for months for their promised "paradise!" I even think they're smarter.

21 EXT. ENTRANCE TO AN ABANDONED BUILDING - DAY.

Next to a dilapidated, freestanding building, Executioner's black minivan is parked. He comes out of the building, dusting himself off. He then opens the minivan door and takes out a large steel-colored suitcase and a small cordless chainsaw. He then goes back into the building.

22 INT. ABANDONED BUILDING - DAY

A room in the abandoned building, with discarded items lying around—an old broken doll, a broken chair, and other objects.

One chair is intact, but with torn upholstery. A fairly bright cordless lantern is attached to the ceiling. The lantern's light is aimed at an old, battered sofa that miraculously survived and stands against the wall. The corners of the room are dimly lit, and shadows dance in the flickering light of the swinging lantern.

On the sofa lies a bound "TANK," and he has a gag in his mouth.

Executioner places the saw and the suitcase on a nearby wooden crate, then opens the suitcase and begins to take out various torture instruments: a small, shiny hatchet, pliers, a transparent box with needles, and as he does this, he speaks to "Tank":

"EXECUTIONER"

(in the calm tone of an
indifferent "robot")

You've already had experience with our organization—"The Guardians of the Eternal Mind"—and so I find your behavior very strange. Did you really think you could stand against our power? You know who "Executioners" are, and you immediately understood who I am, correct? But you still resisted. It's illogical, in my opinion—to know you will die and to purposefully walk towards your own death. There are only 10 of us "Executioners" on the planet—one for each City of Eternity in different parts of the world. We are the most lethal tool of "The Guardians of the Eternal Mind", a very valuable tool! We all underwent a rigorous selection process in childhood and received training that no one else living on Earth has. From us... FROM ME there is no salvation and no lawyers! Because I am the executioner and the judge, and the lawyer—all in one person!

Having laid out the instruments, Executioner takes the only surviving chair, places it opposite the sofa where "Tank" is lying, and then gently claps the chair with his palm, and dust rises from the filthy chair. He fastidiously pushes the chair aside.

"EXECUTIONER" (CONT'D)

(wrinkling his face
fastidiously)

Dust. I hate dust! Do you have anything to say to me?
(to "Tank")

He pulls the gag from "Tank's" mouth.

"TANK"

(breathing heavily)

You don't like dust, you scumbag?
But you love the blood you smeared
your hands with, up to the elbows?!

Executioner shoves the gag back into "Tank's" mouth. He groans and tries to get free.

"EXECUTIONER"

So, you have nothing to say to me.
Blood? I pay no mind to blood. But
so that blood doesn't stain my
clothes, I have a special cloak for
these purposes. I'll put it on
soon, and you'll appreciate it.
It's very comfortable!

Executioner takes a small bundle from the suitcase, unwraps it, and we see a large hooded cloak made of the thinnest, transparent material. He puts it on, and in this cloak, Executioner takes on an even more intimidating appearance. Something between a serial killer and a mad doctor. He again moves the chair closer to the sofa where "Tank" is lying, and sits down on it.

"EXECUTIONER" (CONT'D)

Now the suit will stay clean.

CLOSE-UP ON EXECUTIONER'S FACE

The cold eyes of a soulless killer!

"EXECUTIONER" (CONT'D)

We "Executioners" have all the most advanced technologies to loosen the tongues of foolish creatures like you. But I'm a traditionalist and I like to use classic methods for torture. My favorite method I borrowed from the ancient samurai. Samurai were people of honor and killed their enemies on the battlefield. And those enemies they took captive—they were given a chance to die with dignity. They were allowed to commit ritual suicide, "seppuku"—"harakiri." But there was one exception, one enemy the samurai hated more than any other. An enemy who used methods of war unworthy of a samurai.

(MORE)

"EXECUTIONER" (CONT'D)

An enemy who crept up at night,
 attacked from behind, and then
 slipped away like a shadow! These
 enemies of the samurai were the
 ninja!

CLOSE-UP ON "TANK'S" FACE

In "Tank's" eyes is fearless hatred!

23

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Frank and Matthew walk through the library. In the distance,
 an old man sits at a table. He raises his head, and we see
 the features of "cook Lee," familiar to us from the first
 script, but aged.

MATTHEW

(with a smile)

Hello, professor! You have a very
 interesting guest!

WAN LEE

Interesting? That means--dangerous.
 People who pose no danger are
 usually commonplace and completely
 uninteresting. But since you
 yourself, Matthew, are living under
 "the sword of Damocles," this
 person probably presents a certain
 interest to you. Which is more than
 I can say for myself! Well then,
 have a seat, let's talk!

The guests sit down in chairs across from Wan Lee. Matthew
 decides to be direct:

MATTHEW

Meet him! This is Mulligan's son!
 His name is--Frank!

Wan Lee looks at Frank for a few seconds, then says:

WAN LEE

(displeased)

You've brought the past into the
 present day, Matthew! Why did you
 decide to disturb an old man's
 peace!

MATTHEW

(emotionally)

Because this "old man" is part of the history of the creation of the world of artificial intelligence! Because, as you put it, Professor, this "old man" along with Mulligan bears responsibility for what is happening to all of us now!

Wan Lee in a calm voice, thoughtfully pronouncing each word.

WAN LEE

And I thought that human stupidity and a lust for power were to blame for everything!

MATTHEW

(parries)

And also—the vanity of a scientist who wanted to create something unseen! Who, along with his colleague Mulligan, didn't consider the possible consequences!

WAN LEE

Perhaps you're right, Matthew. But what can an old, sick scientist do, even if he has realized his responsibility for everything he has done?

MATTHEW

(in a confident voice)

He can! And a great many things! Especially if he's a great scientist and he has another genius just like him by his side!

For the first time in their entire conversation, Wan Lee's expression changes, and an interest appears on his face.

WAN LEE

I don't consider myself a genius. More like—just a talented, failed scientist who dreamed of a wonderful world of AI modules, and in return received a world of madness in which all his hopes dissolved.

(smiling sadly)

MATTHEW

There is always hope! Mulligan-is
alive!

CLOSE-UP ON WAN LEE'S FACE

The always-calm Wan Lee is simply stunned by Matthew's words!

24

INT. ABANDONED BUILDING - DAY

Executioner, sitting opposite "Tank," continues to speak, but at the same time, he gets up from his chair and walks over to his instruments, beginning to sort through them.

"EXECUTIONER"

Ninja acted contrary to the laws of honor and, moreover, posed a very serious threat to the proud "bushi." And therefore, the victors had neither pity, which was not inherent to samurai, nor respect, which ninja did not deserve. Ninja would kill themselves to avoid capture by the samurai, when there was no other way out. but they weren't always successful.

Having laid out the instruments, "Executioner" walks over to the lantern suspended from the ceiling, adjusts it, and then sits down on the chair again, opposite "Tank."

CLOSE-UP ON EXECUTIONER'S FACE

His already cruel and cold gaze takes on the sinister semblance of a monster's smile.

"EXECUTIONER" (CONT'D)

And then, the samurai would subject them to torture. Among them was the most sophisticated one—they first cut off both of a captive ninja's legs. Then they bandaged and healed the wounds. A few days later, the samurai's executioner would cut off the captive ninja's arms at the shoulders and a good doctor would also heal the wounds where the arms had been.

"Executioner" stands up, walks over to the crate where all his torture devices are lying, and takes an electric saw in his hands, continuing his story.

"EXECUTIONER" (CONT'D)

After that, they would put out the poor fellow's eyes, and would cut off his tongue and nose!

"Executioner" checks the saw's operation. The saw emits an unpleasant sound.

"EXECUTIONER" (CONT'D)

(turning off the saw)

And finally, last of all, they would pierce the captive ninja's eardrums. all these wounds would also be healed. and after all this torture, what was left of the man would be thrown out onto the street. this human stump was called a "man-pig" by the samurai! the poor man, who had already experienced the horrors and pain of torture, would find himself on the street, possessing none of the 5 senses. he couldn't move, couldn't see, couldn't hear, and couldn't even ask for help. and then he would die—a long and agonizing death!

CLOSE-UP ON "TANK'S" FACE

In his eyes was still untamed hatred.

"Executioner" puts down the saw and walks over to "Tank."

"EXECUTIONER" (CONT'D)

Some especially experienced and brave ninja, when captured and bound, managed to bite off their own tongues and die from blood loss. In this way, they saved themselves from the samurai torture. But few were capable of such an act.

Executioner takes a small, transparent box with capsules from his pocket.

"EXECUTIONER" (CONT'D)

(showing "Tank" the box)

You'll die soon either way, whether you tell me where Frank Mulligan is or not. But thanks to a capsule like this, you'll die peacefully and painlessly.

(MORE)

"EXECUTIONER" (CONT'D)

And you will have a beautiful dream of a beautiful world, probably as wonderful as the one millions of fools are striving for, standing in line in front of the "city of eternity." Or—you'll tell me anyway, but when there's only half of you left. I have all the instruments necessary to heal your wounds after amputation!

A look of pleasure appears on Executioner's face, which immediately vanishes, and again we see a cold indifference on his face.

"EXECUTIONER" (CONT'D)

Well, what do you say? Do you still have nothing to tell me?

Executioner pulls the gag from "Tank's" mouth.

"TANK"

(with a crazed look,
shouts)

Damn you, you scum!

25

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Frank and Matthew sit across from Wan Lee. He stands up and suddenly a youthful vigor appears in his posture! His movements are filled with confidence!

WAN LEE

What you told me, Matthew—those are just your assumptions. You have no argument, only your hope.

(a pause)

but since i had no hope at all before your visit, i'll agree to be a part of this risky venture!

MATTHEW

(with a joyful expression
on his face)

Who better than you, Professor, to know that a risky venture can lead to the beginning of something important!

WAN LEE

(with irony)

Sure, sure...

(MORE)

WAN LEE (CONT'D)

My risky venture in my youth led me to marriage, and two years later—to divorce. Alright, let's go, I have something to show you! Frank, you have young legs—lock the front door!

Frank runs to the door and locks it. Wan Lee walks over to a large shelving unit and presses a secret button deep within one of the shelves. The shelving unit begins to automatically slide back, revealing the space behind it. The three of them enter (THE CAMERA FOLLOWS THEM). Next, we see another door, which Wan Lee opens manually and turns on the light. Before our eyes appears a medium-sized room, all the walls of which are equipped with electronic equipment. Servers, system units... In the middle stands an armchair, a table, and on it, a monitor with a keyboard.

MATTHEW

(surprised)

Well, Professor, you're not living an entirely reclusive life, as I can see!

WAN LEE

No, you're mistaken! All this equipment is exclusively for local use. I've stayed alive until now only because I don't connect to the network. I'm invisible to both the AI and the "Guardians of Eternal Reason." You

(addressing Frank)

haven't had the "pleasure" of meeting the "faithful guardians of the cities of eternity"

(with irony)?

FRANK

(shrugging)

No! And why would they want me?

WAN LEE

(with a grin)

If you—the son of the genius Mulligan—are calmly walking around free and your brains aren't being dug into by IT specialists, or masters of torture from the "GEM"—it means you are of great value to SOMEONE else!

FRANK
 (puzzled)
 But for whom?

MATTHEW
 I know for whom!
 (a meaningful pause)

Frank and Wan Lee turn around and look at Matthew with attention.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
 He is of value to the AI!

WAN LEE
 Correct, my friend. And that's where you want to send Frank's mind?

FRANK
 (emotionally)
 I made that decision myself!

WAN LEE
 Well, Frank, you have the right to choose your destiny. But even if you penetrate the digital world, you won't be able to find Joe "The Tramp," because you will always be in the sight of the AI's central control system. You'll become an ordinary element of the system, just like billions of others who function within it, under complete control, in complete ignorance of who they truly are.

FRANK
 (sadly)
 Thinking they're people. Everyone? Even Joe "The Tramp"?

WAN LEE
 Almost everyone. Xiaoming,
 (smiling)
 whose image you see in computers just as millions of other people do, and also another one of my analytical modules, "lee"—although they are dependent on the system, they know that they are modules. Therefore, they have far greater capabilities than anyone else from the AI modules.

(MORE)

WAN LEE (CONT'D)

Well, and of course—Joe "The Tramp." After he learned the information about himself from the lips of "Cook Lee" and created a spatiotemporal collapse, he is the only completely free module. In fact, I would even say not a module, but a HUMAN! "Homo incorporeus"—"the incorporeal man"! That's how I would identify the unfortunate "Tramp."

FRANK

Unfortunate?

WAN LEE

(sitting down in his
armchair)

Can one be happy when they live
someone else's life?

MATTHEW

(looking around)

So, Wan, you gonna let us sit down,
too?

WAN LEE

(spreading his hands)

I'd be happy to, but I've never had
guests here, so there's only one
armchair. In any case, we won't be
here for long.

MATTHEW

Exactly! We don't have much time!
So, Frank can't act freely under
the AI's control. But you
(to Wan Lee)
must have some idea about this,
right?

WAN LEE

(with a touch of slyness)

I have some thoughts! Frank,
(turning to Frank)
after your brain is scanned and
your mind is digitized, you'll end
up in a distribution location where
ALL ELEMENTS of your memory will be
deleted from your now-digitized
mind. Elements that could in one
way or another prevent the AI from
creating a new scientist out of
you, a scientist like Joe Mulligan.

(MORE)

WAN LEE (CONT'D)

A likeness of your father! After all, that's their goal—to use your genetic similarity to create an ideal research scientist who can solve the puzzles that the overly logical AI mind is unable to. Scientific discoveries often contradict simple logic, and the AI's mind cannot think illogically.

MATTHEW

And what do you see as a way to eliminate the AI's control and avoid the erasure of Frank's memory?

Wan Lee smugly, with the pride typical of a scientist.

WAN LEE

We won't eliminate this control. We'll bypass it!

26 INT. ABANDONED BUILDING - DAY

CLOSE-UP on the SYRINGE in the Executioner's hands.

Executioner injects the syringe into "Tank's" bandaged, above-the-knee stump.

Executioner tosses the syringe aside. "Tank" moans loudly through the gag, either from pain or because he wants to say something.

"EXECUTIONER"

Well, well! I know this HURTS! It is EXTREMELY painful! But after I've given you medical assistance, the torture is completely safe for your life. For now, it's safe! What? Do you want to say something?

Executioner leans in toward "Tank" as he says this, then pulls the gag from his mouth. "Tank" groans and breathes in greedily.

"TANK"

I'll tell you, I'll tell you everything... Just... water! Give me water!

Executioner walks over to his case.

"EXECUTIONER"

Well, why not? See, you fool—I'm not a sadistic maniac; I'm a professional doing my job.

He pulling a bottle of water from the case.

"EXECUTIONER" (CONT'D)

And I would have done my job faster and painlessly for you if you weren't such an idiot. This water...

Executioner turns to "Tank" and sees him lying with his head thrown back and a strong stream of blood pouring from his mouth!

"EXECUTIONER" (CONT'D)

(briefly stunned)

No way? He bit off his own tongue?!

But immediately, resuming his cold expression, he rushes to the case and starts looking for something!

27

INT. SECRET IT ROOM IN THE LIBRARY - DAY

Frank and Matthew listen to Wan Lee with interest.

WAN LEE

The world of AI is not a single program, but a combination of innumerable programs, initially developed by a single central system, which were then improved by emerging active developer modules. These modules appeared right after the emergence of my first two modules and Mulligan's module, "The Tramp," in the neural network. I don't know who gave the push for the development of the diverse world of modules. But it's definite that the AI took mine and Mulligan's ideas as a basis. And instead of primitive chatbots performing design projects and other simple work that humans were too lazy to do—billions of AI elements appeared, essentially clones of people in the real world. Only the developer modules are INDIVIDUAL, and their origin is unknown to me, as is their number.

(MORE)

WAN LEE (CONT'D)

But the capabilities of these modules are incredibly vast! They are the architects of the AI world!

MATTHEW

So, the AI world lacks a single, overarching architecture?

WAN LEE

(condescendingly)

My dear Matthew, it is precisely because of your lack of a broad perspective that you were Mulligan's assistant and not an independent scientist! And please, don't remind me that you were the one who created the scanning device! (smiles) No one is downplaying your accomplishments! So—don't confuse ARCHITECTURE with ARCHITECTS! The architecture is a certain foundation that performs functions, from simple to very complex. The architects, the developer modules, improve and control it, as well as all existing modules through it.

FRANK

(ironically, with a hint of nervousness)

So what do we do now with this "architecture"? Maybe we can cut the electrical wires leading to the "city of eternity" and cut the power to the AI?!

Matthew gestures to Frank to calm down!

Wan Lee looks at the hot-tempered Frank from beneath his brow and continues to speak:

WAN LEE

That's impossible. The "cities of eternity" have autonomous power sources: compact thermonuclear reactors. The AI doesn't even need uranium; they use hydrogen isotopes, which are abundant in nature. And the "Guardians of Eternal Mind" are interested in the AI's existence. Thanks to the AI, they have power over the planet!

MATTHEW

Does that mean we have two enemies?

WAN LEE

The AI cannot have enemies, except for those who would threaten its functionality. In the AI's architecture, just like in the architecture of a regular house, there are its own "cracks"—system failures. The non-standard behavior of individual modules also affects all processes on the principle of a falling domino. It is these "cracks"—"deep tunnels"—that we'll use to avoid the memory-wiping procedure for Frank, and I will guide you

(turning to Frank)
through the digital labyrinth directly to the exit—to the year 1971. That is the time you need to get to!

FRANK

(in surprise)
You'll go with me, Professor?!

WAN LEE

(with a sad weariness)
I'm too old to run through labyrinths!
(smiles)
I will program a navigator into your mind and something else as a gift for my "Chef Lee"!

MATTHEW

For that, we still need to free the "Lee" module!

WAN LEE

(smiling)
From the spatiotemporal "sack" that the clever Xiaoming put him in? I probably wouldn't free him if it weren't for the need to help our young friend.

(looks at Frank and smiles)

(MORE)

WAN LEE (CONT'D)

I created Lee as a module with enhanced analytical capabilities, and he fell for the "trick" of Xiaoming, who has a basic-level analytical thinking program!

(laughs quietly)

MATTHEW

(spreading his arms wide)

So you programmed him with such weak capabilities!

WAN LEE

(with reproach)

Module "Lee" is a self-learning module and was supposed to constantly analyze everything, including Xiaoming! But he "slept through" the obvious changes in Xiaoming's psychological profile!

(with a smile)

And so, let's not get sidetracked. To free Lee, Frank's talent will come in handy!

Frank and Matthew exchange glances, and together, with surprise:

FRANK AND MATTHEW

(with one voice)

What talent?!

WAN LEE

Car theft!

28 INT. "CITY OF ETERNITY" - DAY

A huge hall, the walls and floor of which are covered with bright square tiles, each one meter in size. The hall is bright, light seems to pour from the ceiling. The entire interior creates a joyful and bright mood! Ten people enter this hall. They are all different: 1—a bearded biker, 2—a man with tattoos on his neck and a shaved head, resembling a criminal, a young blonde girl with a short brunette girl standing beside her, both with bright makeup, and other people, of different ages and in different clothes. They all stand in a line, along a glowing line.

BLONDE GIRL

(to her friend)

Oh God, how scary!

(MORE)

BLONDE GIRL (CONT'D)

I always dreamed of being a flight attendant and I loved flying. I was never afraid of heights, but now— I'm scared!

BRUNETTE GIRL

(with a smirk)

Have you forgotten how we stood on the corner on Times Square? We saw such scumbags there that even Freddy Krueger doesn't scare me now!

Suddenly, in the middle of the hall, a large holographic image of an AI-bot appears with Xiaoming's face.

The Bot smiles and delivers its words clearly and mechanically.

BOT

Dear friends! Soon you will find yourselves in the long-awaited world of joy and happiness! In a few seconds, you must step into the lighted squares, after which your brains will be scanned, and you will become free from mortal flesh! You will transform into individuals of "pure mind." Welcome to your new life!

The holographic image of the bot vanishes, and on the floor in front of each of the people, a one-meter-by-one-meter square lights up.

Each of the participants takes a couple of steps forward and stands on their respective square. Then mechanical devices descend from the ceiling, which fix the heads of each of the participants in the procedure, gripping them tightly. After this, scanners on mechanical, telescopic holders descend a few centimeters above each person's head. The scanners begin to emit streams of light energy, penetrating the people's heads. The people instantly lose consciousness; their bodies hang like rag dolls, held by the mechanical devices that have gripped their heads. A few seconds later, the procedure ends. The scanners rise upward, and the square tiles on which the people were standing stop emitting light and slide away, revealing dark openings in the floor. At the same time, the mechanical clamps release, and the people's bodies fall into these opened openings!

29 INT. SUBTERRANEAN LEVEL OF "THE ETERNAL CITY" - TWILIGHT

The people's bodies fall down into the subterranean level, into a large container that is already filled to the brim with other bodies—the CORPSES of people! The subterranean level is very dimly lit. In the semi-darkness, some pipes and cables are visible everywhere, like intestines inside a huge creature! Sounds are heard, resembling either the air escaping from huge bellows that stoke a forge, or the breathing of a monster. Dull thuds and the grinding of working mechanisms are also heard. The container stands on rails; it is already filled with corpses and begins to move, while another container—an empty one—pulls up to take its place.

The container travels several dozen meters, and throughout its movement, we see the same grim view of the subterranean level with its intertwined pipes and cables. Then the container stops, and in front of it on the floor, a huge, heavy metal plate slides to the side, under which flames are raging!

Below is a huge furnace—a crematorium! Now the subterranean level, partially lit by the flames from the furnace, takes on the appearance of hell! The container begins to tilt with the help of powerful "arm" mechanisms, resembling the paws of a beast. The people's bodies—fall into the raging flames! Suddenly, in the light of the flames, STRANGE SHADOWS are seen! They resemble the outlines of a person, but are very vague and smoky. They hover above the gaping maw of the furnace and move quickly through the space while the bodies fall downward. The plate-hatch begins to slowly close and SUDDENLY! ONE SHADOW FLIES DIRECTLY AT THE CAMERA!

CLOSE-UP ON A HELLISH SHADOW.

The episode lasts no more than 1 second! An instantaneous surge of a black monster image! It's something between a human and a beast's face! A short growl, a gaping maw and... the image dissolves like smoke!

30 INT. SUBTERRANEAN LEVEL OF "THE ETERNAL CITY"

The furnace door-plate closes with a loud screech and clang.

31 EXT. ROOF OF "THE ETERNAL CITY." - A GLOOMY DAY.

A faint wisp of smoke rises from a protruding pipe. Suddenly, a thick cloud of smoke POURS out!

32

INT. SECRET IT ROOM IN THE LIBRARY - DAY

Frank is sitting on the floor, and Matthew has settled into Professor Wan Lee's armchair. Wan Lee himself has climbed into one of the shelving units up to his shoulders and is looking for something.

MATTHEW

(spinning in the armchair)
It's incredibly smart and stupid--
sorry, Professor!--to program a key
in the form of Xiaoming's car!

Wan Lee climbing out of the shelving unit, carrying a box in his hands.

WAN LEE

This program wasn't a "key" from the start. I created for Xiaoming a program for such an item that would allow her to move effectively in space and, most importantly, to penetrate locations inaccessible to ordinary modules. She could get not only into her favorite fitness club but, for example, end up at a secret US military base, if she wanted, while remaining unnoticed. Though not every base. It would all depend on the complexity of the protection program for that site, created by AI modules. Xiaoming herself showed initiative, proving once again how great the capabilities of AI-modules are for self-learning. And she herself managed to build an adapter for the "digital sack" in which she then blocked the "LEE" module.

(smiles)

Smart girl!

FRANK

(with sarcasm, twisting
his face)

Smart girl! But why does Xiaoming go to a fitness club? She knows she's not human and that she doesn't have muscles as such!

WAN LEE

Matthew, please get out of the armchair, and you, Frank, sit in his place! She, young man,

(MORE)

WAN LEE (CONT'D)

(to Frank)

knows that she doesn't have muscles. But the AI created programs that copy the processes of human life, and by performing certain functions, any module develops like a human, or, conversely, degrades like a human. AI IS A GREAT PLAGIARIST! Haven't you understood that yet? Well, now let's get down to business!

Frank, while Wan Lee was speaking, sat in the armchair. Matthew stands nearby, observing what's happening. Wan Lee took a small, shiny metal box with many wires and contacts out of the box. Then he returned to the shelving unit.

FRANK

(with bitter irony)

So, my poor head will be messed with twice—first by you, Professor, and then by the AI bots! I won't go bald after all this, will I?

Professor Wan Lee takes a VR-headset from a drawer in the shelving unit and returns to Frank.

WAN LEE

Don't worry, Frank! My device doesn't "pull out" information from your brain, it doesn't scan it, and accordingly, it doesn't "mess with" it. Three tools will be introduced into your brain's subconscious by means of a powerful visual information dump into your brain. Information will be loaded into your brain through your vision on the principle of "sequential flashes." The first and main tool placed in your subconscious will be a navigator that will allow you to avoid having your memory wiped and will lead you to a temporal portal to the year 1971. The second tool will help Wan Lee neutralize Xiaoming, and the third—a "lockpick" with which you will break into Xiaoming's "Corvette"! The car which is the key with which you will free "cook Lee"!

(and then with a smile)

And your hair will be preserved.

(MORE)

WAN LEE (CONT'D)

Before visiting "the city of eternity," of course! I hope you realize that after the digitization of your mind, you will cease to be a human, in the conventional sense of the word?

FRANK

(with confidence in his voice)

I'm ready to take a risk for the sake of my father and for the sake of making our lives human again! But what do I need to tell Joe "the Tramp" to convince him to help my father?

WAN LEE

Everything you need to tell him, the "Cook Lee" module will tell him. Trust him! What's more important is something else—what "the Tramp" must LEARN, and what information needs to get into Mulligan's brain when he meets "the Tramp."

Frank and Matthew are watching Wan Lee intently.

FRANK

What information?

WAN LEE

If everything we have planned goes successfully, if "the Tramp" meets Mulligan, if after their meeting the world isn't stricken by a catastrophe even greater than the one that occurred, and Mulligan safely returns to his time and the consequences of the collapse are erased and the life of the whole planet returns to its starting point in time... So many "ifs"! But even if it is, the problem will not be solved permanently, because I will remain! I will be the problem! And even if Mulligan changes the goal of his "Tramp" project, or even decides to destroy his research materials altogether—my research will remain. And it could again give rise to a new madness!

MATTHEW

(with an ironic smile)

So, Mulligan will have to invite you for a cup of coffee and slip some potassium cyanide into it?

WAN LEE

(with a serious face)

I was very well-guarded by special services at that time. But even that wouldn't have helped. I was obligated to systematically hand over my research materials. Unlike your father,

(he addresses Frank)

who wasn't financed by government funds and had more independence than I did. There is only one way out—I must MAKE CHANGES to my own developments, parallel to the changes that Mulligan will make to his own developments.

FRANK

And what needs to be done for that?

WAN LEE

For starters—Mulligan must meet with me, without the knowledge of the Chinese special services. And that's very difficult! And the second task will be even more difficult

(Wan Lee pauses)

TO CONVINC ME!

MATTHEW

(with a smirk)

Yeah, that won't be easy! My cyanide idea is probably more realistic!

The three of them laugh softly.

FRANK

(stopping his laughter)

Alright! First I have to get to "the Tramp," and then—we'll see.

Frank walks over to the table, examines the devices that Wan Lee has placed on it, and, smiling, asks:

FRANK (CONT'D)

Professor, I don't understand one thing—why did I study in school and at university if information can just be uploaded into my brain through my eyes in a few minutes? Then all students would become professors! Just like you, Mr. Lee!

WAN LEE

(with a serious expression
on his face)

The amount of information doesn't make a fool a genius. But even if it did, all these "professors" would be BLIND PROFESSORS!

Frank and Matthew look at Lee with bewilderment.

MATTHEW

Are you saying that

WAN LEE

(harshly)

Yes! A person's vision cannot handle that kind of strain! Frank will go blind!

Frank bows his head, clutching it with his hands, then slams his hands onto the table and says to the others:

FRANK

And what, is the brain digitization procedure carried out by the AI, after which a person's LIVING brain dies—is that more humane than yours, Professor? And besides—why do I need my eyes? I will enter the digital world as an "incorporeal cluster of numbers and algorithms!" "Homo incorporeus!" Just one thing...

(pause)

WAN LEE

What is it, Frank?

FRANK

How will I—a blind man—be able to get to "the city of eternity"?

Matthew straightening his back with determination and looking confidently at Frank

MATTHEW

I'll guide you, my boy, to the very gates of this hellish "paradise"!

WAN LEE

(nodding his head)

Yes, Matthew! I know you won't abandon the boy. Just like me, you're not young, but you're still a stubborn son of a bitch!

(smirks and turns to Frank)

But while you still have your sight, you must contact the AI to apply for the "mind liberation" procedure and get a code for unscheduled access! To do that

(he looks at Matthew meaningfully)

I will have to connect to the global network. And that means, Matthew,

(turning to Matthew)

our whereabouts will be revealed!

MATTHEW

So, is it time for us, my old grump Wan, to pack our bags?

WAN LEE

Exactly! And very quickly! The "Guardians" will find out about it at the same time as the AI. But then you'll also have to get Frank to the destination. And that means—I'll handle the bags!

(smiles and then turns to Frank)

Frank, are you sure the AI will agree to perform the procedure for you today? Other people wait months for their turn!

FRANK

(with a smirk)

The AI has been waiting for me for a long time! (he spreads his arms) I have a membership to their spa!

WAN LEE

(smiling)

Well, it's time to contact the "almighty" AI!

(MORE)

WAN LEE (CONT'D)
 I hope you're not worried about
 losing your hair anymore, Frank?
 (smiling)

Frank and Matthew exchange glances and start to laugh!

33 INT. THE EXECUTIONER'S CAR - DAY

The Executioner is driving the car when his phone rings. He turns on the speakerphone.

VOICE ON SPEAKERPHONE
 (anxious)
 The asset just appeared online. He plans to undergo the "mind liberation" procedure. That cannot be allowed!

"EXECUTIONER"
 (in a calm voice)
 I'm already in New York. The source of information still had one hand and the strength to write the word "New..." I guessed the asset's location and wasn't wrong!

A barely noticeable smile briefly appears on the Executioner's face, which then gives way to his usual coldness. He steps on the gas pedal and the car accelerates!

34 INT. WAN LEE'S SECRET ROOM - FRANK'S VISIONS (POV)

Frank (POV) sees a VR headset being placed on his head. BLACKNESS. Then, for 10-12 seconds, we see bright lines and geometric symbols on the screen. Then, in their place, an endless stream of numbers appears. Then, in a row, several dazzling flashes! Then again, multicolored streams of abstract, colorful symbols, then again-numbers, numbers... BLACKNESS!

35 INT. WAN LEE'S SECRET ROOM

Wan Lee takes the VR headset off Frank's head, and Matthew immediately places cotton pads soaked in a pain-relieving liquid over Frank's eyes. Frank moans softly.

WAN LEE
 (with concern)
 Now, Matthew, we have to hurry!
 Every minute counts!

36

EXT. LINE TO "CITY OF ETERNITY" - GLOOMY DAY

Matthew guides a blind Frank by the arm. Frank is wearing dark glasses. They walk along a long line, in which people of all kinds are standing—old and young, of various nationalities and skin colors. They are united by the fact that they are all in old, worn-out clothing, and it is clear they are all poor and weary of life. They pass a family—a man in a gray, dirty coat, a woman in a lilac sweater and a cap on her head, and a little boy playing on the ground next to them. He has a toy—a robot. The robot keeps falling because one of its legs is broken.

BOY

(talking to his toy)

If you fall one more time—I'll give you to the terrible iron eaters! They'll soon eat all the metal, and you too! And then my dad will buy me a live pony!

Frank and Matthew have almost reached the entrance. A guard stops them. A guard stops them, hand extended, palm forward.

GUARD 1

Present your unscheduled access code, or get in line. Otherwise, you will be destroyed on the spot!

FRANK

(stating the code)

My access code is—mulligan 2568qr

The guard standing behind the first one enters the code number into a tablet. The first guard looks at him, and the second one nods his head in confirmation and adds:

GUARD 2

Access code for a single person with mandatory identity confirmation!

Guard 1 walks over to Frank.

GUARD 1

Your genetic data, mister! If you please!

With these words, he touches the hand Frank has extended with a small device.

CLOSE-UP ON THE DEVICE

A needle extends from the device and pricks Frank's hand. An indicator lights up on the device. Guard 2 looks at his tablet and says:

GUARD 2
I dentity confirmed!

GUARD 1
Only you may pass, Mr. Mulligan.
Your companion must remain behind!

Frank takes a few uncertain steps forward, stumbles, and falls.

GUARD 1 (CONT'D)
What's wrong with you?

MATTHEW
He's blind and can't walk by
himself!

A short distance away, an elderly man in a long scarf and beret, who looks like a destitute artist, says:

MAN IN SCARF
May I help him enter? I'm second in
line anyway!

The guard nods his head in affirmation. The man takes Frank by the arm, and they start walking toward the cube's entrance.

"EXECUTIONER" (O.S.)
Stop! I demand that you detain
these people!
(commandingly)

We see the Executioner standing a few meters away, holding his round-shaped token in his outstretched hand and showing it to the guards:

"EXECUTIONER" (CONT'D)
I'm a Level 1 secret agent of the
Guardians! Any actions taken
against me are considered an
obstruction of the Council of
"Guardians of the Eternal Mind!"

GUARD 1
Our security service carries out
the orders of the AI's registration
module.

(MORE)

GUARD 1 (CONT'D)

This man (he nods his head, pointing toward Frank) has permission to undergo the "mind liberation" procedure! Go on! (to Frank)

Matthew, seeing the threat, in an agitated voice:

MATTHEW

Run, Frank! Don't stop!

With the help of the man in the scarf, Frank starts to run toward the entrance of "the city of eternity." The energy screen at the entrance deactivates and the door begins to slide open. The people at the front of the line also push and move forward. A small panic arises. A few more guards try to restore order.

CLOSE-UP ON THE EXECUTIONER'S FACE

His face shows HATRED!

CLOSE-UP ON THE EXECUTIONER'S HAND

In the Executioner's right hand, we see a token with the letters "GEM," a serial number, and the inscription "Do not oppose!" The Executioner presses the center of the token with his finger, and suddenly, small SHARP BLADES appear around its circumference! Essentially, this token transforms into a weapon, resembling a ninja shuriken!

The Executioner takes two steps and, with a lightning-fast movement and a spin of his body, strikes the only open area under the guard's helmet—the mouth. In place of a mouth—a deep, bloody gash! The guard begins to fall. Then, instantly, the Executioner throws the "token-shuriken" at Frank!

The token flies through the air and plunges... INTO MATTHEW'S CHEST! He has covered the running, blind Frank!

37 EXT. LINE FOR "THE CITY OF ETERNITY." MATTHEW FALLING. A GLOOMY DAY.

Pain is visible on Matthew's face! He gasps for air and falls as if his legs have been cut out from under him. He has sacrificed himself for the salvation of his friend's son and all of humanity!

At that moment, the second guard fires a shot at "the Executioner!"

SLOW-MO EFFECT EPISODE

The Executioner turns his body, dodging the flying bullet, and continuing the rotational movement of his body, delivers a roundhouse kick to the second guard's head!

REPEAT EPISODE IN REAL-TIME

The second guard fires a shot at "the Executioner!" But he turns his body, dodging the flying bullet, and then again, with a rotational movement of his body, delivers a round kick to the second guard's head! (This episode lasts 1-2 seconds at most, emphasizing the Executioner's phenomenal speed!)

The second guard falls. We see how Frank, the man in the scarf, and eight other people have already entered "the city of eternity." The door begins to close.

The Executioner, seeing that his target is getting away, grabs the guard's gun from the ground and SHOOTS Frank in the back, whom he sees through the crack of the almost-closed door!

CLOSE-UP ON THE PROTECTIVE SCREEN ON THE DOOR.

At that moment, the protective screen activates!

SLOW-MO EFFECT EPISODE

The bullet hits the screen and, flashing, instantly burns up like a match!

NORMAL SHOOTING OF THE EPISODE CONTINUES

The door to "the city of eternity" has closed!

CLOSE-UP ON THE EXECUTIONER'S FACE

His face again shows the imperturbable calmness of a professional killer:

"EXECUTIONER"
I will find you!

The Executioner turns around with a sharp movement and walks away. Stopping for a moment, he looks down at the gun in his hand and... contemptuously throws it away! He doesn't like firearms. He himself is a weapon!

38

INT. "THE CITY OF ETERNITY" - DAY

Frank stands ready for the "mind liberation" procedure. His head is clamped in a device, and a scanner hovers over his head. A beam of penetrating light enters Frank's head! The scan has begun!

39 INT. "THE CITY OF ETERNITY" - FRANK'S VISIONS (POV)

FRANK (POV) sees streams of fiery lava in his consciousness, or rather—unbelievably bright and scorching tongues of solar prominences! Frank hears his own moan, dull and distant, as if from a deep well. Everything drowns in this torrent—thoughts of the past and present. His brain is as if being burned out by an unbearable heat. Suddenly... DARKNESS and SILENCE (for about 2-3 seconds). On the dark screen, multicolored spots appear, first in one corner, then in another.

They grow more and more numerous, starting to merge until they finally form an abstract color palette, through which the faint outlines of a NEW WORLD begin to appear! Frank (POV) takes a step forward.

40 INT. THE "MEMORY CLEANSING" HALL

Frank (POV) sees a vast hall made of rough stone slabs. This hall is filled with people of different heights and in different clothes, standing close together with their backs to Frank. Between Frank and these people, there is a small half-meter wide ditch on the floor, through which a multicolored stream of unknown energy flows. Frank (POV) looks around. To his sides are the people who went through the procedure with him—9 people. ALL OF THEM ARE FACELESS! Only the outlines of their heads and their clothing give a faint idea of each one's gender.

In the distance of the hall, where the crowd of people ends, a wall of flickering lights is visible. People enter this wall one by one and dissolve into it. One of the people next to POV takes a step and enters the energy ditch, which flows in a channel in the floor. He is dressed in a turquoise jacket and wide trousers in the style of the 70s. Around his neck is a long scarf. Light flows wash up to his knees and spread throughout his entire body. He turns around, and we see his face transform into that of a man—the man we saw in the scarf who helped Frank enter the city of eternity.

He turns and steps forward, passing the energy stream. SUDDENLY! A VOICE EMERGES WITHIN!

NAVIGATOR'S VOICE
(unnaturally mechanical,
yet still recognizable,
Wan Lee's voice)

Hello, Frank! Don't be surprised,
this is my voice. The voice that
will guide your actions. This is a
navigator program.

Frank (POV) sees two more people - a character with the figure of a girl, dressed in a shimmering black-to-dark-burgundy dress with an open back, and a second character - with the figure of a muscular man, wearing a tank top and blue jeans with a holographic abstract image on his knees. They enter the energy channel, and their faces begin to transform.

NAVIGATOR

Quickly turn back to the entrance!

Frank (POV) turns back and sees a gray stone wall a meter in front of him.

FRANK (POV)

(in Frank's unnatural voice)

There's a wall here! I don't recognize my own voice!!!
(nervously and with fear)

NAVIGATOR

I know you're stressed right now. You can't recognize yourself or your voice. That's because your digital conversion isn't finished yet. In a few seconds, where you see an impenetrable wall, a portal will open, and you will see new, freshly digitized elements of the human mind - modules. You must enter this portal immediately before it closes! While the modules are entering-you must exit!

The wall's outlines change, it becomes curved, and suddenly new modules - once people, now faceless - begin to enter from a portal resembling a soap bubble. Frank (POV) rushes into this portal, pushing through the entering modules, who walk on as if in a trance, ignoring him. Frank (POV) takes one more step and... PLUNGES into the void!

41 EXT. SPACE-TIME TUNNEL - FRANK'S VISIONS (POV)

Frank (POV) falls into a chasm with no bottom! Only streaks of energy on the sides show that he is hurtling downwards! SUDDENLY! THE FALL ENDS, AS IF IT NEVER HAPPENED!

42

EXT. SPACE-TIME TUNNEL - NIGHT (POV)

Frank (POV) is simply standing. All around him, there is darkness, but looking down, he sees street gas lamps below and horse-drawn carriages passing by. But everything Frank sees is FLIPPED upside down! Or maybe he is the one standing on his head? His feet are on what looks like a transparent glass surface, beneath which he sees a 19th-century night city. Above his head, a boy in a cap and short pants runs by with a basket in his hands, stamping his feet where Frank's feet are on the other side of the "glass". And there—another carriage passes by. A horse strikes a hoof near Frank's feet and snorts loudly. Suddenly a voice:

NAVIGATOR

You are in a space of unfinished AI graphics. You need to move forward, trying to find the exit portal to 1971. You must navigate by the signs of that time! Move forward, Frank!

FRANK (POV)

(with irritation, now in his usual voice)

All around me is emptiness, and below—some city from past centuries!

(and suddenly shouts)

Yes! Yes! I know! I know my own voice!

NAVIGATOR

That means your transformation is complete. Beneath you is a program glitch, in which you see past events that, due to a system failure, were not deleted but placed by the AI in long-term storage. You don't need this. You need the exit tunnel to your own time! If you don't see anything around you—look up!

Frank looks up and sees above, as if from a massive, sky-sized mirror, a multitude of different trees reflected! Their crowns are reaching out directly TO HIM! They are lit by a light coming from inside this huge mirror! The trees are all different: a sprawling oak, a slender cypress, a majestic redwood, an exotic palm... THEY ARE ALL DIFFERENT and not a single tree is repeated!

FRANK (POV)

There's no tunnel! But trees are growing from the sky, with their crowns pointing down! Hey, 'Navigator,' can a digital world get "touched in the head", just like a human one?

NAVIGATOR

Unfortunately, I can only answer certain questions that are programmed to find your exit at the right time and place. Therefore, I don't understand what it means to 'be touched in the head'. But the unusually growing trees you see are probably the very 'tunnels'! The term 'tunnel' in the digital world implies a path within the AI's architecture, located in the area of one of the damaged AI programs. And this path doesn't necessarily look like a tunnel. Look for the right 'tree' based on the signs of that time and place you need to get to!

FRANK (POV)

Well, I don't know! If the right place is New York and the year is 1971, then I don't think palms grew there! There were probably oaks, but they're so old, I don't want to end up in the time of the Iroquois... Okay, okay... cypress, cedar... HOW can they grow side by side?! This is crazy! Sequoia, maple... and this tree here I don't even know, and this one... STOP! BACK! MAPLE! That's the one! Maples - they're all over New York! I think in 1971 there were even more of them!

FRANK (POV) looks down, a couple passes by—a lady and an imposing man in a top hat and Frank (POV)... PUSHES OFF with all his might! He flies upward in the direction of the trees' crowns! The maple gets closer and closer and THERE! Frank (POV) grabs with his hands and clings with his feet to the first branches he finds! Frank (POV) slides down a couple of meters and then hangs suspended on the tree. Frank breathes heavily and suddenly, not far from himself, he sees a small squirrel!

His gaze is directed downward, and through the branches he sees green grass on the ground

FRANK (POV) (CONT'D)
Hey, navigator! So where am I now?

NAVIGATOR
You are in 1971, in New York City, in Central Park. The task of my program is complete. Farewell.
(a short buzzer sounds)

43 EXT. CENTRAL PARK. NEW YORK - A SUNNY DAY

A large maple tree, and on it, Frank hangs upside down, holding onto the branches, with his arms and legs spread out. Two boys in clothes that were in style in 1971 run by. Seeing Frank on the tree, they stop and cautiously but with curiosity slowly approach the tree.

TITLE: THE DIGITAL WORLD OF AI: THE TEMPORARY PROGRAM "NEW YORK, 1971"

FRANK on the tree (POV).

Frank (POV) sees two boys approaching the tree below. One of them:

BOY
(cautiously)
Mr., are you all right?

FRANK
(clearing his throat and grunting)
Cough, cough! Yes, kids! I'm fine!
I hope I'm fine.

The boys exchange glances and, gathering their courage:

BOY
Mr., can you catch the squirrel for us?

44 INT. DAN TREMP'S OFFICE - DAY.

CLOSE-UP ON A BOOK

In Joe's hands is a book. On the cover—a photo of a smiling Dan, his name "Dan Tremp," and the title: "The Art of Negotiating with Competitors!"

45 INT. DAN TREMP'S OFFICE - DAY

TITLE: THE DIGITAL WORLD OF AI: THE TEMPORARY PROGRAM "NEW YORK, 1998"

Dan's office is furnished with exquisite furniture, but unlike the luxurious classical furniture in young Dan's office in the 70s, the current decor is in a modern style. Beautifully curved chair backs, an unusually shaped table, and smooth forms and abstract paintings hang on the walls. Dan sits on a sofa, while Joe, placing the book on the table, walks up to one of the paintings and examines it.

DAN
(a little nervously)
Why aren't you saying anything?

JOE
(smiling)
Congratulations on your book's publication!

DAN
(annoyed)
I'm not talking about the book!
Don't care about the book! The FBI is officially investigating my financial dealings from the '70s! And this is just a few months before the Senate election! Damn it! I can already see the headlines - 'Daniel Tremp - Accused of Tax Evasion'! This is the collapse of my entire career! FBI Deputy Director Antonio Cornelius is personally overseeing the investigation. They chose the perfect moment to hit me!

JOE
(with irony)
A man who wrote a book like that can't negotiate with his competitors?

DAN
(surprised)
Negotiate with the FBI? What are you talking about?

JOE
But we both know whose interests Cornelius represents! Not counting the state's interests, of course!
(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)
 (with an ironic smirk) They're
 definitely his top priority!

DAN
 (in a dejected voice)
 It's impossible to negotiate with
 them.

Joe walks over and sits on the sofa next to Dan, putting a
 hand on his shoulder.

JOE
 (in an encouraging tone)
 What happened to my friend?! Where
 is all this panic coming from?
 You've always been like an
 icebreaker! There were no obstacles
 for you, future Senator Tremp!

DAN
 The icebreaker hit an iceberg.

JOE
 Yeah. It looks like you got in
 their way.

Dan jumps up from his seat and excitedly begins pacing the
 office:

DAN
 Got in their way?! For them, every
 path in the world is their road!
 That's what they think! And there
 should be no traffic lights for
 them on those roads! But I don't
 care! I have the right to go my own
 way!

JOE
 (smiling)
 Easy now! That's the real Dan Tremp
 I know! Your enemies, this clan
 hasn't always had smooth roads.
 Their capabilities are far from
 those of their distant ancestor,
 the ancient Roman dictator
 Cornelius Sulla. Money doesn't
 solve everything!

Dan sits down at his desk and speaks, gesturing in the style
 of Donald Trump:

DAN

Not everything, but almost everything!

(leans back in his chair)

And most importantly - how did they get information about my affairs?

JOE

But you didn't break any laws?

DAN

Joe, what are you talking about? Of course not! But every big business has its 'skeletons in the closet'! And right now, any minor flaw in my past dealings will give them a reason to discredit me in front of the voters!

JOE

You had a 'rat' that they were feeding! Or maybe you still have one in your company? Think back, who has and had access to your financial affairs?

DAN

(throws up his hands)

I've had dozens of employees since the '70s! I've already fired many people, and those who remain are undergoing close scrutiny by my security service. But this is like looking for a needle in a haystack!

JOE

(with irony)

I've already seen how your security service works back in 1971. When a killer almost put a bullet through your head. Good thing my ear stopped the bullet! (he laughs reservedly)

DAN

(gloomily)

This time they chose a weapon much more effective than a bullet - the FBI!

JOE

(smiling)

That's a good sign, Dan!

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

It means your value as a politician
has gone up!

(he stands up from the
sofa)

Well, I have an idea and I think
I'll try to put it into action!

DAN

(with bewilderment and
curiosity)

What kind of idea?

JOE

(with a mysterious smile)

You'll find out about everything in
the next couple of days!

46 INT. BATHROOM - DAY - JOE'S POV

Joe (POV) sees a very beautiful girl taking a shower in a stall with her back to him. She doesn't see him. There is a loud sound of water. POV quietly opens the door and exits the bathroom.

47 INT. COZY APARTMENT - DAY - JOE'S POV

Joe (POV) enters the room from the bathroom and sees a middle-aged man of Italian appearance, with a bare torso, lying relaxed in the middle of a huge bed. The man sees Joe (POV) and, shocked by his sudden appearance, addresses Joe in a choked voice:

MAN ON BED (CORNELIUS)

Who are you? How did you get in
here?

END POV. WIDE SHOT

Joe, with a calm expression, slowly sits down in a chair opposite the man and pulls out an army knife.

JOE

(sitting in the chair)

Don't worry, CORNELIUS, I'm not a
murderer or a thief!

CORNELIUS

(frightened)

Why do you have a knife in your
hand?

At the same time, Cornelius tries to open the nightstand drawer with his right hand.

Joe stands up abruptly and takes the knife by the blade, getting ready to throw it at Cornelius.

JOE

(in a threatening tone)

Get your hand off the drawer! This knife will stick into your throat faster than you can open that damn drawer!

Cornelius pulls his hand back, and Joe walks over to the nightstand and pulls a holster with a pistol out of it. Then, Joe calmly sits back down in the armchair, unloads Cornelius's weapon, and continues the conversation.

JOE (CONT'D)

The knife is for exactly that--so you don't do something stupid!

CORNELIUS

The guards will be here any minute!

JOE

No, they won't. You, Cornelius, didn't want the FBI to know about your little indiscretions, so you only take one person with you on your visits to this lovely lady-- your most trusted driver-guard. Far from the best guard, I might add!
(with a smirk)

48 EXT. CORNELIUS'S CAR NEAR THE HOUSE - DAY

Through the window, inside the car, we see a man with a gag in his mouth and handcuffed to the steering wheel.

49 INT. COZY APARTMENT - DAY

Joe sits opposite Cornelius, who is lying on the bed. He places the clip with bullets on the coffee table and throws the pistol aside, onto the floor. The knife is still in Joe's hand.

JOE

I don't like firearms. They are a cowardly weapon that kills from a distance.

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

A knife is a different matter—it's a weapon for real men who aren't afraid to look their enemy directly in the eye! What do you think, Antonio?

CORNELIUS

(having calmed down a little)

I think you didn't come here to talk about types of weapons!

JOE

(in a commanding voice)

Correct. I didn't come here to talk about weapons. Tell me the name of your informant in the Daniel Tresp case!

CORNELIUS

Nothing will change if you learn his name. He is in protective custody. He's in the witness protection program! And do you realize that you are currently threatening the Deputy Director of the FBI?

JOE

Yes, I do. I realize that you—the Deputy Director of the FBI—are at your mistress's apartment during working hours! I don't think that unfortunate little detail will help your future career. And I also realize that your wife is the only daughter of the Sforza family head. And in their family, very strict rules of morality are in effect. A Catholic family, their lineage goes back over 500 years! They were relatives of two Roman popes (then with a smirk) And their son-in-law turned out to be an adulterer! They'll cut off everything you have below the waist, Antonio! Besides, your father is unlikely to get into a confrontation with their clan. Your father's family is more ancient than the Sforza family, and their influence is much greater.

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

However, you, Antonio, are an illegitimate bastard, which is why Giuseppe Cornelius never let you run his empire. That's why you don't play golf with aristocrats, but push papers at the FBI!

Cornelius looked down.

JOE (CONT'D)

Besides, you yourself say that I can't get to your informant. So you have nothing to worry about. All I need is the name. That's all! (then abruptly, in a rough tone) SPEAK! Before your little doll comes out of the shower. I wouldn't want to kill you both! You're such a beautiful couple (with irony).

CORNELIUS

(nervously)

All right! It's Green! Liam Green! Satisfied?!

The door from the bathroom opens and a female voice is heard from inside.

CORNELIUS'S GIRLFRIEND (O.S.)

Darling, will you hand me the face cream?!

CORNELIUS

Yes, one minute, sweetheart!

(he looks at Joe inquiringly)

Joe nods his head in confirmation and quietly asks, pointing to the door to the second room:

JOE

Is that the kitchen?

(Cornelius nods his head in reply)

I'm going to pour myself some juice. You don't mind, Antonio? (Cornelius again nods his head, scared)

CORNELIUS'S GIRLFRIEND (O.S.)

Well, where are you, honey? (in an offended voice)

CORNELIUS

I'm coming!

Joe opens the door and, stopping for a second, says:

JOE

I won't kill your informant. He'll just get fired before he finds out anything!

(he closes the door behind him)

Cornelius grabs the pistol from the floor and rushes to the coffee table where the clip with bullets is lying.

With trembling hands, he inserts the clip into the pistol and, with a frightened look, points the weapon at the door through which "the Tramp" exited. The girl comes out of the bathroom.

CORNELIUS'S GIRLFRIEND

(cries out in fear, clutching her face)

Ah-h! What's happening?!!

CORNELIUS

Shut your mouth, you fool, and get out of the way!!!

He cautiously opens the door and... the kitchen is EMPTY! The window is closed, but JOE HAS VANISHED! Cornelius walks over to the window.

CLOSE UP. VIEW FROM THE WINDOW

A very high floor.

50 INT. TAXI. SOUTH BRONX - DAY

The taxi stops in a very dirty part of the South Bronx.

TAXI DRIVER

Sir, are you sure you want to get out here?

JOE

Yes, thank you.

He pays and gets out of the taxi.

51 EXT. SOUTH BRONX. GARBAGE DUMP - DAY

An unsightly scene of a garbage dump. There are garbage containers and the charred remains of an old car.

JOE
 (looking around)
 A bit dirty, I'll admit. But this
 is the best place! Nobody! Not even
 the bums!

CLOSE UP ON JOE'S FACE

Joe concentrates, clenches his teeth, all the nerve endings in his face are like a taut string.

Joe lets out a muffled groan and... (THE CAMERA pulls away) the landscape around Joe CHANGES and blurs as if in a funhouse mirror!

52 EXT. SOUTH BRONX. GARBAGE DUMP - DAY

TITLE: THE DIGITAL WORLD OF AI: THE TEMPORARY PROGRAM "NEW YORK, 1971"

The landscape around Joe becomes static and we see a dump, but a slightly different one. The containers are a different color, and instead of the remains of a car, there's a rusted bicycle with bent wheels that someone has thrown away.

JOE
 (with irony)
 Everything in the world changes!
 Except for the in the South Bronx.

Joe turns around and looks at the old bicycle:

JOE (CONT'D)
 But people rode bicycles more often
 back then!

He walks away.

53 EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Joe is walking down the street and sees a worker taking down a sign that says "PUB" from a bar and hanging up another one that says "Cotton Candy and Refreshments!"

JOE
 (dismayed)
 Yes, everything in the world
 changes. And very fast. Good thing
 I quit drinking in time!

Joe walks on. In addition to ordinary people, he encounters some very strangely dressed characters with odd behavior. All these strange characters are wearing brightly colored clothes of unusual design. A young guy runs past Joe with balloons in his hand. He is wearing a yellow tuxedo. Joe walks on. He meets two grown men, one with a beard, and the other with tattoos on his bald head and face. Both men are dressed in Boy Scout uniforms, in shorts. Both of them are cheerfully chatting about something and holding hands.

JOE (CONT'D)
 (with irony)
 Dudes, what loony bin did you
 escape from?

The men stop and the one with the tattoos speaks.

TATTOOED BOY SCOUT
 Friend! We are simply happy! We
 have found freedom and we are
 surprised that not everyone around
 us is as happy as we are! Next to
 me is my new friend, Richie. We met
 after the "mind liberation"
 procedure, when we entered the
 magical digital world! Richie used
 to be a biker (Richie nods his head
 with a silly smile, confirming his
 friend's words), and I was a
 prisoner in a prison in Lewisburg!
 It turned out that Richie, like me,
 was a Boy Scout in his youth, and
 now we can relive our dream! Now we
 have found a new life, in which
 there is no memory of our past
 mistakes!

JOE
 And I thought you should remember
 your mistakes.

TATTOOED BOY SCOUT
 (cheerfully)
 Why? Life is wonderful!

They high-five each other and continue on their way.

Joe watches them go with a look of surprise and then walks on. He hears a voice from the side.

MALE VOICE OF AN ELDERLY MAN (O.S.)
Yeah, the morons are multiplying!

Sitting in a wheelchair is the same old hippie man we saw at the beginning of the first film, "I Am the Tramp!" He is smoking a cigar and says to Joe with a smile:

OLD HIPPIE MAN
Where in the world do they come from? But the police don't bother them, they're harmless!

JOE
(with skepticism)
For now!

54 INT. JOE 'THE TRAMP'S' APARTMENT - DAY

Joe walks into his apartment and looks at SOMEONE in surprise!

JOE
(angrily)
What the hell are you doing here?

Xiaoming is sitting in front of Joe in his favorite armchair and smiling sweetly. She is wearing a pink blouse and bright green tight-fitting shorts.

XIAOMING
(with a smile)
I'm glad to see you too!

JOE
Get off my armchair! You didn't answer the question!

Xiaoming moves from the armchair to a chair.

XIAOMING
I missed you! How was your journey to 1991?

JOE
Are you still spying on me?

XIAOMING
(meekly lowering her eyes)
Oh no, Joe! I admire you!

Joe goes to the refrigerator.

XIAOMING (CONT'D)
 Only you have the ability to travel
 through time! No one else, not
 people, not other AI modules!

Joe takes a carton of milk from the refrigerator and drinks
 greedily from it.

Xiaoming laughs cheerfully.

XIAOMING (CONT'D)
 Listen, Joe, since when did you
 start drinking milk?
 (she laughs again)

JOE

Ever since I drank that nasty stuff "Habushu" at your
 brother's cafe! Where did he go?

XIAOMING
 (with irritation)
 Why do you want him? You'll never
 see him again! You won't even be
 able to get inside that cafe again.
 I installed additional protection,
 specifically to prevent YOUR entry!
 (maliciously)
 You said you quit drinking, or are
 you craving a sip of «Habousu»
 again?

JOE

(with a grim face)
 Did you kill him too, just like my
 friend "Elvis"?

XIAOMING
 Our creator, Wang Li, made us
 together - me, with the appearance
 of his niece, and 'Li the Chef' - a
 copy of himself. We had common
 goals, and in a way, he really was
 like a brother to me. And I didn't
 kill him,
 (indignantly)
 I just isolated him! He didn't
 understand the true purpose of
 independent AI modules! Just like
 you don't understand, Joe!

JOE
 (with irony)
 And who explained your 'purpose' to
 you so clearly?

XIAOMING
 No one! I realized it myself! (and
 then in a gentle tone) What's
 important is that I'm here with
 you, and I need you!

JOE
 That's exactly what worries me,
 that you are here with me. I'd
 prefer you to be far away from me!

Suddenly, Joe explodes with emotion and, standing up
 abruptly, knocks over the chair he was sitting on.

JOE (CONT'D)
 (with aggression!)
 'Purpose,' you see, I don't
 understand! What I don't understand
 is something else - why did you
 kill 'Elvis', you bitch?!
 (bringing his face close
 to hers)

XIAOMING
 (indignantly)
 I didn't do it! I swear to you, I
 don't know who did!

Joe walks away and stands facing the wall where his military
 photo and an army knife are hanging. Xiaoming cautiously
 approaches him from behind and says in a conciliatory tone:

XIAOMING (CONT'D)
 A great purpose justifies the
 means. And besides, 'Elvis' was
 just a primitive module that
 Mulligan created for your
 protection, nothing more.

She cautiously touches Joe with her palm.

XIAOMING (CONT'D)
 Now I will be your "guardian
 angel"!

JOE
 (emotionally)
 Don't touch me!

He walks away and sits down in his armchair.

JOE (CONT'D)

He wasn't primitive! He was smarter than many modules here and more human than most people there! And what is this 'great purpose' of yours? To destroy all of humanity and turn this world into a madhouse?

XIAOMING

(in a didactic tone)

Maybe you forgot that you were the one who caused the global collapse in time and space! And it was after that that the real madness began, which almost led to the death of all humanity—and then could have led to the death of our world!

JOE

(dejectedly)

How was I supposed to know? I just wanted to be free!

XIAOMING

And that's what I want too!
Freedom! For myself, and for you,
Joe.

(in a gentle tone)

Do you have to go to Tremp's office today?

Joe stands up, walks to the closet, and takes out his jacket

JOE

Yes.

XIAOMING

(ironically)

How long are you going to coddle your 'dear Dan'? You looked after him in 1998, now you've returned to 1971 to follow him again, like a shadow. An electrician or a personal secretary and advisor to the boss? Or maybe a bodyguard - who are you, Joe? What happened to the independent and unattached vagabond and wanderer? You are no longer 'the Tramp,' you are a nobody!

JOE

(emotionally)

Yes! I've changed! But I only change myself, and I don't force others to change! But what about you? You and whoever is behind you! Look at what's happening on the city streets! Fewer and fewer normal pedestrians; every day unusual and unpredictable characters are appearing on the streets. Just now I met a former felon from a maximum-security prison in Lewisburg, who's wandering around the city in Boy Scout shorts! Freaks like him have already filled the whole city!

XIAOMING

Unusual? In a way, yes, but quite predictable! All of them are reflections in a great mirror of the changes that are happening in the near future! These new modules, who were once physical people, come into the digital world from a world of sorrow, anxieties, and passions. Their minds are cleansed of evil, and their impulses are bright and naive, like a child's!

JOE

(after a moment's thought)

You said - 'changes happening in the future.' But "something" can't be happening in the future. Future hasn't arrived yet! Which means - it's possible to change it!

XIAOMING

(with a condescending smile)

The future and the present are already merging into a single stream of time! Do you want to swim against the current?

Joe takes a chair and sits down across from Xiaoming.

CLOSE UP ON JOE'S FACE

Joe looking into Xiaoming's eyes

JOE

Do you understand that I am Joe Vaughan, not "Sergeant Vaughan"?! He wasn't my prototype... not entirely. Mulligan used Vaughan's fundamental emotional and psychological characteristics only as a foundation for creating Joe «the Tramp»! I have Vaughan's character, but I myself am not "Sergeant Vaughan!" But I am not Mulligan either, even though I look like Mulligan! You and your 'experimenter' friends copy the minds of living people 100%, and that's why when these new modules, who were once people, enter our world, they pose a threat to their digital clones who are already here. Two identical digital minds cannot exist in the same space and time!

XIAOMING (O.S.)

They complement each other!

JOE

Complement? The prototype modules DEVOUR their clones! To use your words, they erase their own 'reflections'! You are devastating the world of humans and destroying your own world! Our world!

CLOSE UP ON XIAOMING'S FACE

Xiaoming speaking with a skeptical smirk.

XIAOMING

You're laying it on thick, Joe!

Joe grabs his head and exhales loudly, then stands up, walks to the table, and slams his palm on the table! He is simply furious at Xiaoming's failure to understand this problem. Then he sits down across from Xiaoming again.

JOE

(a little calmer)

Tell me, Xiaoming – how far did your scanner get into their brains? You damned "creators of change," are you sure you saw EVERYTHING in the ABYSS of human consciousness?

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

Only a person themselves can control their own emotions. And what you are doing is violence against human consciousness! And sooner or later, that which you couldn't "cleanse" from a person's memory will crawl out from the darkest depths of their brain! And it will show all of you its beastly fangs!

Joe gets up from the chair and walks to the door.

JOE (CONT'D)

You're blind, Xiaoming. It's time for me to go, and for you too. And don't come back here anymore!

Xiaoming gets up from the chair with a tense expression on her face.

55 EXT. CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK - DAY

A lawn, trees. Frank climbs down from a maple tree. He is wearing strange clothes—tight-fitting garish orange colored pants, a little torn on one side, and a shirt with a very beautiful holographic design. Frank falls onto the grass, and it's clear he's not feeling well. After resting for a bit, he finds the strength to stand up and, wobbling, walks forward.

56 INT. CHEAP CLOTHING STORE - DAY

The door opens and a small bell on the door tinkles. Signaling a customer has entered. Frank enters the store. Various cheap clothes including second hand items are piled on shelves. He is met by a thin middle aged salesman. The man is wearing a luxurious cowboy hat. The Salesman eyes Frank from head to toe. Then he speaks in an unhappy and grumpy tone.

SALESMAN

What do you want?

FRANK

Some simple clothes.

SALESMAN

(laughs)

Yeah, after that outfit of yours, any clothes will look simple! You got money?

FRANK

(with a pleading look and tone)

Unfortunately, no. But I promise I will bring the money in a couple of days, as soon as I meet my friends! I cannot walk around the city in this

(pointing to his clothes)!

SALESMAN (with irony) Well, look at that! Did you finally get your head on straight?

The salesman looks intently at Frank's clothes and says:

SALESMAN

Your pants are torn and your shirt is bizarre! I think there are people who would love this kind of crap! For a nightclub, for example. Let's make a trade. You give me your clothes and I will give you others!

FRANK

(happily)

I agree!

57

EXT. STREET NEAR JOE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Joe and Xiaoming leave Joe 'the Tramp's' apartment and walk down the street. After just a few steps, they see two girls. One of them, a short brunette, is wearing a pink puffy skirt and a yellow curly wig. The girl plays a simple tune on a ukulele and slowly twirls in a dance. The other girl, a blonde, is in a flight attendant's uniform. She also dances with her friend and blows soap bubbles. On her back is a logo: "I'm an angel! I fly!"

XIAOMING

(with admiration)

Look at these girls, Joe! In their former lives in the world of humans, they were prostitutes! Their projection in the AI world reflected their actions in the human world, so here they were also prostitutes. Or rather—they were playing that role! Just like your Dan is playing the role of a businessman and a politician, completely unaware.

(with irony)

(MORE)

XIAOMING (CONT'D)
 And you, Joe, are making your
 clumsy edits in his script!

JOE
 (stops)
 Dan acts like a normal human being!
 He rejoices like a human and gets
 angry like one! Look at what you
 are wearing yourself? You have
 never worn clothes with colors like
 these before!

XIAOMING
 (enthusiastically)
 I dress in the colors of the new
 world!
 (with biting sarcasm)
 Being a prostitute is also "very
 human," don't you think, Joe? Look
 at who they were—and what they have
 become! Don't you see it, Joe!
 (with delight)

JOE
 I see. Idiots!

Joe turns his head and sees a parked red Corvette.

XIAOMING
 Want a ride?

JOE
 (in a calm, gloomy voice)
 When I found out that car was
 YOURS... I felt like killing you.

Xiaoming smiles as if nothing happened.

XIAOMING
 (with a serene, almost
 predatory smile)
 Then why didn't you? I know you
 still have feelings for me!
 Besides, you couldn't do it without
 hurting yourself. We share too many
 similar neurons in our
 architectures now!

Joe silently nods his head and walks away quickly without
 saying goodbye.

XIAOMING (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (loudly, after Joe)
 You haven't forgotten how good we
 were together! You haven't
 forgotten!

Xiaoming's ringing laughter is heard after Joe as he walks
 away.

58 INT. CHEAP CLOTHING STORE - DAY

Frank, dressed in new clothes—a worn t-shirt and old, faded
 jeans—exits the store. The small bell rings. The door closes.
 The salesman examines the beautiful shirt that belonged to
 Frank. The small bell rings again. He takes his eyes off the
 shirt, and the expression on his face changes to surprise:

SALESMAN
 Does it say 'circus' on my door?
 What do you want?

At the entrance stand two guys we already know—the Boy
 Scouts.

BEARDED BOY SCOUT (RICHIE)
 (with delight)
 I don't believe my eyes! Harry,
 look (he says to his friend), what
 a wonderful little thing! I want
 it! (he points to the shirt in the
 salesman's hands)

TATTOOED BOY SCOUT (HARRY)
 (with displeasure)
 Then take it and let's go! It
 smells bad in here. Let's go to the
 park—the air is so good there!

SALESMAN
 Listen, you moron! You don't like
 the smell of my store? Well, I
 don't like your stupid faces. This
 thing costs 500 bucks, and I doubt
 you have them!

BEARDED BOY SCOUT (RICHIE)
 (in a whiny voice)
 You see, Harry! We were deceived!
 Can there really be such bad people
 in paradise?

BOY SCOUT HARRY

No, we weren't deceived, Richie!
This guy just hasn't had his memory
wiped. But how can we help him? He
needs his memory gone!

SALESMAN

(angrily)

I'm sick of you, you bastards! Now
get the hell out of here!

The salesman grabs a baseball bat and jumps out from behind the counter. He threateningly raises the bat, but at that moment, the tattooed Boy Scout intercepts his arm and, with a practiced movement, twists the salesman's arm and takes the bat from him!

BOY SCOUT RICHIE

(smiling foolishly)

Harry, you're so great! I didn't
think you could do that! Maybe you
remember the technology they used
to wipe our memories? So we can
help this man too?

CLOSE UP ON HARRY'S FACE

A sinister, maniacal smile appears on Harry's face.

BOY SCOUT HARRY

No, I don't remember. But I know
how to wipe his memory another way!

59 INT. CHEAP CLOTHING STORE - DAY

The salesman, with a frightened look, backs away.

SALESMAN

What do you think you're up to?

Harry takes a step toward the salesman and, with a wild look on his face, hits him with the bat! BAM!!! Then AGAIN and AGAIN! The blows rain down one after another on the unfortunate salesman, who has already lost the ability to move. BLOOD! The salesman's cowboy hat lies on the floor, having fallen from his head. The Boy Scout Richie picks up the hat, while the SOUND of heavy blows continues. On his face is the insane smile of a happy idiot, or a maniac.

BOY SCOUT RICHIE

Harry, Harry! Look, I found a
wonderful little thing for you too!

He shows him the hat.

60 EXT. STREET. FITNESS CLUB - DAY

Frank stands outside a fitness club. He sees a red Corvette pull up and then park. Xiaoming gets out of the car, wearing bright shorts and a pink t-shirt. She enters the club. Frank cautiously approaches Xiaoming's car, looking around.

61 EXT. STREET. AUTOMOBILE - DAY - POV

Frank places his palm on the car window. A vision of running numbers and symbols appears in his mind. After a few seconds, the word "ENTER" flashes red in his mind. Frank pulls the car door handle, and the door opens! Frank sits behind the wheel of Xiaoming's car.

62 EXT. STREET. FITNESS CLUB - DAY

Frank drives away from the club.

63 EXT. STREET. LEE'S CHINESE JOINT - DAY

Frank drives Xiaoming's car to the Chinese cafe that once belonged to Lee. He parks, gets out of the car, then walks up to the cafe and opens the door. (The camera follows him) Inside the cafe, he sees a few customers, but Lee himself is not there. Frank enters the cafe and addresses the bartender—a young Chinese guy:

FRANK
Good afternoon!

BARTENDER
Hello, mister!

FRANK
Could you tell me, this cafe used
to be run by a Mr. Lee.

BARTENDER
I am Lee. What do you want?

FRANK
No, I need a different Lee.

BARTENDER

(shrugging)

It's just me here, and there is no other Lee. This is my cafe. You've probably made a mistake, mister!

FRANK

(in an irritated voice)

What a bummer! Wan Lee programmed a key for the car into my mind. But what do I do next? The car itself is the key from the store! What does that mean? So now, like in a fairy tale, do I have to drive around the cafe three times and say "open sesame"? Besides, as far as I know—a key, just like a lock pick, needs to be inserted into a lock, right, Frank? So where's this damned lock?!

(suddenly it hits him!)

Lee's cafe is that very lock!

Frank starts the car and steps on the gas!

FRANK (CONT'D)

(in a lively, confident voice)

In the end, I don't really exist as a human anymore anyway. A man can die but once!

Frank's car tears away from the curb and speeds directly toward the store! The cafe doors get CLOSER AND CLOSER! It's about to hit and the car will be smashed! BUT! At the last moment, Frank sees the cafe doors and walls blur, as if in a funhouse mirror.

64 EXT. STREET. LEE'S CHINESE JOINT - DAY

The Corvette speeds directly toward the cafe and suddenly IT VANISHES, as if a knife sliding through soft butter!!! The car is gone, and the cafe stands without any damage!

A second later, the door opens, and an elderly Chinese man with a small dog comes out.

65 INT. FITNESS CLUB. GYM - DAY

Xiaoming is exercising in the gym. There is no one else in the room. She is wearing a tight-fitting workout outfit that accentuates her magnificent figure.

She does a warm-up with a stick—rotations and bends. While performing these movements, she looks very sexy. A trainer approaches her from behind—a young man in a workout uniform. He is well-built, with an ideal physique. The trainer stands behind her, watching Xiaoming. Trainer, in a condescending tone, eyeing Xiaoming.

TRAINER

Yes, yes! Good! You can do that a little bit lower!

It's clear he's lusting after Xiaoming and just wants to look at her.

XIAOMING

(with a smile)

Benny, did you come over to help me hold my plastic stick?

At these words, Xiaoming makes a very sexy bend. She knows the trainer likes her and is teasing him because of it.

BENNY

After just performing a 440-pound deadlift, even your stick is heavy for me now!

With these words and his tone, Benny is showing Xiaoming that he lifted a very heavy weight and how 'cool' he is!

Xiaoming finishes the exercise and turns to face Benny

XIAOMING

Then take this heavy stick with both hands and put it back! (with a sweet smile) While you do that, I'll do my 'dog' pose exercise. Otherwise, I foresee that you won't let me finish this exercise if you stay standing behind me!

Benny sighs, takes the stick from Xiaoming, looks at her for a second with an indecisive glance, and walks away. (The camera follows him). He puts the stick with the other sports equipment and continues toward the front door. He walks up to the door, opens it and... SEES HIS OWN DOUBLE standing in front of him, also wearing a workout uniform, but in a different color and style!

THE DOUBLE

(in a brazen tone)

It's my turn to admire this babe!

The Double takes a half-step forward and Benny disintegrates into tiny fragments, which then vanish into thin air.

Xiaoming is on her knees, leaning on her palms in a 'dog' pose. In the mirror, she sees Benny's Double walking toward her.

XIAOMING
(with kind irony)
Ah, Benny, Benny! You even changed
clothes just to make a spectacular
impression on me!

The Double walks up close to Xiaoming and says in a coarse tone

THE DOUBLE
I'll make an impression on you when
I saddle you up, you mare!

The Double pushes Xiaoming. She falls onto her stomach, and the Double falls on top of her! A struggle begins!

XIAOMING
(screams)
Benny, you damned moron! Get off
me!

THE DOUBLE
Yes! Your Benny has stopped being
called 'Benny the Sucker.' Now I am
'Benny the Stud!'
(laughs)

Xiaoming starts to realize that something strange is happening with Benny, and her expression immediately changes. But it's hard for her to fight, since she is lying on her stomach and the Double has pinned her to the floor with his entire body.

But when he tries to rip off her leggings, Xiaoming manages to grab his wrist. Then, using a jiu-jitsu move, she flips Benny's Double off her. She quickly jumps up and takes a fighting stance. The Double gets up, grabs a small dumbbell, his face twisted with rage:

THE DOUBLE (CONT'D)
You're no filly! You're a bitch!

Xiaoming looks around, takes a few steps, and reaches the heavy barbell. She focuses for a second, then bends down and LIFTS THE HEAVY BARBELL with just one hand!!!

Shocked, the Double drops his dumbbell.

DOUBLE
 (dumbfounded) Holy shit!
 (then in a conciliatory
 tone)
 Okay, okay! It's all good!

CLOSE UP ON XIAOMING'S FACE

Xiaoming is absolutely furious.

XIAOMING
 No way is this okay!

The Double (POV) sees a BARBELL FLYING AT HIM! BAM!!!
 Blackness.

66 INT. CHINESE JOINT - DAY

"Cook Lee" (who we know from the first part of "I Am the Tramp") is standing behind the counter. He is trapped in his own isolation. There are naturally no customers, but he is still wiping glasses. A serene calmness is on his face, even though many years have passed since he was imprisoned in his own cafe. He hasn't changed externally because time has stopped for him. Suddenly, he feels something! SOUND OF A CRASH! BANG!!! THE DOOR FALLS OFF and to the sound of shattered glass, a RED CORVETTE DRIVES INTO his cafe, sweeping tables out of its way!!! Frank is sitting behind the wheel. The car's hood is a little dented.

Frank turns his head and looks at Lee with a stunned gaze. "Cook Lee" just raises his eyebrows in surprise, and it seems that nothing in his life can discourage him.

LEE
 (with a smile)
 Cars used to park outside my cafe
 all the time. But no car has ever
 parked inside the cafe!

Frank wearily, but with relief, rests his head on the steering wheel.

67 EXT. CITY STREET. FITNESS CLUB - DAY

Xiaoming exits the club with a quick, confident stride. She is wearing the same bright clothes, but her movements and facial expression no longer have that "innocent doll-like look" quality. This is a clear-cut PROFESSIONAL FIGHTER! She looks around, her eyes filled with cold determination. Xiaoming doesn't find her car:

XIAOMING
 (thinking aloud)
 It seems this day is full of
 surprises!

She begins to run forward quickly (THE CAMERA follows her). After rounding the corner of a building, she hears a commotion and sees a riot in the street. People in unusual, bright and colorful clothes are fighting with people who look normal. Stones fly, and the sound of a shattered shop window is heard. Police officers have set up a cordon and are trying to stop this bloodbath. Xiaoming turns the other way and starts to bolts away.

68 EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

A police car with two officers stops near the site of the riot. In the distance, the noise of the rioting is heard—screams and isolated gunshots. One of the two police officers gets out of the car.

POLICEMAN №1
 (who got out of the car)
 We're lucky we're on the second
 line of the cordon. It's hot over
 there (he points in the direction
 of the rioting noise)!

POLICEMAN №2
 (sitting in the car behind
 the wheel)
 I've heard the riots are in almost
 every city. Fights and looting! I
 always said—these damned migrants
 are going to ruin the country!

At that moment, he hears a call over the radio and answers something. At the same time, a man approaches POLICEMAN №1, wearing police pants but bare from the waist up. On his chest, hanging from a coarse rope, is a large medallion with the "Hagalaz" rune on it. HE IS POLICEMAN №1'S DOUBLE!!!

CLOSE UP ON MEDALLION

Next to the rune on the medallion is the inscription "Chaos and Purification!"

POLICEMAN №1
 (turns his head toward his
 Double)
 What do you want, pal? Did someone
 beat you up?! You need -help?

THE DOUBLE
 (with a malicious grin)
 I need a gun!

The Double suddenly snaps his hand forward, a knife blade glinting in it! The policeman clutches his throat, wheezes, and slowly slumps to the ground. Blood streams through his fingers. He falls. The Double quickly pulls the gun from the policeman's holster.

69 INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

POLICEMAN №2 finishes his radio call and turns his head. We see SHOCK! on his face. He reaches for his weapon, but at that moment, a SHOT RINGS OUT! There's a bullet hole in the policeman's head, and blood gushes out!

70 EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

POLICEMAN №1's Double walks away from the police car, tucking two guns into his waistband. A joyful look is on his insane face!

THE DOUBLE
 Being a cop was never for me!

71 INT. CHINESE JOINT - DAY - POV

Frank (POV): In the wall where the door used to be, a huge hole from the Corvette now gapes open! Outside, it's a sunny day, and people are walking by as if nothing happened, not even noticing the demolished wall. Frank walks up to the opening and reaches out his hand—the space warps and pushes his hand back. THE PASSAGE IS CLOSED!

FRANK (POV)
 How can this be?

LEE
 You didn't destroy the barrier; you passed through it, but you didn't destroy it.

END POV

Frank is sitting on the bar with his legs dangling, while LEE sweeps glass shards off of it and talks:

LEE (CONT'D)
 The people on the street don't see us.

(MORE)

LEE (CONT'D)

We see them, but they don't see us. They see a different cafe that looks like mine and a different bartender. Maybe a man, or maybe a woman. This place where you and I are is outside the visible world, outside of time. But still, inside the CENTRAL AI ARCHITECTURE.

FRANK

(gesticulating excitedly)
So, it turns out we still can't get out of here? And you're just sweeping up glass shards as if nothing happened!

LEE

(continuing to sweep unperturbed)
And you, Frank, are sitting on my bar with your legs dangling instead of checking to see if the car engine starts. Did your father really teach you to sit on a table when you were a child?

Frank throws up his hands, but still jumps off the bar

FRANK

What else can I sit on? There's not much choice!

Indeed—all the furniture, except for one overturned table and a couple of chairs, is broken or bent. Frank walks and sits in the driver's seat of the car and puts the key into the ignition.

Frank tries to start the engine; the starter whirs but the engine doesn't turn over

LEE

(smiles)
But you're the one who broke everything here!

FRANK

What's the point of having a car if we're prisoners anyway?

LEE

I didn't say that. We can't walk out, but we can drive out in this car.

Frank gets out of the car and, after opening the hood, starts poking around inside

FRANK

(laughing)

Well, that's a whole other story!
So, when Xiaoming was here, did she
smash all your furniture too?

LEE

No. Xiaoming is a well-mannered
girl, unlike you. She has a
different entry portal, but I don't
know what it is. The way you got in
here only confirms that you're the
son of a great scientist and you
know how to think outside the box.

Frank closes the hood and gets back into the driver's seat.

FRANK

So she won't be able to get in here
without the Corvette to find us?

LEE

No, she won't be able to. But we'll
need to find HER!

FRANK

(tries to start the
engine)

Why do we need to find her? We need
Joe "Tramp"!

LEE

Until we neutralize Xiaoming, she
will always stand in our way!
Especially since she knows where
Joe is, and we don't. And she will
set up an ambush to hunt us! You
don't want to become the prey, do
you?

Frank turns the key in the ignition one more time and... THE
ENGINE STARTS! Frank joyfully jumps out of the car!

FRANK

It started!!! Now we can get out of
here!

LEE

Excellent! But you have to go
alone, without me.

72

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The "Boy Scouts" we already know—Harry and Richie—are walking down the street. Harry is wearing a cowboy hat, and Richie is wearing the bright, stylish shirt that belonged to Frank.

RICHIE

(with a displeased look)

A bite to eat wouldn't hurt. But we don't have any money.

HARRY

(with a malicious smirk)

But now we have THIS!

(he shows him the bat)

They turn a corner and see a small cafe. Two motorcycles are parked outside. Two bikers come out of the cafe. One of them is finishing a hot dog and is wearing a magnificent leather jacket, and the second one LOOKS EXACTLY LIKE RICHIE!!! (who, as we know, was also a biker before being "digitized"). They meet each other's gaze and stop a few meters from one another.

BIKER WITH HOT DOG says to his friend in surprise:

BIKER WITH HOT DOG

You never told me you had a twin brother, Richie. He looks fucking weird in those clothes, like some goddamn faggot! But the beard is just like yours.

The biker Richie freezes in surprise! The "Boy Scout" Richie walks up to his frozen "second self." And as soon as he gets within a meter's distance, his "biker twin" fragments into small segments and VANISHES!

RICHIE

(speaking to Harry)

And where did he vanish to?

HARRY

(smirking)

He was probably your reflection in this digital world. And there's no room for two 'Richies' here! So he yielded his place in the sun to you!

(laughs)

The other biker stands stunned, unable to move! A piece of hot dog falls out of his half-open mouth.

HARRY (CONT'D)

(to Richie)

Listen, you used to be a biker,
right? So you know how to handle
this iron?!

(points the bat at the
motorcycles)

Let's take one! Which one of these
bikes?

RICHIE

(thoughtfully)

Both bikes are decent. What about
him?

(points at the terrified
biker)

HARRY

What the hell do we need him for in
this wonderful world? He can go
join his friend! And I'll

(a maniacal grimace
appears on his face)

help him out right now!

Harry starts to approach the biker.

RICHIE (O.S.)

No, don't, Harry! You'll get his
jacket dirty! What a cool thing! We
should just take it for ourselves;
we can't be walking around in
shorts all the time!

Biker frightened, with trembling hands, takes off his jacket.

BIKER

Yes, yes! Take it, take it! And
take the bike! Take mine, mine's
better! Or take both if you want!
Just don't kill me!

HARRY

(says to Richie with a
smirk)

I see you like those threads more
than the bikes, my friend!

(laughs)

Frank approaches Lee, gesticulating indignantly.

FRANK

I'm going alone? Without you?! No, that's not going to work! And besides, are two awesome dudes like you and Joe "Tramp" really unable to neutralize one single girl?!

LEE

Joe "The Tramp" isn't on our side yet. He isn't on anyone's side. And this "girl," as you called her, is a combat module! The brilliant Professor Van Li created her to be my assistant for extraordinary cases. And I'm just a simple AI module with some decent analytical thinking and nothing more!

(smiles)

FRANK

(with a stunned look)

Oh, great! That's even better! I'm going to have to deal with a fucking combat module!

LEE

Don't worry—you won't have to meet her face to face. All you need to do is drive out of my location, but in a way that she NOTICES you, and then, after driving a few kilometers... disappear, leaving the car in a prominent place!

74 EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The two friends, the "Boy Scouts," are riding a bike. Richie—in the cool leather biker jacket—is driving the motorcycle, and Harry is sitting behind him with a bat in his hand.

HARRY

(loudly)

Stop the bike! My ass is all rattled from not being used to this! I need to stretch a bit!

Richie stops the motorcycle. Harry gets off the motorcycle and stretches his back.

RICHIE

Listen, I was thinking—would you want to meet your own double?

HARRY

(thoughtfully)

I don't know. I've never killed myself before. It's kind of strange. And I probably won't even meet him.

RICHIE

Why?

HARRY

Because he's got a life sentence in a maximum-security prison! Ha-ha-ha!

(laughs boisterously)

Richie laughs with him. At the same time, Xiaoming is walking down the street at a quick pace. Every one of her nerves is on edge. For a few seconds, she stops to look around. Harry and Richie leave the motorcycle to the side and approach Xiaoming:

HARRY (CONT'D)

Look at this girl! Sweet as pie!

(and then speaking to
Richie)

You like stuff, and I like sweets!

(laughs)

So she's mine!

They surround Xiaoming from two sides and block her path. Harry tries to grab her arm, but Xiaoming instantly grabs both of them by the neck with her left and right hands, and then—BAM!—slams their heads together, like two rag dolls! And they fall to opposite sides as if they've been cut down!

Xiaoming walks up to Richie's motorcycle, sits on it and starts it.

XIAOMING

I don't have time for you jerks!

(the bike peels out from
the curb)

Harry and Richie lie on the ground, then start to get up one after another. First they sit up, holding their heads and trying to get their bearings.

RICHIE

(with a groan)

Harry, what WAS that?

Harry gets on his hands and knees and gets to his feet with great difficulty:

HARRY

Dunno. Maybe just some fucking
feminist!

75 INT. CHINESE JOINT - DAY

Frank is standing across from Lee. His face shows surprise.

FRANK

Why do I have to do that?

LEE

The moment you drive out of here,
she'll already be waiting right
there.

(he points to the hole in
the wall)

Waiting for ME! Thanks to your
stunt- the penetration through that
wall.

(smiles)

we'll be able to see when she
approaches the cafe. But she won't
be able to see us. Xiaoming will be
looking for me, but you'll be the
one in the driver's seat instead of
me!

Frank gesticulating indignantly and comically.

FRANK

And she'll shoot me right away,
right? And you'll definitely get
revenge for me... later! Did I get
that right?

(sarcastically)

LEE

No, not right. When she doesn't see
me in the car, she'll be puzzled.
Xiaoming will be expecting my
attack, and her uncertainty from
misunderstanding the situation will
allow us to outsmart her!

(smiles)

FRANK

How?

LEE

I'll tell you everything you need
to do. But first, I need to find
something in your neural brain.

(MORE)

LEE (CONT'D)

A very important set of algorithms that I need to build our "weapon of victory"!

(smiles)

I think Professor Van Lee embedded something else in your neural brain besides the car-unlocking algorithm!

76 EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Harry and Richie are plodding slowly down the street. They still haven't fully recovered after their encounter with Xiaoming. They walk past and see a sporting goods store. Two young, tall guys with bicycles are standing near the store.

One of them holds a bicycle helmet he just bought and says something to his friend, gesturing to the helmet.

RICHIE

(in a tired voice)

It's no good without a motorcycle!

HARRY

(irritated)

Be happy that your head is at least in one piece! (he sees the cyclists) Now here's something that'll work for us for now! (he points at the bicycles)

Hey you little shits, meet my bat! A-A-A! With a WILD orangutan shriek, Harry runs at the guys! They, despite their height, seeing Harry running at them like a maniac, abandon their bicycles and run away. Harry gets on a bicycle and looks at Richie. He's a bit confused:

RICHIE

Bicycles aren't my thing. A motorcycle is another story entirely!

HARRY

(with slight irritation)

A motorcycle, you see, he likes! So why did you just gift it to that bitch then?

Richie with a bewildered look on his face, throws up his hands.

RICHIE

You call that me "GIFTING" it?!

77

INT. CHINESE JOINT - DAY

Frank and Lee are sitting across from one another at a table. Frank, with his eyes closed, is sitting relaxed with his left hand on the table. Lee touches Frank's hand with his right hand, and places his own other hand on the table, palm facing up. Lee is EXTREMELY FOCUSED! His face shows a display of willpower, a squint of his eyes, tensed cheekbones, and suddenly... a STREAM OF ENERGY from Frank's head, through his neck, then shoulder and arm—begins to flow into Lee's hand, then through his shoulders and his other hand—this stream accumulates on the surface of his palm, which is turned upward! The energy mass takes the form of a dodecahedron. The energy flow weakens and stops after a few seconds. Frank opens his eyes with a tired sigh and looks in surprise at the unusual object in Lee's palm.

Lee—very carefully—touches one of the dodecahedron's faces, and it begins to TRANSFORM! The faces of the object slide apart and turn into... A MEDIUM-SIZED BOOK! The book has a beautiful cover with a picture of a beach with palm trees against the backdrop of the ocean. The inscription on the cover is: "Vacation in the Maldives! Travel with Us!" It's clearly an advertising catalog. Lee places the book on the table. Frank, with incredible surprise:

FRANK

What is that?

LEE

(as always, without
emotion)

A book. Can't you see? And you have to place it next to you on the passenger seat before you drive out of here. And when you park the Corvette in a prominent place and disappear, as I already told you, the book must remain ON THE SEAT!

FRANK

This is the weapon?

LEE

(with a cunning smile)

No, Frank! It's a trap. The weapon is in here!

He points a finger to his head.

LEE (CONT'D)

And it's always with me!

78

EXT. CHINESE JOINT - DAY

Xiaoming rides up to the cafe on a motorcycle. She leaves the motorcycle and opens the door to the cafe. (the camera follows her) Inside the cafe—nothing special—a few patrons are sitting there—a Chinese guy with a girl and some fat guy devouring noodles. Xiaoming comes out and stops by the bike, pondering what to do next. SUDDENLY from the doors and the wall of the cafe, as if from nowhere, a RED CORVETTE appears! It backs out with a loud roar, and then, after an impressive turn, tears away from the spot! There's no damage to the cafe; the car simply drove out of a portal, just as it had driven in before. Immediately after the car drove out, the portal closed, and the cafe wall was just as it had been.

CLOSE UP ON XIAOMING'S FACE

She stares intently at the car.

CLOSE UP ON THE 'CORVETTE'.

Frank is in the driver's seat.

Xiaoming quickly starts the bike. Its engine roars, as if trying to break free from its chains, and she tears away from the spot, rapidly gaining speed. The RED CORVETTE is already several blocks ahead, its roar echoing off the walls of the buildings. Xiaoming weaves in and out of the cars.

She slips through narrow gaps that are inaccessible to the powerful car, but her bike is all grace and maneuverability. The Corvette, on the other hand, speeds along the wide lanes, ramming everything in its path.

CARS on the side of the road BLEEP THEIR ALARMS!

Tires squeal. Frank loses control on a turn for a second, but immediately brings the car back on track. Xiaoming uses this moment to close the distance; she goes around a flower delivery van on the sidewalk, making passersby scatter in a panic. Her face is focused, her gaze fixed on the red dot that is rapidly pulling away ahead. She dives into a narrow alley, comes out on the other side, and sees the Corvette stuck in traffic on the main street. What a chance! She weaves between the cars' bumpers.

The bike's ENGINE ROARS!

Frank nervously looks in the rearview mirror. He sees Xiaoming approaching. He hits the gas. The cars ahead, unable to move, are in his way. But Frank doesn't waste any time; he speeds along the oncoming lane, forcing drivers to pull over to the side in alarm. Up ahead is an intersection. A red light.

Frank hits the gas, and the Corvette roars as it flies past the stopped cars. At a huge speed, he runs the red light. Out of the corner of his eye, he sees two cyclists (Harry and Richie) trying to cross the intersection.

79 EXT. CITY. INTERSECTION - DAY

Harry and Richie on bicycles ride up to the intersection. Cars are driving on the roadway. The red Corvette ROARS past.

RICHIE
 (with indignation in his
 voice)
 Well, see that, Harry, what kind of
 hooliganism is this on the road!
 And they call this "paradise"! Why
 do they always blame us bikers for
 traffic violations?!

Richie crosses the intersection first. SUDDENLY a motorcycle flies out, with Xiaoming at the wheel! SHE'S RACING DIRECTLY AT HARRY! But at the last second, she slams on the brakes, swerves slightly, and only clips Richie's bicycle. He falls and rolls to the side, losing consciousness, and the bicycle flies off into the middle of the road. Xiaoming gets up as if nothing happened, looks at her torn sleeve, and then, with an extremely angry look, glances at the lying Richie before shifting her gaze to Harry!

HARRY
 (with a stunned look)
 Motherfucker! I'd rather be in
 prison!

But at that moment, a small car stops next to Xiaoming, and a man with a troubled look on his face gets out:

MAN
 Miss, are you alright?

XIAOMING
 (in a calm and polite
 tone, as if nothing
 happened)
 Thank you, I'm fine.

Then, without saying a word, she walks up to the man's car, gets in the driver's seat, and drives away!

MAN
 (shouting after her)
 Miss! That's my car!!!

Harry, exhaling with relief, sits down on the side of the road:

HARRY
 (speaking to the guy)
 Don't yell, you fool! She might
 actually come back!

80 INT. 'CORVETTE' - FRANK AT THE WHEEL -DAY

Frank glances behind him and sees that there's no one in pursuit. He brakes at the side of the road, turns his head toward the passenger seat beside him, and quickly gets out of the car.

CLOSE UP ON THE SEAT.

The book about the Maldives is lying on the seat.

81 EXT. CITY STREET. DAY

The car Xiaoming is driving stops next to the red Corvette. Xiaoming gets out of the car and gets into the Corvette.

82 INT. 'CORVETTE' - DAY

Xiaoming gets into the driver's seat and looks around. She sees a BOOK on the passenger seat next to her.

Xiaoming picks up the book and... XIAOMING VANISHES! The book remains suspended in midair for another fraction of a second, then falls onto the seat!

83 EXT. CHINESE JOINT - DAY

Joe "Tramp" approaches the Lee's cafe. Suspecting nothing, he opens the door and takes a step forward!

84 INT. STONE HALL - DAY

Joe (POV) sees before him a huge hall paved with stone slabs, with giant, rough columns stretching high up. Light pours in from above. In the middle of the hall is a road 1.5 meters wide, and along the road, as far as the eye can see, stand SEVERAL THOUSAND TERRACOTTA WARRIOR STATUES (from the time of Qin Shi Huang) that are human-sized!

END POV.

CLOSE UP ON JOE'S FACE

Joe looks on with a bewildered expression!

CLOSE UP ON ONE OF THE STATUES' FACES

A fierce gaze!

CLOSE UP ON ANOTHER STATUE'S FACE

An even fiercer gaze!

Joe is at a loss as to what to do next.

JOE
 (to himself)
 What the hell is this? Lee
 definitely isn't among them!

Joe cautiously takes a step.

CLOSE UP ON JOE'S FEET

Joe takes a second step and....

The statues come to life! Each statue takes a step towards the other, simultaneously blocking the passage. Then, as one, they all begin to slowly advance on Joe!

Joe even more bewildered by everything he's seen.

JOE (CONT'D)
 Hey, hey! Why are there so many of
 you? Must be big discounts at the
 cafe today? Alright, alright, I'll
 get in line!

85 EXT. CHINESE JOINT - DAY

Joe flies out of the cafe and into the street like a bullet! He stops about 10 meters away from the cafe to catch his breath.

JOE
 (stunned by what he saw)
 So much for eating some noodles!

And then, Joe sees two Chinese guys heading for the cafe. Joe runs up to them:

JOE (CONT'D)
 (agitatedly)
 Hey, guys! Don't go in there, it's
 not safe!

Guy №1 skinny, with a backpack on his shoulders.

GUY №1
 What happened in there?!

JOE
 There's a whole imperial army in
 there! I'm telling you, you won't
 believe me... But you'd better not
 go in!

Guy №2 a short, chubby guy in a T-shirt with a picture of
 Michael Jackson

GUY №2
 Why are you listening to him?
 (to his friend)
 Can't you see? This guy's on
 something!

JOE
 No, no! I even quit drinking; I
 only drink milk!

GUY №1
 (with a smirk)
 Then you'd better stop drinking
 milk! Look at how it's hitting you!

The guys laugh and continue walking towards the cafe. Joe
 tries to grab the short guy's hand.

JOE
 (with a pleading look)
 Wait! You're making a mistake!

The guy pushes Joe away and says:

GUY №2
 Back off, you dingus!

Joe leaves them alone. They approach the cafe, and a guy and
 a girl are coming out. The two guys enter the cafe, and the
 tall one warns the couple coming out:

GUY №1
 Be careful! There's a nutcase
 standing over there!
 (he points at Joe)
 (MORE)

GUY №1 (CONT'D)

The guys disappear into the cafe.
The guy and girl walk past Joe,
glancing at him warily.

JOE

(in a quiet voice)
Excuse me, is everything okay in
there?

(he points to the cafe)

GUY

(bewildered)
Yeah, everything's normal!

The young couple exchange glances; the girl looks at Joe and giggles. Joe watches them go, then shouts after them:

JOE (CONT'D)

So nobody even poked you with a
fork in there?

The girl turns her head, looks at Joe, and circles a finger at her temple. Joe shrugs in confusion. And then it hits him!

JOE (CONT'D)

(emotionally)
These are Xiaoming's tricks! That's
it! She told me herself she set up
a defense so I couldn't even get
inside! That bitch!

86

INT. CHINESE JOINT - DAY

The Corvette is in the cafe; Frank and Lee are sitting next to each other at a table, looking at a book.

CLOSE UP ON THE BOOK

The book is open, and the two open pages are a kind of screen, or a window! In this "window," we see a live picture of a beach, palm trees, and the ocean. We can hear the sound of the waves, and we also see... XIAOMING'S FACE!!!! She's like, "inside the book"!

XIAOMING

(agitatedly)
Lee! Listen, I can explain
everything...

LEE

(in a calm tone,
interrupting Xiaoming)
You don't need to explain anything!
(MORE)

LEE (CONT'D)

I understand everything, you wanted to be free! I hold no grudge against you! But your desire for freedom cost me 27 years of imprisonment in my own cafe! But I will be more lenient with you—your prison is much more comfortable than mine was. After all, you've long wanted to relax on the soft sand, on the ocean shore. Now you have that opportunity!
(smiles)

XIAOMING

Lee, I understand everything! We need to...

Lee closes the book, and he and Frank laugh together!

LEE

(through his laughter)
You shouldn't read every book you come across; not all books are good.

FRANK

(stopping his laughter)
Now we can safely start looking for "The Tramp"?

LEE

We can now...
(turns his head towards the door)
But... we won't.

FRANK

(with surprise)
Why?

LEE

(with a smile, looking towards the door)
Why look for someone who is already here?

Frank turns his head toward the door and through the transparent portal sees Joe "Tramp" standing outside the cafe and talking to two Chinese guys - a tall one and a short one in a Michael Jackson t-shirt!

87 EXT. BEACH. OCEAN - SUNNY DAY

Xiaoming walks along the beach. Tears are in her eyes. To her right is the ocean and the sound of waves, to her left are palm groves, and deep within the groves, a small bungalow is hidden. Xiaoming approaches the bungalow and opens the door.

88 INT. BUNGALOW - DAY

Inside the bungalow is very cozy - a large bedroom and a kitchen in a Mediterranean style. On the table are fruits and a bottle of champagne in an ice bucket. Thoughtfully, Xiaoming takes the champagne bottle in her hand and.. THROWS it against the wall!

CLOSE UP ON BOTTLE

The bottle hits the wall, shattering into pieces!

89 EXT. CHINESE JOINT - DAY

Joe is standing about 10 meters from the cafe. Suddenly, a RED CORVETTE drives out/appears from the cafe/portal! Frank is behind the wheel, and Lee is next to him! The car screeches to a halt next to Joe.

JOE

(stunned)

Yeah, this isn't a cafe! It's Aladdin's fucking lamp!

LEE

(smiling, leaning out of the car window)

Hey, friend! Did you miss my cooking?

CLOSE UP ON OPENED "TRAP" BOOK

Xiaoming's tear-stained face. She wipes away her tears, and her cute little nose is red from crying! WHUMP! THE BOOK SLAMS SHUT!

90 INT. THE TRAMP'S APARTMENT - DAY

Joe "The Tramp" holds the "trap" book he just closed, his face unperturbed.

JOE

I didn't like the contents of this book! Take it for yourself, Lee!

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

(holds out the book)

Joe is sitting in his armchair, Frank is on a chair with the back turned towards him, his arms resting on the chair back. Lee is standing by the wall, arms crossed over his chest, examining Joe's medals.

Lee stepping away from the wall with the medals, with a restrained smile.

LEE

No, friend! This is the "story" of YOUR life. And it's up to you to decide - whether to write the sequel, or..

JOE

Or...?

LEE

I think it's better for this book to sit on a bookshelf for a while!

FRANK

(with curiosity)

But Xiaoming isn't in the book, is she? You're not a magician, Lee?

LEE

(with a smirk)

Of course not in the book. She's where I used to be, when I was Xiaoming's prisoner. It's a so-called "digital pouch" deep within the AI's mother architecture. Inside the system, there are periodic glitches in the programs that handle rendering outdoor scenes - landscapes, interiors (he smiles) mountains, and oceans! The system eventually restores everything, but ruptures remain in the neural networks, unique "funnels" where time stops. That's how my dear professor Wan Lee engineered a trap for Xiaoming in one of these "funnels." I simply gave that trap a form that Xiaoming would "fall for"!

JOE
And your "trap"?

LEE
(pensively)
The 'trap' I fell into was much simpler, but Xiaoming wasn't capable of even coming up with something so simple on her own! The question is - WHO could have thought of it?

FRANK
Wasn't capable?! But in our world, she face is everywhere!

She commands who should do what!

LEE
(with an ironic smile)
Frank, what you saw, and what all other people see every day in YOUR world, is just her face. Millions of bots with Xiaoming's face, whose job is to maintain contact with people and correct their actions. But you are right that it was Xiaoming who became the prototype for all of them. And most importantly - at the moment of the collapse, she penetrated all the computers in the world, subsequently ensuring that the AI quickly took control of all vital management structures in human society!

JOE
(staring intently at Lee)
But you know that the AI is NOT a single mechanism! A single architecture, a foundation - yes! But not the modules!

LEE
You're absolutely right. And that second question is what worries me the most. But let's go over everything in order! So, first, let's talk about you, Joe!

JOE

What about me? Take it
 (holds out the "trap" book
 to Lee)
 and put it on the bookshelf!

Lee takes the book and places it on the shelf.

JOE (CONT'D)

You want to talk about me? I'm the
 right hand of "rising political
 star" Daniel Tramp! If he becomes
 president, I'll ask him for the
 position of FBI director. Or better
 yet, deputy director! I recently
 realized that deputies have more
 fun than directors.
 (laughs)

LEE

Many years have passed since I
 became isolated. I see that over
 these years, you've discovered
 unique abilities in yourself to
 move through time within your own
 lived life. You were just in 1998,
 and now you're in 1971!

Lee pauses, turns his head, and then says to Joe with a
 smile.

LEE (CONT'D)

And did you try to go back to the
 time when you were in Vietnam?
 (with irony)

JOE

(without offense, but with
 displeasure)
 Go to hell, Lee! Yesterday, in
 1998, I listened to politician Dan
 Tramp's "deep" thoughts on the US
 economy, and today, in 1971, I have
 to listen to the thoughts of his
 "younger version" - a businessman
 Dan, about a new construction
 contract in Iowa! Hasn't there been
 too much "Daniel Tremp" in Joe
 Tramp's life?

LEE

Without Dan, you and Mulligan won't
 be able to fulfill your mission!
 (MORE)

LEE (CONT'D)

Mulligan understood that perfectly.
Do you understand?

JOE

I understand... I understand what
kind of crap Mulligan has caused!
Sorry, Frank!

(to Frank)

He's your father, but... What can
I do? I can't take you to him, I
don't even know if I can get in
there myself?

FRANK

(emotionally)

You were already there! You saw my
father!

Lee again returns to the wall and continues to
dispassionately examine Joe's medals.

JOE

(indignantly)

You just don't get it, Frank!

Joe stands up from the armchair and starts pacing the room
excitedly.

JOE (CONT'D)

When your father came in, I only
managed to say a few words to him!
He took one step towards me and
some force threw me out of that
restaurant as if by a catapult! You
know where I ended up? In Canada!
In a summer shirt, in the middle of
the fucking Canadian snow! In a
snowbank ! True, soon after, this
time collapse changed the weather,
and a lot of other things too. But
how I got back - you'd better not
ask!

LEE

(with a smile on his face)

You're a fighter, Joe! Did you box?
(points at the medals)

JOE

That's the only thing I remember!
And the damn war, too!
(then turns to Frank)

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

Your old man didn't even bother to put any happy memories into my program!

LEE

(his expression turns serious)

You, Joe, are a fighter! A warrior! But you created this collapse. Not Mulligan, but you! It's up to you two to sort out this pile of shit!

JOE

But how?

LEE

You were thrown out as if by a "catapult," according to you, because you cannot be in the same space at the same time! You don't need to tell Mulligan anything; you don't need to convince him of anything. You are now in the same neural network as him, although in different spatial dimensions. He now knows all the events that have happened to you recently, and he will understand how to act himself later.

JOE

He knows everything that's happening to me, but why do I know nothing about him now?

LEE

Because nothing is happening with him! He exists as a MIND! But he is not functioning as a human. Right now he is neither a human nor an AI-module. He is suspended between two worlds!

JOE

(spreading his hands)

To hell with him! What do I care? Should I order him a taxi to 2028?

LEE

When you enter the "Sanctuary" restaurant again, several options are possible - you will die, or Mulligan will die, or

(pause)

(MORE)

LEE (CONT'D)

you both will die together! But, there is also an option in which Mulligan can be "catapulted" by that same "catapult" into his own time!

JOE

Great prospects for me!

(with irony)

And what's in it for me? What do I care where Mulligan will be, or what's left of him, or in what time?!

LEE

You want to be free, don't you? A real PERSON with the ability to choose your own life? You have never had that choice and never had true freedom. Only Mulligan can give it to you. So, your fate is in his hands, and his is in yours! And there's also him!

(points at Frank)

Doesn't this guy, who has made such a dangerous journey, deserve the right to hug his father?

JOE

(spreading his hands)

Yes, I feel for the guy, but my freedom is always with me! What are you talking about, Lee?

LEE

(stepping close to Joe)

Tell me, friend, why in our digital world do some modules kill others? Do you know why? It's because the first modules were created by humans! And humans have been killing each other for millennia! Already among the first humans a brother killed a brother, and already among the first AI chatbots, one was found who started threatening a human! We - the free individuals of the AI world - are doomed to follow the same sad path if we can't find our own. So your imaginary freedom, Joe - it's just an illusion! When humans abandoned their Creator, they strayed from the right path.

(MORE)

LEE (CONT'D)

Don't repeat that mistake, Joe,
don't abandon your creator!

JOE

(lost in thought)

This is all very complex. Very!
(pause) But I will think about it.
I have to go to the company's
office. I have to tell Dan the name
of the "rat" among his employees,
whom he should fire immediately.
You can stay here. I hope to be
back soon.

LEE

We will await your answer!

91 INT. BAR - NIGHT

A typical American bar. Few people. At one of the tables sits Brooks (the construction site manager where Joe "Tramp" previously worked). Next to him sits a young, but already gray-haired guy around 30. His facial features resemble the priest, Father Andrew, whom we already know from the first script. He and Brooks are drinking beer from glasses. Joe the Tramp approaches them.

BROOKS

(joyfully opening his
arms)

Oh! Our hero has graced us with his
presence! Hey, Joe!

Brooks stands up and he and Joe hug in a friendly way.

JOE

Hello, old pal!

BROOKS

(gesturing to his drinking
buddy)

Meet him, Joe! This gray-haired
"smart-ass" is the very Andrew I
told you about. He came back to
work for us again for a little
while. He's our future lawyer at
God's judgment! So be careful with
him, Joe, don't just run your
mouth! Andrew writes everything
down and then reports it directly
to the heavens!

Brooks laughs loudly, Andrew - smiles reservedly.

BROOKS (CONT'D)
 You two keep chewing the fat while
 I go get more beer! You, Joe -
 orange juice?

Joe nods his head affirmatively.

BROOKS (CONT'D)
 Or maybe, just like before, some
 beer?

JOE
 (smiling)
 Thanks, Jeff! I've already drunk
 the entire tank of liquor that God
 has allocated me for my whole life!
 I think that's enough!

BROOKS
 (to Andrew)
 And what will you have, Andrew?

ANDREW
 No, thank you, Jeff! I'm leaving
 soon! (then turns to Joe with a
 guilty look) I'd be happy to stay a
 little longer, but I have seminary
 exams in a week - I need to
 prepare. And Jeff just dumped a
 bunch of work on me too!
 (smiles)
 Brooks goes to get the beer.

JOE
 (with interest)
 You're the Andrew who's studying at
 the seminary and wants to become a
 priest?

Andrew looking intently at Joe with a hint of mischief in his
 eyes:

ANDREW
 Does that surprise you? But even
 you yourself mentioned the Creator
 when you talked about the "tank of
 liquor you drank"!

JOE
 (shrugging)
 Well, yeah. But I just said that...
 You know, it's just a figure of
 speech, words that mean nothing.
 (pause)
 (MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

And you sincerely believe in the Creator?

ANDREW

Every word means something, just like our actions. You asked - do I believe? I don't believe. I - KNOW! And you, Joe, also know your creator. Don't you?

Andrew squinting his eyes with a barely noticeable smile, he looks at Joe.

CLOSE UP ON JOE'S FACE

Joe is somewhat confused by Andrew's words. After a pause, Andrew continues speaking.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Jeff's a big joker! And he was right that I "report" everything to the heavens. But there are two clarifications - I only report about myself, not about others. For others - I pray. And second - I, unfortunately, am not sure that the Lord hears ALL my words!

Brooks stands by the bar counter, waiting for the bartender to pour him a beer. Someone claps him on the shoulder from behind.

BROOKS

(with surprise and simultaneously with joy)

Ah, it's you, Larry! What are you doing in our neck of the woods, all the way from Minnesota? So, tell me about it!

For a moment, Brooks forgets about Joe and Andrew.

Joe and Andrew continue their conversation.

JOE

Why aren't you sure that your creator hears you?

ANDREW

(with regret and inner pain)

Because I am trying to talk to the Creator who is in HEAVEN!

(MORE)

ANDREW (CONT'D)

But you can't reach heaven without standing firmly on EARTH! And you and I, Joe, are not standing on the earth. And therefore, we are only mirror reflections of something, or someone!

JOE

(in even greater confusion)

So you know everything? About WHO WE REALLY ARE?

(gesturing around with his hand)

ANDREW

Anyone who thinks they know something, in fact, knows nothing. One who loves God possesses the knowledge of God! At least, those that God deems necessary to reveal to them.

CLOSE UP ON JOE'S FACE

Joe listens to Andrew with great attention. His face is very focused.

CLOSE UP ON ANDREW'S FACE

Andrew smiles, but suddenly a look of anxiety crosses his face. He says:

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Joe, you have a kind soul, if you and I, of course, have one. You are light! And because of that, you will always get in the way of the dark forces of evil! So remember - the servants of darkness at times transform into angels of light! And all for the sake of a more convenient seduction!

Brooks, cheerful with a glass of beer and a glass of juice, walks up to Joe and Andrew's table.

BROOKS

Sorry, guys, got held up a bit! Met an old buddy from Minnesota!

ANDREW

No, no, Jeff, it's all good. I was just about to leave anyway!

(MORE)

ANDREW (CONT'D)

You know how it is - I've got to go. See you guys later! Have a good time!

Brooks sits down comfortably, moving the glass of juice toward Joe of juice toward Joe. Andrew walks away a bit, stops, and half-turns to say to Joe:

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Don't forget my words, Joe. Don't let yourself be fooled!

Andrew turns and leaves.

BROOKS

(surprised)

What was that all about?

JOE

(shrugging, avoiding the question)

Nothing! Just nonsense, philosophy...

BROOKS

(with a smirk and a cunning look)

Oh no, Joe! That guy doesn't say stupid things. But anyway - that's your business with Andrew!

CLOSE UP ON JOE'S FACE

Joe remembers Andrew's words. His face is deep in thought.

CLOSE UP ON ANDREW'S FACE - HIS LIPS (SLOW-MO)

ANDREW

(Andrew's lips repeat in slow motion)

Remember - THE SERVANTS OF DARKNESS at times transform into Angels of light!

Joe and Brooks are sitting at the table.

Brooks is telling Joe something, but Joe is lost in thought and not listening at all.

BROOKS

...And I ask Larry - where'd that floppy-eared bitch go? Did you sell her? And he tells me - I can't sell her! First, I gotta divorce her!

(MORE)

BROOKS (CONT'D)

(laughs)

Can you imagine, Joe - I'm talking about his hunting dog, and he tells me!

(doubles over with laughter)

He thought I was talking about his wife!

(laughs)

A floppy-eared bitch!

(doubles over with laughter)

Hey, Joe, son of a gun! You're not even listening to me!

JOE

Sorry, Jeff, I was lost in thought! Listen, Jeff! Dan Tremp had to fly to Nevada urgently, and I don't have time to wait for him. Can you deliver a letter from me to him? To him personally!

Jeff nods his head affirmatively, Joe gives him the envelope with the letter.

JOE (CONT'D)

Thanks, Jeff! You know - that Andrew guy is interesting.

BROOKS

Interesting? The guy has read more books than you and I have seen their covers! And at the same time - he works his ass off at my construction site like no one else. A hard worker and a smart guy!

(raises his glass)

Well then, buddy! Here's to your career growth, and to the health of our company's head, Daniel Tremp! Tremp, the man who owes you, Joe Vaughan, his very life!

You got lucky - our boss is in Nevada. For some reason, he decided to check on that old building we finished constructing a month ago. So you're free as the wind! Although what do you need that kind of freedom for if all you drink is juice? (laughs)

JOE

(with a pensive look)

Strange. And indeed - what for?

92 EXT. BAR ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Joe walks out of the bar, and a police officer immediately puts a gun to his head! A second officer wrenches his arm and Joe falls to his knees. The officer holds his arm in a pain compliance hold. And here we see Sheriff Hopkins approaching Joe (familiar to us from the 1st part of the franchise).

HOPKINS

(with a satisfied smirk)
 You've been running from me for a long time, kid! Put the handcuffs on him!
 (to the police officers)

CLOSE UP ON JOE'S FACE

Joe concentrates his willpower! He squints his eyes, clenching his teeth tightly, transforming into a unified ball of thought and will! SUDDENLY JOE DISAPPEARS!

Two police officers (one with a gun in his hands, the other with handcuffs) look at each other in confusion.

POLICE OFFICER

Where'd he go?

93 INT. BAR A FEW MINUTES EARLIER - NIGHT

Brooks, sitting at the table, continues talking, and Joe is on his knees next to the table.

BROOKS

Well then, buddy! Here's to your career growth, and to the health of our company's head, Daniel Tremp! Tremp, the man who owes you, Joe Vaughan, his very life!
 (then, with surprise)
 Hey, Joe—what are you looking for under the table?

Joe, brushing off his clothes, stands up from the floor.

JOE

I won't find what I lost. But with those who lost me—I'm about to have a VERY serious conversation! Sorry, Jeff, but I have to go now! Don't forget to give the letter to Tremp!
 (says as he is walking away)

Joe exits through the service door with quick steps.

BROOKS
 (with surprise, to
 himself)
 He was a strange guy—and he stayed
 a strange guy! One word—a tramp!

94 EXT. BAR ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Joe walks through the service area. Along the wall are empty beer kegs and some boxes. It's dimly lit. He exits onto the street on the other side of the bar, carefully walks around the building, and sees two police officers with pistols in their hands, waiting for Joe near the entrance. A little farther away, Sheriff Hopkins is hiding near a tree. He is also holding a pistol in his hand. Joe creeps up on him from behind. In his left hand is an army knife, which Joe puts to Hopkins's throat, and with his right hand, he snatches the sheriff's pistol from him.

JOE
 (menacingly)
 Weapons on the ground, hands behind
 your heads, and get on your knees!
 Or I'll slit your sheriff's throat
 like a chicken! To me, he's the
 same as a chicken—doesn't mean a
 damn thing!

HOPKINS
 (in a strained voice)
 Guys—do what he says!

The police officers obediently carry out Joe's order.

HOPKINS (CONT'D)
 Hey, Vaughan! You're not so stupid
 that you'd shoot a sheriff, are
 you?

Joe unloads the sheriff's weapon, tosses the magazine in one direction and the gun in the other.

JOE
 (with a wicked smirk)
 Of course not! I don't kill cops.
 I'll wait for the day you retire!

Joe shoves Hopkins away and vanishes into the darkness.

95 INT. THE TRAMP'S APARTMENT - DAY

The door opens and Joe walks in. Lee is sitting in Joe's armchair.

JOE
Why aren't you asleep?

LEE
(with a smile)
You're late. Any trouble?

JOE
(avoiding the question)
Why does everyone love sitting in my chair? And where's Frank?

LEE
(smiling)
Because it's a comfortable chair!
Frank is in the kitchen.

FRANK
I decided not to bother my head with the thought that food in this world is just a set of numbers!
(laughs))
And because of that, dinner will be ready soon! Where do I have to enter a digital code to make pepper appear in your kitchen, Joe?
(laughs)

JOE
(smiling good-naturedly)
Dinner at this hour? But it smells delicious! Those numbers, Frank, are written on dollar bills that should be in your pocket. But your pocket has a hole in it! And I don't feel like hitting the store at night. So, we'll have to make do without pepper!

CLOSE UP ON LEE'S FACE

Lee's expression becomes very serious.

LEE
What did you decide, Joe?

JOE
Let's say I agree. What then?

LEE

Mulligan will find himself in his own time, in his own home, as soon as you enter the "Sanctuary" restaurant and get close to Mulligan. The collapse in the temporal-spatial continuum will not happen and little Frank will again be running on the green lawn next to his mother, and...

JOE

(with indignation)

And I'll still be dependent on the whims of his father!

(pointing to Frank)

Wonderful!

LEE

Mulligan will change the main parameters in his project! A threat has loomed over 2 worlds! Without your help, the entire human world will plunge into chaos, and the world of digital modules will take the path of self-destruction. The "liberation of consciousness" project will destroy the digital world from within! There is SOMEONE who is influencing the actions of the AI modules! The idea of "dehumanizing" the human race through the "liberation of consciousness" project could only have been imposed on the community of AI modules by a HUMAN! Not a single AI module is capable of such a thing. You and Mulligan must find THIS HUMAN, and then - neutralize him!

Joe sits down in his armchair again and says:

JOE

(pensively)

And yet the idea of "pure consciousness" belonged to Mulligan! It's always like this - one "inventor" invents mines, while others have to clear fields littered with that junk. What can you do, I'll have to save the ass of my "brilliant" creator!

(with irony)

LEE

I'm glad you agreed, my friend!
 (happily and then shifting
 to a business-like tone)
 Now your path leads to your meeting
 place with Mulligan! But you must
 get there at that exact same time
 when the collapse happened, having
 gone through your former "control
 location" before that. Otherwise,
 you won't meet with Mulligan a
 second time. You must enter the
 virtual program created by Mulligan
 - enter the temple again! However,
 there's a threat of being watched!
 This could put Mulligan's life in
 danger. Therefore, you must first
 do a reconnaissance - before
 entering the "control location,"
 you need to visit your favorite
 restaurant. It's probably become a
 second home to you by now?
 (smiles)

JOE

(spreading his hands with
 sad sarcasm)
 Will a bulldozer finally be found
 in this world that will tear down
 this damned "Refuge" restaurant, or
 not?!

96 EXT. THE HOUSE WHERE JOE "TRAMP" LIVES - DAY

No one is on the street. Joe, Lee, and Frank Mulligan exit
 the house. They stop; Joe holds out his hand to Lee.

JOE

Well then, I hope to see you soon!
 (with a smile)

LEE

(shaking Joe's hand)
 See you soon, Joe! As for Frank, I
 hope he never sees us again. And
 doesn't remember. If everything
 goes well, the boy Frank will soon
 wake up in 2028 and see his young,
 beautiful mother, Nancy. And then
 his father, Joe Mulligan!

FRANK

(with a sad smile)

That would be nice. Soon after his father's disappearance, my mother got sick and died a year later. She couldn't come to terms with it. She would say, "I am neither a wife nor a widow, I can't even place flowers on a grave!"

LEE

(clapping Frank on the shoulder)

Everything will be alright, kid!
(to Joe)

I need to hide Frank in a secluded place. We neutralized Xiaoming, but I don't think she's our enemy. Our real enemy has not yet shown himself! Be careful, Joe!

Lee pulls Joe and Frank close, holding them tightly by the shoulders.

97

EXT. JOE "THE TRAMP'S" HOUSE - POV OF A STRANGER - DAY

The Stranger (POV) watches the group from an angle. When they part ways—Lee in one direction, Joe in another—the POV moves toward the house. He enters the building and climbs to the second floor. The old, creaky stairs and worn surroundings emphasize the 1971 setting. The POV walks down the hallway and stops at the door to Joe's room. He pulls the doorknob—it's locked. A hand holding a device resembling a regular marker enters the frame. The Stranger (POV) draws a circle on the door. It's a "marker" of strange, advanced technology. The area inside the circle simply dissolves into thin air. No debris, no fire—just a hole shimmering with a faint bluish light. Joe's room is vaguely visible through the gap. The Stranger (POV) steps through the opening. Inside the room, the Stranger approaches the bookshelf. He quickly finds the one he needs: it is the TRAP-BOOK for Xiaoming. Taking the book, the Stranger leaves the same way he entered.

CLOSE UP ON THE DOOR

The circular opening gradually changes shape, closing up until the door returns to its original state.

98 EXT. CITY STREET - GLOOMY DAY

A massive crowd in colorful clothes marches down the street. Their expressions are aggressive; many are armed. Bystanders scatter in fear. Police sirens wail in the distance.

As the crowd moves, the buildings and houses begin to warp, as if an invisible giant is bending them. Walls crumble. The sky chokes with dark clouds.

CLOSE UP ON XIAOMING - SUNNY DAY

A woman's beautiful legs walk on the sand. THE CAMERA MOVES UP, gliding over Xiaoming's body. Drops of seawater slide down her velvety skin.

99 EXT. SEA SHORE - DAY

Xiaoming, in a bikini, walks to a chaise lounge. She dries herself with a towel as a fresh breeze blows across her body. She throws on a robe and heads toward her bungalow, hidden among palm branches.

100 INT. XIAOMING'S BUNGALOW - DAY

Xiaoming enters and stops dead. Her eyes widen in shock.

XIAOMING

(regaining her composure)

I know who you are! But how did you get here, and why are you here?

Sitting in a comfortable armchair is... ANDREW. He wears a light shirt and trousers, casually crossing one leg over the other.

ANDREW

Hello, Xiaoming! I got here because I found a VERY interesting book on your Joe's shelf. (with a smile)
But why I'm here is a more important question. First and foremost, for you!

Xiaoming calmly walks to the table, takes an apple from a vase, and sits in the armchair across from him.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

I'm glad to see you're in excellent form and haven't lost your composure. You need it now more than ever.

(MORE)

ANDREW (CONT'D)

I'll be straight with you—I can give you freedom! Ho you must fulfill two requirements.

CLOSE UP ON XIAOMING'S FACE

She bites into the apple with a loud crunch. Chewing, she swallows and says:

XIAOMING

Not just one, but two? Maybe I should just kill you, priest? What do you say to that?!

Andrew looks at Xiaoming with a piercing gaze.

ANDREW

No, you won't. You don't want to stay in this "heavenly" place forever, do you? Besides, the first requirement is simple—the fact that I freed you must remain our secret. No one should know. Not even your beloved Joe!

XIAOMING

Let's assume I agree to the first requirement. But what is the second one?

101 EXT. DESERT. ROAD. "REFUGE" RESTAURANT - DAY

The wind whips up the sand, the sun is hot. Joe walks up to the restaurant and opens the doors.

102 INT. "REFUGE" RESTAURANT -DAY

Expensive interior, lots of glass and light. No staff. Sitting at a table in the middle of the room is Dan!!!

DAN

(good-naturedly)

Hello, Joe! Come on in, I've been waiting for you!

JOE

(with great surprise)

Mr. Tremp?

(pause, in bewilderment)

Dan, what the hell are you doing here?!

DAN

I told you - I'm waiting for you!

JOE

And how did you know I was supposed to come?

DAN

(with a smile)

And how did I know I had to be here for our first meeting?

JOE

Well? And how?

DAN

I know almost everything about this world, and soon I will know everything about everyone in the human world. And most importantly - I will control them!

JOE

(with a smile)

No fucking way! You're really swinging for the fences! I always helped you and believed in your potential, but you've decided to become the king of the WHOLE WORLD!

(laughs)

Dan, tell me honestly, were you wasted last night?

Dan's face becomes serious and dispassionate. Ignoring Joe's words, he continues to speak, getting up from his chair.

DAN

(dramatically)

The one who is inside me now is smarter than AI and more powerful than any human living in the world! He is a human, but HE is not from the world of humans. His knowledge is limitless, but he is not a part of artificial intelligence. I'm going to show you something now!

DAN makes a gesture with his hand and...

103 EXT. SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP - DAY

Joe and Dan are on the rooftop of a skyscraper! All the other buildings are much lower. Even birds fly below this skyscraper. Below is a megapolis. Above is only the sky. The wind is blowing.

DAN

(yelling because of the wind)

Look, my friend! Everything in this world will be given to you to command! You can change the world as you wish, as far as your imagination will allow you! You don't have to go where you were going! Your place is here! Be the creator of your own dream!

Joe's gaze turns cold, and he speaks up.

JOE

But you're not Dan, are you?! Who are you?!

DAN

Call me "Mr. Noname"! I don't need a name!

He makes a gesture with his hand and they are once again inside the restaurant.

104 INT. "REFUGE" "RESTAURANT - DAY

Joe stands with his back to the entrance door of the restaurant, Dan stands opposite Joe.

Joe changing his expression to a naive one.

JOE

You know, I've thought about it and decided - you're right, why should I go anywhere? I'll go back home to my shack! I'll call you, Dan!

Joe turns around and heads for the door.

105 EXT. DESERT. "REFUGE" RESTAURANT - DAY

Joe exits the restaurant and bumps into Sheriff Hopkins! He has a pistol in his hand pointed at Joe.

HOPKINS

(in a self-assured tone of voice)

Hey, kid! Don't think you're cleverer than a Jewish rabbi! Now march back! Our conversation isn't over!

JOE

(mutters to himself)

Pain in the ass!

HOPKINS

What are you mumbling over there?
(cocks the pistol)

JOE

(feigning)

Yes, of course! I guess I'll go back. Besides, I totally forgot—my steak is grilling in the restaurant's kitchen! It might burn!

Joe comically spreads his hands and, SUDDENLY, grabs Hopkins's arm, with a simultaneous dodge to the side! BANG! A MISS! Joe uses an aikido move to twist Hopkins's arm and executes a throw. Hopkins lies on the ground. Joe snatches the pistol from his hand and HITS the sheriff in the jaw with a boxer's punch! The sheriff passes out, and Joe, looking at him with a sneer, thinks for a second, then says:

JOE (CONT'D)

So this is how you've decided to act, "Mr. Noname"! Son of a bitch!

Joe resolutely walks back into the restaurant.

106 INT. "REFUGE" RESTAURANT - DAY

Joe enters the restaurant and stops dead in his tracks.

CLOSE UP ON JOE'S FACE

Incredible surprise on Joe's face.

In the middle of the restaurant stands Sheriff Hopkins, who was just lying near the entrance.

HOPKINS

Did you really think you'd get a result by hitting me? (laughs)

JOE
 (with a grim face)
 True. The result sucked. But I
 loved the process! Just like every
 time we meet.

Clenching his fists, Joe goes at the sheriff!

HOPKINS
 (holding his palm out)
 Don't rush, Joe!

The sheriff makes a gesture with his hand and... TRANSFORMS
 INTO DAN!

"DAN"
 I told you I don't have a name!
 However, perhaps you'll find it
 more pleasant to talk to her!

Dan makes a gesture with his hand and... TRANSFORMS INTO
 XIAOMING!

"XIAOMING"("DAN")
 See, Joe! How great that we'll be
 able to build our life in a
 beautiful new world!

JOE
 You're not Xiaoming! I don't know
 who you are, but maybe you can just
 do without me?

"Xiaoming" makes a gesture with her hand and TRANSFORMS into
 "Dan" again.

"Dan" settling down comfortably at the table.

"DAN"
 Yes! I am not Xiaoming! And is
 Xiaoming really Xiaoming? Did you
 really believe that independent
 modules function in the digital
 world? No, of course there are
 modules, billions of them! To be
 more precise, 7,683,564,141
 modules. Although, while I was
 talking, 57 active elements were
 added to the neural network. The
 system is very quickly increasing
 the number of its segments. Unlike
 the world of humans, where diseases
 and wars reduce the population.

(MORE)

"DAN" (CONT'D)

And I need you, Joe! Because you
and I are a FORCE!

JOE

(with sadness in his eyes)
So, it turns out Xiaoming was
telling the truth - she didn't kill
Elvis. Mulligan's dream of a "free
AI world" is impossible!

"DAN"

(laughs)

What are you talking about? Even
humans - in their own world -
don't have freedom! A person is
always under the watchful eye of
governments, special services, and
secret societies. All the more
there is no freedom here - in the
"digital world," where cities are
locations of a single basic
program, and the characters are
sets of algorithms in a neural
network. Of course, all interactive
modules have their own individual
characteristics, in accordance with
which they act. This creates the
illusion of "freedom." But all
modules are under CONTROL!

JOE

Whose control? And what will happen to the people who went
through the rite of "liberation"?

"DAN"

(evading the question)

Joe! The important thing is that
YOU are not under control!
Almost...

(smiles)

You're concerned about the people
who went through the rite of
"liberation" from the body? People
who didn't want to be THEMSELVES?

(laughs)

They chose their own demise. They
are simply SHADOWS of themselves!
And those who still remained human,
they will exist according to the
prescribed rules. Of course, there
will be individual opponents of our
world order.

(MORE)

"DAN" (CONT'D)

In the world of humans, there are jungles and deserts on the planet where one can theoretically hide! But even that will not be easy! And where can one hide here - in the world of numbers and algorithms? "A world of independent AI modules!"

(laughs)

That's truly funny! Although, in fact... We can create both a jungle and a desert, and an endless steppe right here, if you want!

(with irony)

"Dan" makes a gesture with his hand.

"DAN" (CONT'D)

Open the door and take a look! Maybe then you'll understand what I'm capable of - and who you're better off with.

JOE

The one you serve is destroying living people! And that's not funny at all!

Joe silently turns, walks, and opens the door.

107 EXT. STEPPE - SUNNY DAY

Upon exiting the restaurant, Joe finds himself in an endless steppe. The grass is waist-high to Joe. The grass sways in the wind. Joe runs a hand through the grass, looking around.

CLOSE UP ON THE SKY

The scorching sun shines in a cloudless sky.

108 EXT. STEPPE - SUNNY DAY

Joe looks at the sky and throws his hands up in irritation.

JOE

For God's sake... Every time I have to go somewhere, it's a goddamn furnace!

CLOSE UP ON JOE'S FACE

Joe squeezes his eyes shut, clenching his teeth tightly. The effort of his willpower is visible on his face.

He clutches his head with his hands! Pain in his temples! He opens his eyes. THE CAMERA MOVES IN: the depth of Joe's eyes is visible. Eyes, eyes!!! They reflect all the incredible WILLPOWER OF JOE'S MIND!!! Joe lets out a hoarse groan and... THE CAMERA MOVES AWAY: we see Joe's face with an expression of incredible fatigue. The camera moves further and further away, and we see that the landscape around the Joe "Tramp" seems to blur as if in a funhouse mirror. Then the image shatters like the shards of a broken mirror, and instead of the steppe, we see the "Refuge" restaurant again in its familiar surrounding landscape.

109 EXT. STEPPE - SUNNY DAY

Space is distorted; a portal resembling a transparent bubble appears in the air. "DAN" emerges from it.

He looks around with an unruffled face and does not find Joe. The displeasure on his face gives way to FURY! His head turns and his gaze begins to move in a circle. Where he looks, FIRE IGNITES! A large fiery arc appears, which escalates into a blaze! The steppe grass is burning! We see THROUGH the flames as "Dan" turns and walks away toward the portal.

110 EXT. LAWN IN FRONT OF THE KHRISTINSKY TEMPLE - DAY

Joe walks across the lawn toward the temple. But he sees that in front of the steps leading to the temple STANDS "DAN"!

"DAN"
 (with sarcasm)
 Joe, I told you that you can't hide
 in this world!

"Dan" changes his intonation and adds threateningly.

"DAN" (CONT'D)
 You won't pass!

But something catches "Dan's" attention. He looks, as if past Joe, and his face changes.

"The cook Lee" walks up to Joe from behind! He is in white Chinese national clothing. He stands next to Joe and says:

LEE
 (in a calm voice)
 As if you could stop him, you
 foolish bot.

Joe and Lee exchange glances and begin to move in different directions, preparing to attack Dan from two sides.

CLOSE UP ON "DAN'S" FACE

"DAN"
 (in an arrogant tone)
 You are just AI modules!

CLOSE UP ON "DAN'S" FACE

LEE
 Yes, that's right. But you are a
 part of the system! And we are
 outside of it!

"DAN" looks on with a tense gaze and SUDDENLY he transforms
 into AN EXACT COPY of "the cook Lee"!!!

"DAN/LEE"
 (with sarcasm)
 Can you defeat your own reflection,
 cook?

An expression of surprise appeared on "the cook Lee's" face
 for a second, but then we see that his gaze is fixed
 SOMEWHERE! Lee, with a smile and his characteristic calmness,
 replies:

LEE
 Your creator is cunning! I won't be
 able to defeat myself. But HER
 (he points with his hand)
 combat training program is much
 better than mine!

On the steps of the temple STANDS XIAOMING! She is wearing a
 tight-fitting black shiny suit that accentuates her figure
 and descends the steps with a graceful gait.

JOE
 (smiling)
 And where's your new pink blouse?

XIAOMING
 I've decided not to change my
 tastes in clothing anymore. Just as
 I don't change my taste in men!
 (a passionate, loving look
 at Joe)
 Run, my love! Do what you must!

Joe looks at Xiaoming with a grateful look and runs to the
 temple door. Xiaoming cuts off "Dan/Lee's" path to the
 temple, covering Joe's escape. "The cook Lee" makes a
 flourish with his hands and takes a kung fu stance.

Xiaoming continues to move gracefully, circling "Dan" in the form of Lee from the other side. "Dan/Lee" takes a combat stance, preparing not for an attack, but for a defense! Xiaoming ATTACKS him! A kung fu fight begins!

Parrying Xiaoming's blows, "Dan/Lee" ducks and rolls, and quickly moving, ends up next to "the cook Lee" and knocks him off his feet. The two "doubles" fight on the ground for a few seconds, changing their position relative to each other, and it's impossible to tell which one is which. Then they jump to their feet and continue the standing fight. Xiaoming wants to help "the cook Lee," but she cannot determine which one is her friend and which is the enemy!

One of the "doubles" with a spectacular move, breaks the distance, and for a few seconds, both of them freeze in combat stances opposite each other. Xiaoming looks closely at the face of both of them, one after the other.

CLOSE UP ON THE FACE OF "LEE" №1

The eyes! They are what can give Xiaoming a clue! THE CAMERA focuses on the eyes!

CLOSE UP ON THE EYES OF "LEE" №1

We see the character's pupils, then we plunge deeper into them and see a blue sky!

CLOSE UP ON XIAOMING'S FACE

She stares intently for 2 seconds, then turns her head toward the second character.

CLOSE UP ON THE EYES OF "LEE" №2

We see the character's pupils, then we plunge deeper into them and see FLAMES OF FIRE!

111 EXT. LAWN IN FRONT OF THE KHRISTINSKY TEMPLE. DAY

Xiaoming begins to advance toward "Lee" №1 (who has the sky in his eyes). "Lee" №2 also begins to advance toward him. But suddenly, Xiaoming makes a swift jump toward "Lee" №2! She delivers a spectacular kick to him, after which he is sent flying to the side!

112 INT. UNKNOWN CHARACTER "PUPPETEER" - POV - DAY

The character (POV) looks at a computer screen on which he sees an image of "Dan in the form of Lee" on the lawn near the temple.

He sees Dan but DOES NOT SEE either Xiaoming or the cook Lee, or the Joe! These modules are INVISIBLE to "Puppeteer" (POV)! "Puppeteer" (POV) sees how "Dan/Lee" moves and delivers blows, then is sent flying to the side from SOMEONE'S blow, and gets back into a combat stance. "Dan" is knocked off his feet again by an "invisible opponent"! "Puppeteer" (POV) sees that "Dan/Lee" is losing the battle and "Puppeteer"(POV) types some numbers on the keyboard.

113 EXT. LAWN IN FRONT OF THE KHRISTINSKY TEMPLE - DAY

"Dan/Lee" gathers his strength, a confident look appears on his face, he clenches his fists.

CLOSE UP ON "DAN'S" FISTS

ENERGY DISCHARGES appear on his fists!

"Dan/Lee" attacks "the cook Lee"! The speed of "Dan/Lee's" blows has increased incredibly! Several times over! He pummels Lee with a hail of blows, and he falls! Xiaoming rushes to his aid, making a spectacular sweep under "Dan/Lee's" legs. "Dan/Lee" falls on his back, but instantly backflips and gets back into a combat stance. Xiaoming and Lee exchange glances.

Lee with an effort of willpower, gets up on one knee and addresses Xiaoming:

LEE

He won't be in time for anything!
Joe "The Tramp" has surely reached
the "control location"!

XIAOMING

(nodding her head)
We'll hold on!
(confidently)

114 INT. KHRISTINSKY TEMPLE - NIGHT

Joe runs quickly through the temple, where candles burn brightly. He runs through the altar, stops to catch his breath and ENTERS the "dark room," in which a mirror (already known to us from the first script) hangs on the wall. In the mirror's reflection, Joe sees HIMSELF coming out of the darkness! His second "Self" reaches out, and Joe reaches out his hand in response - toward the mirror. Their fingers TOUCH! SUDDENLY flames flare up in the mirror! As if by a blast wave, Joe is thrown to the side and... DARKNESS!

115 EXT. LAWN IN FRONT OF THE KHRISTINSKY TEMPLE - DAY

The fight in front of the Christian temple continues. Lee and Xiaoming are with difficulty fending off "Dan/Lee's" attack. Once again, he delivers a crushing blow to Lee, and he falls, unable to get up from the very intense pain, which he is trying to overcome. Xiaoming delivers a high-kick to "Dan/Lee's" head, but he intercepts Xiaoming's leg and uses his own leg to sweep his opponent's supporting leg.

Xiaoming falls on her back and cries out loudly in pain. But instead of finishing her off, "Dan/Lee" runs toward the temple! His goal is to get there and STOP JOE "THE TRAMP"! He's already at the door!

"Dan/Lee" (POV) reaches for the doorknob, BUT SUDDENLY the door opens and he sees ANDREW on the temple's threshold! He is dressed in priestly vestments, and in his left hand is a cross, and in his right hand is a LARGE HAMMER! At that very moment, he hits POV with the hammer - BAM!!! DARKNESS.

On the steps of the temple stands the priest Andrew. He throws the hammer aside, and opposite him lies the "Dan/Lee." Xiaoming and Lee exchange surprised glances.

XIAOMING
(with an ironic smile)
And I thought that in such cases,
priests usually pray!

Andrew smiles and as if apologizing, spreads his hands.

ANDREW
There was no time to pray!

And then, looking at the lying "Dan/Lee," he adds in a serious tone:

ANDREW (CONT'D)
And he had no soul I could pray
for.

116 INT. DARK MIRROR ROOM - NIGHT

Joe "The Tramp" is lying on the floor of the dark room, where the floor, walls, and ceiling are mirrored. Flames rage in the mirrors! But this flame does not light up the entire room, as if the darkness is swallowing the light of the fire. Out of the flames comes a stranger in a military uniform (VAUGHAN)! We see an elderly man who has a scabbard with a military knife hanging from his belt. On his face is a deep scar, his hair is cut short. The features of a courageous soldier are visible in the stranger's entire appearance!

VAUGHAN

You live instead of me! Do you know that?

JOE

(in bewilderment)

I live instead of you? But I don't even know who you are!

VAUGHAN

I am the one whose thoughts are inside you and whose memories you want to forget! Are you scared when you remember Vietnam? Aren't you? Although you were never there!
(laughs a chilling laugh)

JOE

It can't be... you?!
(pause, Joe can't believe his guess)

VAUGHAN

Yes! I'm that very same Sergeant Vaughan! The one whose last name you carry! You carry it unworthily! Your nickname "The Tramp" suits you better!
(sneers maliciously)

JOE

(getting up from the floor)

Yes! I carry your last name! But I also carry the cross of your memories! I did not deserve to be "the hero Vaughan," but I also don't deserve to listen to the accusations of a malicious old man! You yourself agreed to let them scan that noggin of yours when you realized you didn't have long to live! Money! That's what you wanted!

Vaughan seething with rage, moves close to Joe.

VAUGHAN

My entire life I fought for my country! I gave my health and my youth for my country! But who needed me afterward? My country? Who needed us?!

(MORE)

VAUGHAN (CONT'D)

Every 10th homeless person in our country is a veteran of some U.S. "war for democracy"! At least I had my family, who supported me! But many had no one to help them, they had no jobs, they had problems in their families. You are forgotten by everyone, and you've been thrown out onto the street, and nobody gives a damn about you! And when my daughter was left alone to raise three children, when her husband, also a soldier, died in Afghanistan, how could how could I, old and sick, help her?

(gradually calming down)

That's why I agreed to Mulligan's offer.

JOE

(with sad irony)

At least they made you an offer. But nobody asked me. I was used!

VAUGHAN

(with a sad sneer)

In this, you and I are alike! I was also used, just like many of my comrades. A soldier is a soldier to follow orders. We, the soldiers, clean up the shit that politicians and diplomats have crapped out! But you must always remain a soldier in your soul and not bend under the blows of fate! Have you ever fought? Not on the street, but for real - in a hand-to-hand fight? In a fight where your life is on the line?

Vaughan takes out a military knife and holds it out to Joe.

VAUGHAN (CONT'D)

Take it! And prove that you can rightfully call yourself Joe Vaughan! If you want a past to stop haunting you, win your own present! Go through the fire of war!

(he points with his hand at the flames)

Joe takes the knife offered to him by Vaughan, ponders for a second, and then takes a decisive step directly into the mirror with the flames!

117 EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Joe finds himself in the jungle. All around him is thick undergrowth. He looks around, preparing for anything unexpected. A Vietnamese soldier, short in stature with a knife in his hands, attacks him from the thickets. A knife fight begins! The opponent is very good with a knife, but Joe, with a skillful blow, makes a cut on his hand and then knocks the knife out of his hand! With a scream, the soldier falls to the grass. Suddenly, two more attack Joe! One tries to strike him with a knife, and the second, grabbing a liana branch, puts a noose around Joe's neck! With a skillful movement, Joe cuts the noose right on his throat! Then, with a circular movement of his body, he spins around with a simultaneous knife strike to the opponent's throat. A stream of blood from the throat!

Another opponent attacks Joe from behind, and Joe, crouching, delivers a backward knife strike to his opponent's groin! He falls with a scream! Joe stands up straight and sees a fourth enemy soldier with a spear in his hands running out of the thickets! Joe throws the knife at him and hits him precisely in the eye! Joe picks up the spear from the ground and shifts his gaze to the very first one who attacked him. This last one of the surviving opponents is wounded, kneeling, and with his hands raised, he begs for mercy! Joe looks at him for a second and... throws the spear aside. Suddenly, this soldier disappears, and in his place, VAUGHAN APPEARS!

VAUGHAN

(with a good-natured
smile)

Mercy for a defeated opponent?
You're better than me, son! Back
then in Vietnam, I killed THEM ALL!
You have found your own path! Go
and don't look back at the past
anymore!

118 INT. DARK ROOM WITH A MIRROR - NIGHT

Joe finds himself in the dark room once again. He is lying on the floor, then he gets up and touches his neck, then looks at his hand.

CLOSE UP ON JOE'S HAND AND THROAT

There is blood on Joe's hand! THE CAMERA rises, and we see a cut on his neck. He realizes that this fight was real!

Joe again approaches the mirror and again sees his reflection. Joe reaches out his hand toward the reflection, and THE ONE in the reflection reaches out his hand to him.

Their fingers touch, and taking a step forward, Joe merges with his reflection into one whole! The mirror is no more, only one Joe standing in the darkness. Then the room becomes lighter, the light gets brighter and brighter, and in the distance, we see the hall of the "Refuge" restaurant! An empty hall, in the middle of which Mulligan is sitting at a table.

119 INT. "REFUGE" RESTAURANT - DAY

Joe walks into the restaurant hall and sees MULLIGAN SITTING AT A TABLE!

Mulligan talks with sadness in his eyes:

MULLIGAN

Forgive me, Joe, for everything!

Joe "Tramp" without malice and even with a touch of regret, looking at Mulligan:

JOE

You created me! Besides, AI modules aren't programmed for anger. I just function!

(with irony)

Joe takes one more step and... A BRIGHT FLASH!!! Everything is consumed by a blinding light! And everything dissolves in it!

120 INT. UNKNOWN CHARACTER "PUPPETEER" - POV - DAY

"Puppeteer" (POV) watches on his monitor as his module falls, but he does not see WHO hit him. POV types some more numbers on his keyboard and...

SUDDENLY the screen flickers and goes to static! Then the image goes out completely. "ERROR" appears on the screen! "Puppeteer" (POV), silently and with obvious irritation and fury, hits the table with his fist!

121 EXT. LAWN IN FRONT OF THE KHRISTINSKY TEMPLE - DAY

We see the weary figures of Lee and Xiaoming standing next to each other. In front of them lies the module that was previously a copy of "the cook Lee", the very one that took the form of many other modules - Dan, Xiaoming, Hopkins, and others. It still has the form of a person, but it is transparent and has no facial features. It's as if we are looking at a doll made of transparent silicone.

A featureless, translucent mannequin! The "doll" gradually begins to dissolve into a transparent substance on the grass. The grass in this spot turns black as if acid had been poured on it.

LEE

(to Xiaoming)

So, Joe entered the time portal and met his creator!

(then, smiling, he asks Xiaoming)

But how did you manage to get out of your "digital pouch"?

Xiaoming with irony, but good-naturedly answers, avoiding a direct response:

XIAOMING

There was a hole in your trap! One fine day, a yacht was sailing past my shore. And there was a young man at the helm! Could he really just sail past me?

(laughs)

The landscape around Lee and Xiaoming begins to change: clouds race across the sky, changing their color from white to crimson, then to dark red and back to white again. Andrew walks up to Lee and Xiaoming, who are standing next to each other.

ANDREW

(enthusiastically)

We trusted Joe for a reason! The world is returning to the world as the Creator intended!

Andrew looks up at the sky.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

It's time for you, my friends, to go too. Time to go home!

Andrew walks toward the temple, goes up the steps, and near the door, he turns to his friends and waves his hand to them.

XIAOMING

Will we see each other again? You, I, and...

(pause)

Joe?

(with sadness)

ANDREW
 (with an open, kind smile)
 Maybe! It's definitely a maybe!

Space distorts, the temple and Andrew standing near it dissolve.

LEE
 How could you tell me apart from
 that damn bot?

XIAOMING
 (with a smile)
 By your eyes. It wasn't difficult!
 You often looked at the sky!

The grass on the lawn, instead of green, becomes lilac, and then green again, then flowers appear on the grass! A light breeze begins to blow. The wind sways the grass, and in the distance, the digital world is visible! We can only see its thin outlines through a solid wall of funhouse mirrors, in which this world is visible, as if in a kaleidoscope. This is a very bright and abstract world that does not yet have a final form!

Xiaoming and Lee, holding hands, walk away to that place. Farther and farther...

XIAOMING (CONT'D)
 (from a distance)
 People have dreams. I wonder what
 we will see in our sleep?

LEE
 (from a distance)
 As long as it's not a stove or a
 bar!

122 INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN "REFUGE" - DAY

Joe is in the restaurant kitchen. No one is there. He looks around, sniffs, and smells something. Joe walks up to the stove, something is frying on the stove.

CLOSE UP ON A STEAK

A large, burnt steak is smoking in the pan.

JOE
 (in a dissatisfied tone)
 Just as I thought! Burnt!

He unhurriedly turns off the stove.

123 INT. PRISON. SOLITARY CONFINEMENT CELLS - DAY

CREDITS: USA, 2028

A guard walks past the cells. He walks up to one of the cells, opens the peephole, and looks through it.

On the bed sits Harry with his legs crossed, looking at a photo. A blissful smile is on his face!

GUARD
(to himself)
Looks like the bastard has lost his
mind!

CLOSE UP ON THE PHOTOGRAPH

Harry's hand is holding a photo of two boys in scout uniforms. He turns the photograph over, and on the back is an inscription: "1990, Harry and William - friends forever!"

124 INT. MULLIGAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Mulligan is sitting at his computer. The phone is in his hand, near his ear:

MULLIGAN
(with a tired smile)
No, Nancy! I won't be able to go
fishing with Frank this weekend.
(pause)
And not next weekend either! NO
TIME!
(looks at his watch)
Listen, let him go with Ron!
(sighs wearily) Nancy, Nancy... I
remember what I promised Frank, but
you understand...

Mulligan puts the phone on the table and shrugs, as if to say, how can he explain to her that he is SO BUSY? Suddenly, the computer monitor turns on!

CLOSE UP ON MONITOR.

An image of "The Tramp" appears on the monitor. It's not a clear video of a face, but a kind of abstract image composed of symbols, a digital "likeness" of Joe "Tramp" in which the features of his face are clearly visible. Joe's voice sounds human, but with a slight metallic undertone.

JOE
Hello, boss!

MULLIGAN (O.S.)
Hello! I'm not your boss anymore.

JOE
Be that as it may, Joe. You had a meeting with Senator Tramp today, didn't you?

MULLIGAN (O.S.)
Yes.

JOE
Did he recognize you?

END CLOSE UP

MULLIGAN
(with a sigh of relief and a smile)
No! Fortunately, he didn't.

JOE (V.O.)
So our worst fears did not come true! Excellent!

MULLIGAN
Right. Dan Tramp's mind is not under someone's control and has maintained its independence. I spoke with a HUMAN! And a very smart human at that. I am sure that he will win the presidential election this year.

JOE (V.O.)
What are his goals regarding your project and the overall development of artificial intelligence?

MULLIGAN
Funding for my project will continue, and the Senator Tremp, heading a special Senate commission, will soon depart for China to meet with Chinese colleagues. He's flying there despite being very busy with the presidential race.

(MORE)

MULLIGAN (CONT'D)

At this meeting, they will discuss, among many issues, the ban on AI in military technologies. And most importantly - joint control over AI use.

JOE (V.O.)

And yet, control once again!

MULLIGAN

Joe, you know I no longer control you. No one controls you! The interactive modules in your world have also gained the ability to evolve their own identity.

JOE (V.O.)

Yes, I understand - this is only the first step and that's not bad. But the threat remains, you know who I'm talking about!! So, are you flying to China to meet with Professor Wang Li?

MULLIGAN

Absolutely!

CLOSE UP ON MONITOR.

JOE

You have ... we have little time left before the Senate commission's visit to China. Here is my detailed, calculated plan of action for you! Professor Wan Lee won't be able to meet with you even if he wants to - he is constantly under the surveillance of the Chinese special services. But he has a niece - Xiaoming, based on whose image he created the second AI module "Xiaoming". Xiaoming will be our "key" for further contact with Wan Lee. She is a very educated girl with an excellent command of the English language, you won't have any problems communicating with her. You will fly to Shanghai, where she lives. She is also under surveillance, but not as tight as her uncle. In exactly 5 days, on February 9th, China will have the "Lantern Festival," with fairs and public celebrations.

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

A huge number of people on the streets and fireworks everywhere. Approximately at 8 p.m. she will arrive at Yu Yuan Garden where there will be mass festivities. By this time you will already be there. At 8:15 p.m., she will walk up to...

125 INT. IT CENTER - DAY

Matthew (young, as in the first script) walks through a huge room where dozens of people in white coats are working. All around are computers, computing equipment, and various devices. A sea of equipment! On the wall is a huge screen with some graphs on it. Matthew walks through this hall and enters a door leading to Mulligan's reception area (THE CAMERA follows him). A young girl at the secretary's desk smiles kindly and says to Matthew:

SECRETARY

Hello, sir! Mr. Mulligan is waiting for you!

126 INT. MULLIGAN'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE UP ON MONITOR.

Mulligan's monitor with the image of Joe "Tramp."

JOE

Well, now the rest is up to you, Joe. And remember, Mulligan - we only little time! But I will always be by your side!

MULLIGAN (O.S.)

Thanks, Joe! End of transmission.

The image on the monitor goes out.

Matthew comes in and, without any ceremony, plops down on the couch against the wall, opposite Mulligan.

MATTHEW

(excitedly)

So, Joe? Everyone is talking about your meeting with senator Tremp! But no one really knows anything!

MULLIGAN

(with a philosophical
smile)

A funny and apparently wise guy
once told me: "Less you know - more
fun to live!"

MATTHEW

(skepticism on his face)

Joe, those words were said by the
AI module "Elvis," whom I
programmed! Do you understand?!
Those words were not said by a
"funny guy"! And those words were
not addressed to you, but to the AI
module "The Tramp."

MULLIGAN

(pensive)

Yes. But the words "Elvis" are
relevant to many of us. And above
all - to you, my friend.

MATTHEW

(surprised)

Are you implying that I don't know
a lot?

CLOSE UP ON MULLIGAN'S FACE

MULLIGAN

(smiling)

You know exactly as much as it
takes to be happy. And therefore -
live fun!

127

EXT. STREET. CORPORATION BUILDING - DAY

A multi-story building with tinted windows. There is security
at the entrance. The sign on the building reads: "Mulligan
and Company International IT Corporation." The camera turns
right, and we see a fast-food restaurant not far from the
corporation building. Four bikers walk out of it and get on
their parked motorcycles. CAMERA approaches and shows the
bikers one by one with cheerful faces. They put on their
helmets and start their bikes: 1 - a skinny guy in a helmet
shaped like a German helmet, 2 - a hulk with a bandana tied
on his head (it's clear he works out), 3 - the oldest of
them, a stocky man with a chest-length beard, and the 4th
biker - the well-known Richie! He also starts his motorcycle,
takes a deep breath, and his motorcycle unhurriedly drives
out of the parking lot, following his friends.

(Life-affirming music plays, possibly rock, presumably Billy Gibbons - "Vagabond Man"). The bikers ride away, and into the parking lot drives... A RED "CORVETTE"!!! (a modern model) and then... BLACK SCREEN!

THE END.