The movie “Gattaca” presents a dystopian reality governed by DNA. The title foreshadows the movie’s genetic motif as it contains the four letters that describe the DNA: G, A, T, C; each letter representing the initial of the four nucleic acids.

Vincent is a “de-gene-arate”, as the movie describes babies born without genetic modifications. His fate has been determined by his DNA, being diagnosticated with heart problems that had 99.9% probability of occurring and being given a lifespan of 30 years. However, throughout the whole movie, Vincent proves to be the exception from the rule. He surpasses his genetic potential: he lives past 30 years, he gets accepted into Gattaca, he beats his brother when it comes to swimming. The DNA quality and potential is considered by the society as everything a person could ever amount to, but as Vincent proved throughout the movie, and especially in the swimming contest against his genetically gifted brother, the will, the work put in and the determination of oneself overpowers any genetic baseline.

The DNA, a sure-fire way to identify and appraise someone became the only security measure and the only test put in place for verifying people. However, due to the eagerness of Vincent, the system was hijacked. This proves once again that the potential of the DNA is no match for the potential of one’s will. The fate of Vincent is far from ordinary in that dystopian reality, the less fortunate people that were “faith-born” had to suffer from severe discrimination, or “genoism” as it is called in the movie: they were neglected by the insurance and health system, they were assigned jobs that belonged to the underclass, they were overall considered less of a human. On the flip side of the coin, the limitless customization of DNA led to people being born in order to pursue certain careers. Society ended up producing humans tailored for specific jobs, such as the pianist with 12 fingers. This dystopian society disregards free will in order to achieve perfection: they are forcing a person to fill out a certain role, like a cog in a mechanism, regardless of the person’s potential passions or interests. However, the said perfection that society tries to achieve can put a huge mental burden on people. For example, Jerome, an almost genetically perfect human, with a gene quality of 9.3/10, faced an enormous frustration and depression when he placed second in a swimming contest. His life proves that a person is not guaranteed to achieve their potential and that, at the end of the day, the body is the vessel of the mind and spirit, just like a vase is a container for water: the water may not be able to fill the whole vase, even though there is enough space in that vase for more water.

The movie exposes a dystopian reality driven by the quality of DNA; however, this reality might not be as strange or far as we are inclined to believe. In our society, by swapping the discrimination based on genes with concepts like education, money and skin color we can find ourselves in the same scenario as the movie describes.