

THE BEAUTIFUL FUTURE

EPISODE 1: IN THE CLOUDS

Written by

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I will be thin and pure like a glass cup. Empty. Pure as light. Music. I move my hands over my body - my shoulders, my collarbone, my rib cage, my hip bones like part of an animal skull, my small thighs. In the mirror my face is pale and my eyes look bruised. My hair is pale and thin and the light comes through. I could be a lot younger than seventeen. I could be a child still, untouched.

-Francesca Lia Block

## CONCEPTS:

MINDCHAT (MC) - This is a form of communication through an augmented reality wearable device. Your interface appears projected onto the real world. This technology is based loosely on Magic Leap. The device responds to small motor movements, head and facial gestures as well as hand and finger movement. Throughout the story we see communication through MC. This messaging appears on top of the character's POV, these messages will be *italic*.

DREAMHOUSE (DH) - was born from a tumblr and Pinterest merger after ownership of VR headsets became ubiquitous. It is a "virtual dollhouse" and social network. The experience is highly addictive as users have access to virtual possessions they are unable to afford in real life. The worlds are designed using the unreal engine.

SMART ADS - throughout the script we see many hidden advertisements. These will run on top of the picture, usually without the actors acknowledging them. Some will be aimed at the audience and some will be aimed at the actors. They will be **in bold**.

AVA'S UNEDITED - Ava posts her thoughts frequently and seamlessly on her "unedited" stream, using MC. Unedited is a type of blog/digital journal. You can choose which unedited posts you make public, but the idea of the site is they can all be private and then you later select the best parts to share. We will see these unedited posts on top of the action next to an icon of her avatar. They will be noted as UNEDITED:.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL INDOOR SWIMMING POOL - AFTERNOON, YEAR 2028

Girls stand in glistening clusters around the edge of the pool. Whistles blow, divers leap, gossip is exchanged.

AVA , 17, tall and pale with a porcelain face and mind elsewhere stands with her arms clasped near the edge of the pool. She watches intently as a bird that has been caught indoors pecks at the glass.

Thoughtlessly her thumb goes into her mouth.

A GROUP OF GIRLS snicker.

Doors burst open at the far end of the gym. 3 GIRLS dressed and made up like 1970's secretaries run in, led by GOLDEN, full figured, cat eyed, teen queen. She runs in front, waving a piece of paper and the girls giggle, chasing breathlessly after her.

Golden turns around as she runs alongside the pool, to taunt and smile at her friends. She doesn't see Ava in front of her and bumps hard into her.

Caught off guard, Ava slips backwards, limbs flailing. Her knee and then cheek crack the lip of the pool before she falls in.

The 3 GIRLS come to a halt.

GIRL 1

Oh shit.

Golden steps backwards from the pool.

GOLDEN

I like, barely touched her.

A SWIMMING COACH blows her whistle and yells;

SWIMMING COACH

Out of the water!

The 3 GIRLS and a gaggle of others still wet from the pool gather around the edge and look down.

Blood billows up to the surface.

INT. UNDERWATER - DAY

AVA sinks down below the silent water. She opens her eyes and looks at the crowd gathering above her.

Blood floats out of a cut on her cheekbone. She opens her mouth and large air bubbles form. She watches them with interest.

TITLE CARD: IN THE CLOUDS

EXT. BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD - LATE AFTERNOON

AVA weaves with assurance through backyards pulling down on the straps of her backpack. She approaches a fence with a sign nearly obstructed by brush;

DANGER: DO NOT ENTER: BIOLOGICAL  
HAZARD

She sticks a sneaker under a loose part of the fence and pulls it up. She ducks under the fence wincing as a branch brushes her swollen cheek.

EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS

The gulf laps the shore in a murky brown foam. Ava walks along the edge of the water, kicking dead fish and other sea life with her feet. Her shirt is up over her nose and she breathes through it.

She draws a box with her fingers around the ocean and we see that she is recording it.

EXT. AVA'S HOUSE - DUSK

Ava places her finger up to a lock pad and the door opens. We hear a recording of a child's voice gleefully shout "Ava's home!" as she enters.

INT. AVA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Her father, DEAN, 65, salt and pepper and slight sits in the living room watching a giant screen soundlessly.

Ava's mother, BETH, absently calls to her from the other room.

BETH  
Hi honey.

Ava doesn't answer and Beth doesn't notice.

INT. AVA'S BEDROM - CONTINUOUS

The room still looks like a kids bedroom, the bed is nearly covered in a mountain of stuffed animals.

Ava sits and pulls a screen out from under the covers.

She lifts it to her face and inspects the cut on her cheek in the front facing camera.

She takes several photos of herself and they appear on screen.

UNEDITED: a row of frowning faces and the captions "ouuuccchhhhhhhh" "you should see the other guy, lol" and "fuckkkkkkkkk".

INT. SELF-DRIVING CAR - MORNING

Ava sits in the back seat next to BETH, 62, scatter-brained and business casual. Beth roots through her bag and Ava stares out the window as they approach the school.

EXT. EAST LAKE HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Students mill around in front of the school. The cliques are very defined and dress "generationally".

Her car door unlocks and we hear the car say "bye AVA".

Beth looks up from her screen and at her daughter. She familiarly mocks the voice of the car.

BETH

"Bye Ava"

Ava half smiles. She also speaks in the car voice.

AVA

"Goodbye Beth, you are powerful and beautiful and today is YOUR day!"

BETH

That's right it is.

Ava shakes her head and starts to walk away.

BETH (CONT'D)

Ava... call me if you need to come home, if your cheek starts hurting.

AVA  
I'm fine mom.

BETH  
OK.

Beth fans her fingers goodbye as the window rolls up. The car pulls into the line of other cars exiting the school.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - MORNING

AVA weaves through the crowded hallway. Kids talk and text and belong. She doesn't make any waves.

INT. MR. RADNER'S CLASSROOM - MORNING

Ava is the first one in her seat. She sits near the back bent over a comic with her hair covering her face.

The kids slowly file in.

A small pink number "1" pops into her field of vision (MC). This startles her. She blinks and turns her head to the side.

An avatar with the words "*what happened to your face?*" appears on her POV.

Ava stares at the words for a moment, uncertain if she wants to answer.

Her words "*uhhhh..*" appear. She deletes "*uhhhh..*"

She sends "*I fell*" and looks around the room.

FRANCIS, 17, with deep blue hair and an easy smile waves at her.

She turns around quickly, and smiles to herself looking back at her comic.

Golden and her friends enter the classroom and sit in the desks in front of her. Golden makes a big deal of leaning over.

GOLDEN  
Ava, I am furreal SO sorry about  
your face. I can't believe you fell  
like that.

Ava barely looks up at her.

AVA

It's OK.

GOLDEN

Oh emm, it looks SO bad.

Golden makes an exaggerated "eeek" face, mimics concern.

Ava nods and looks down.

A tired, young teacher, MR.RADNER, enters the classroom. He wears a body camera on his chest.

MR. RADNER

OK everybody, heads up, screens out, MC's off.

The students take out various sized tablets, phones and computers and place them on their desks.

Mr. Radner motions to a student in the front row to flip hers over. She turns her screen face down.

Golden and her friends sneak a photo of the three of themselves.

MR. RADNER (CONT'D)

Golden!

GOLDEN

Sorry Radner, Olivia just got her braces off.

Another small number appears in Ava's vision. She turns her head to the side to retrieve the message.

The words "*I think it looks cool*" appear on her POV. She bites her lip and her vision becomes slightly blurred.

MR.RADNER

OK, school tabs out, page 129,  
"Introducing Iambic Pentameter"

Ava pulls out her tab and navigates to the correct page.

The photo just taken by Golden appears on her tablet.

She is alarmed.

The heads of the three girls start spinning and then explode.

She brings her hand to her mouth.

Francis laughs behind her.



She tries quickly to close the photo. It disappears from her tablet.

AVA MC: *"did you do that?!!1 How did you get my MC?"*

A BOY behind Ava taps her on the shoulder. She jumps and then turns around. He hands her a small piece of paper.

She unfolds it on her desk. Unpracticed in the ways of note passing, she makes no attempt to hide it.

Written on the paper: "I have my ways :p"

EXT. SIDEWALK - AFTER SCHOOL

The sun beats down oppressively, Florida high noon. Ava rounds a corner and notices Francis walking about 20 yards ahead of her.

He hears someone behind him and turns around.

FRANCIS  
Are you following me?

AVA  
No.

He turns around and they continue walking for a few steps, 20 yards apart.

FRANCIS  
It feels like you're following me.

AVA  
I'm walking behind you, but I'm not following you. I'm walking home.

Francis holds his hand up to his ear, still walking.

FRANCIS  
What?

AVA (LOUDER)  
I'm walking home.

Francis nods.

FRANCIS (YELLING)  
So you live nearby?

AVA  
Yeah, well like, a 20 minute walk.

Francis can't hear her, they are still 20 yards apart.

FRANCIS

Huh?

AVA (LOUDER)

Like 20 minutes.

FRANCIS (YELLING)

20 minutes?

AVA (LOUD)

Yeah.

FRANCIS (YELLING)

So, do you always walk?

Ava shakes her head.

AVA

Will you stop for a second?

Francis stops walking abruptly and turns around.

Ava's cheeks color and she walk/runs towards him, suddenly aware of being observed.

FRANCIS

So, you want to talk to me?

AVA

You were talking to me!

FRANCIS

Uh huhhhh.

They continue walking.

No one says anything.

Ava is visibly uneasy, her eyes dart around. She grips the straps of her backpack and pulls them down.

AVA

Was today your first day?

FRANCIS

Yeah.

Ava nods. It's quiet again. She tries again.

AVA

Where are you walking to?

FRANCIS  
The bus stop.

AVA  
You get the bus at school.

FRANCIS  
No, like, the city bus, I live in  
Holiday... There isn't an  
engineering program in Holiday.

Ava nods. She crinkles her nose.

AVA  
I didn't know we had city buses.

Francis nods.

FRANCIS  
Do you want to come with me?

AVA  
On the bus?

FRANCIS  
Yeah, why not.

AVA  
No, I -

Ava blushes.

FRANCIS  
You don't have anything to do.

AVA  
No I'm OK.

Francis stares at her disbelievingly and smiles.

FRANCIS  
OK, well, I actually go back that  
way.

AVA  
Back there?

FRANCIS  
Yeah, see ya around.

AVA  
Oh, bye.

Francis turns around and starts heading back the way they came. He turns back around.

FRANCIS

Hey Ava -

She turns to look at him.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

I like your Jereme Mean shirt.

Ava looks down at her shirt. It is just a pink shirt.

INT. GOLDEN'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

The room is organized and immaculate, with multiples of everything. In the center of the room is a large four post bed. Music plays loudly.

Set up at the foot of the bed is a tripod with a screen camera on it.

Golden sits on her back on the bed, naked from the waist down, with a flower between her legs. She is taking photos.

A beeping noise interrupts the music and Golden turns her head to the side.

MC FROM OLIVIA

*DREAMHOUSE?*

GOLDEN MC

*Yeah, give me a second.*

She flops over onto her stomach and removes the screen from the tripod. She quickly flips through the photos.

OLIVIA MC

*Hey, did you see that new kid today?*

GOLDEN MC

*Francis, yeah. He's in two of my classes.*

OLIVIA MC

*Talk about a fox.*

GOLDEN MC

*You think?*

OLIVIA MC

*(several flame emoticons)*

GOLDEN MC  
*Yeah, me too.*

INT. AVA'S BEDROOM - EVENING

The sunset and early dusk are projected onto the walls of her room.

She stares at her laptop screen. Her mouth hangs open.

On-screen a small avatar with pink hair wearing a "Jereme Mean" T-shirt runs around the game, "TITANFORGE". Several conversations scroll along the side of the screen, she is heavily involved in the game.

INT. EAST LAKE HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - MORNING

Francis slams a locker closed. Golden stands behind it. She smiles.

GOLDEN  
Hey!

FRANCIS  
HEY!

Golden laughs.

GOLDEN  
You're going to Machine Learning  
now right?

FRANCIS  
Uhhh yeah.

They both start walking the same direction.

GOLDEN  
Me too.

Golden extends her hand, eying him flirtatiously.

FRANCIS  
I'm Golden.

Francis shakes her hand stiffly.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)  
Nice to meet you, Francis.

GOLDEN  
I know. Hinton. You're in my EC-12  
too.

Francis raises his eyebrows, unenthused.

FRANCIS  
Oh yeah?

Golden motions to a classroom.

GOLDEN  
We're going right here.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Ava and Francis walk side by side.

AVA  
I looked for you last night.. in  
Titanforge. That's what you were  
talking about right, the shirt.

Ava is stumbling to find her words.

FRANCIS  
Maybe.

He smiles.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)  
Yeah.

AVA  
Hey, uh, can we talk in MC?

FRANCIS  
OK.

AVA MC  
*How did you know that was me? I  
don't understand. How would we even  
be on the same server? And I don't  
have my name listed with any of  
that stuff.*

FRANCIS MC  
*Regardless of what control you  
think you have, you have a  
persistent identity. Different  
usernames or emails are an illusion  
of choice.*

(MORE)

FRANCIS MC (CONT'D)  
*But they all go back to the same  
place, you have one identity.*

AVA MC  
*But why were you looking at me in  
the first place?*

FRANCIS MC  
*I wasn't looking at you  
specifically. I scraped everyone at  
this school... You were the only  
one with anything interesting  
though. Quite an empire you have in  
that game.*

AVA MC  
*What else did you find?*

FRANCIS  
*Why don't you ask me aloud?*

AVA MC  
*Why?*

FRANCIS  
*I don't know why if you are  
standing right next to me you  
wouldn't just ask me?*

AVA MC  
*I dunno, it just feels easier this  
way.*

FRANCIS  
*Easy is always better right?*

Ava looks down. Francis stops walking and looks at her directly. She tries to make eye contact and looks away.

AVA  
*Sometimes it's just, like, too  
much, looking at someone's face.*

Francis puts his hands on Ava's shoulders.

FRANCIS  
*Will you stand here, and look me in  
the eye for four minutes?*

Ava laughs uncomfortably.

Francis twists the timer on his watch.

AVA

Why?

FRANCIS

Yes or no?

Ava inhales and looks up at him. Her eyes dart around at first and then she makes eye contact.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

You know, anyone can fall in love  
by just answering 36 questions.

**(Ad on Screen - NYTimes digital subscription, link to article  
"To Fall in Love With Anyone, Do This")**

Ava blushes and looks down.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Don't break or we have to start  
over.

Ava looks back up and looks directly at Francis.

AVA

Ok, what are the questions?

E.C.U. Ava's eyes staring at Francis

FRANCIS V.O.

Ok, it starts with an easy one. If  
you could have dinner with anyone,  
who would it be?

AVA V.O.

Dead or alive?

FRANCIS V.O.

Dead or alive.

E.C.U. Francis's eyes staring at Ava.

AVA V.O.

I don't know, I can't really think  
of someone. Can I skip?

FRANCIS V.O.

No skips... Ok, we will come back  
to it. I have to answer too. My  
mom. She left when I was 7 and I  
have a lot of things to tell her.  
Would you like to be famous and in  
what way?



AVA V.O.

I would like something I do to have a positive impact, and maybe be widespread or well known, but I don't personally want to be famous.

E.C.U. Ava's eyes staring at Francis. Tiny flecks of gold starting to sparkle in the sun.

FRANCIS V.O.

No, I don't. What would constitute a perfect day for you?

AVA V.O.

Swimming in the gulf before the oil. Can I have dinner with my dog but we are able to communicate?

FRANCIS V.O.

I will accept that.

AVA V.O.

And your perfect day?

FRANCIS V.O.

A perfect day for me is whatever day it is.

Ava rolls her eyes.

E.C.U. Francis's eyes staring at Ava.

FRANCIS V.O. (CONT'D)

You technically broke but I will let it slide. Do you have a secret hunch about how you will die?

AVA V.O.

Suddenly.

FRANCIS V.O.

Valiantly... For what in your life do you feel most grateful?

AVA V.O.

My family, my health.

FRANCIS V.O.

Freedom maybe, my mind. When was the last time you cried?

AVA V.O.

The day before yesterday, the part  
in *A Separate Peace* where Finny's  
hand is shaking as he tries to put  
the comb back in the suitcase.

E.C.U. Ava's eyes staring at Francis.

FRANCIS V.O.

When I was seven. When I was seven  
I cried everyday and then I  
stopped.

AVA V.O.

Why did you stop?

FRANCIS V.O.

I just did. Name three things we  
have in common.

E.C.U. Ava's eyes staring at Francis.

AVA V.O.

Um. We're both looking at each  
other. We're both human. We're both  
alive.

FRANCIS V.O.

Those are pretty broad.  
We're both smiling, we both like  
each other, we're both alive.

E.C.U. Francis's eyes staring at Ava.

AVA V.O.

You took one of mine.

FRANCIS V.O.

I can't remember any more of the  
questions.

AVA V.O.

Are we in love?

E.C.U. Francis's eyes staring at Ava. They crinkle at the  
sides from where he is smiling.

FRANCIS V.O.

I don't know, now we wait.

AVA V.O.

For what?

FRANCIS V.O.  
For the 4 minutes to be up.

EXT. BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD - LATE AFTERNOON

Ava's thoughts are tumbling out as she leads Francis along a familiar path towards the beach. The homes they pass are mostly vacant, some are boarded up.

They pass a home with vines covering nearly the whole thing.

AVA MC  
*I love how fast things grow in  
Florida. Like, if you leave  
something outside long enough, the  
earth will just swallow it right  
back up. It's not like that  
everywhere.*

They reach the fence with the hazard sign.

Ava lifts it with her foot and ducks under, Francis does the same.

The sky is beginning to color with the setting sun.

FRANCIS  
Man, I haven't been out here since  
I was a kid.

AVA MC  
*It's been closed since 2020.*

Ava lifts her shirt up over her face and heads down towards the water. Francis picks up a large piece of driftwood and turns over dead sea creatures as he follows her.

Ava stands near the edge of the ocean looking out at it.

The water is covered in a sheen of phosphorescent oil.

The reflected sky on the gently waving water is a feedback loop of brilliant color.

Francis stands next to Ava.

AVA MC (CONT'D)  
*It's fireworks everynight.*

AVA  
But you can't swim.

Francis looks at Ava, looking at the ocean.

AVA UNEDITED: The cults of the famous and the dead.

AVA (CONT'D)  
Come on, I'll show you the best  
place to watch.

Ava heads back towards the homes lining the beach. She  
charges towards a black bird eating a dead fish.

AVA (CONT'D)  
Don't eat it you dummy.

The bird flies away.

INT. ABANDONED HOME - CONTINUOUS

The house appears to have been in the middle of a remodel  
when it was abandoned. The wall facing out to the beach is  
missing. The wooden beams of an additional room are visible.  
Ava sits and Francis stands on the second story. They watch  
as the sunset becomes increasingly magnificent.

AVA MC  
*These houses are just like  
seashells. Broken homes, abandoned.  
They will get ground into dust too.*

FRANCIS  
What do you mean.

AVA MC  
*That's what sand is, some of it.  
Seashells that have been broken  
down over time by the waves. But  
the shells used to be houses is  
what I'm trying to say, you know  
for mollusks and other small  
creatures.*

Francis walks over to Ava and looms over her, dominantly.

She looks up at him, uncomfortable, excited.

AVA  
Hi.

Ava rises slowly, making eye contact. Francis kisses her.

(every girl wants to be kissed against a wall!)

The waves beat in the distance.

He pulls away and smiles. Ava studies his face.

AVA MC

*Did you know when people recall time slowing down during near death experiences, it's just that time seems slower upon remembering it because in incredibly stressful situations like that your brain records more information, so when you like, replay it, it seems to go slower, just like with a camera.*

FRANCIS MC

*No Ava, I did not know that.*

AVA MC

*I was just thinking like*

Ava turns around to face the wall, embarrassed.

AVA MC (CONT'D)

*I was just thinking like, this would be that way too. Remembering this.*

INT. ENGINEERING CLASSROOM - DAY

The room is brightly lit. Shelves around the perimeter are littered with 3-D printers, wires, circuits, batteries etc.

The teacher, MR.FLATTS, is small and wiry with long stringy hair, glasses and multiple earrings. He sits perched on the edge of his desk listening to a guest in the room. He wears a body camera attached to a tie dye strap.

MR. MARTIN, CALL ME DAN stands in front and commands the attention of the class. He wears a crisp white polo with a HALCYON logo. He carries himself like a Marine.

MR. MARTIN, CALL ME DAN

*Mr. Martin, you guys can call me Dan.*

He stalks the front of the room like it's a stage.

MR. MARTIN, CALL ME DAN (CONT'D)

*So most people, when they go to bed at night, they lock their doors. Because they want to be safe, and they want to keep the things inside their houses safe... But do you know anyone that exercises that same personal responsibility with their digital doors?*

(MORE)

MR. MARTIN, CALL ME DAN (CONT'D)  
 Halcyon is the fastest growing  
 digital security agency in the U.S.  
 Because we help people realize the  
 work they need to do, *personally*,  
 in addition to helping keep them  
 safe.

Francis snorts. Mr. Martin turns.

MR. MARTIN, CALL ME DAN (CONT'D)  
 Did you have a comment -

He references his watch.

MR. MARTIN, CALL ME DAN (CONT'D)  
 Mr. Hinton?

FRANCIS  
 By keep them safe do you mean keep  
 them afraid, collect their data and  
 then sell it to companies who will  
 exploit the same vulnerabilities to  
 sell them things they think they  
 need?

**(advertisement for a a pair of automated "step-up" shoes)**

Mr. Martin flashes a condescending smile.

MR. MARTIN, CALL ME DAN  
 Mr. Hinton I doubt your opinions  
 are formed on facts.

FRANCIS  
 And you're going to tell me the  
 truth, *Dan*? You're here trying to  
 sell us something. When has honesty  
 ever been a concern of advertising?

MR. MARTIN, CALL ME DAN  
 Halcyon could not be farther from  
 advertising.

FRANCIS  
 Right, it's about *security*, and you  
 are recruiting *officers*. Give the  
 security gang uniforms and protocol  
 and maybe they won't notice they're  
 just tiny functions in the pyramid  
 scheme of spying and selling.

Mr. Martin nods and makes his way to the front of the room.  
 He "switches gears" (all of his actions are tactics).

MR. MARTIN, CALL ME DAN  
I want to tell you guys, about a  
competition, a hack-a-thon that we  
are sponsoring here next weekend.  
Francis it might be a chance for  
you to better learn what we do,  
maybe learn what you might want to  
do for us.

FRANCIS  
I highly doubt that Dan.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Golden walks up behind Francis.

GOLDEN  
You know the prize is ten thousand  
dollars right?

FRANCIS  
For the Halcyon thing?

GOLDEN  
Yeah.

FRANCIS  
I did not.

GOLDEN  
And you can work in teams and I  
want you to be my partner. I am  
prepared to do a 60/40 split with  
you - you getting 60 because I want  
to win and I think if you and I  
team up we will definitely win.

Francis stops walking and stares at her.

GOLDEN (CONT'D)  
Ok I will go 30/70, it's more about  
my college applications.

FRANCIS  
Golden, there is no way I am going  
to enter that competition, and not  
to be a dick, but if I was going to  
do it, had I misplaced my soul or  
something, there is no way I would  
do it with you, in the interest of  
increasing your likelihood of  
getting into some pretentious  
expensive college or whatever.

Francis laughs and shakes his head.

GOLDEN

It's funny how people say "not to be a dick" as though recognizing the fact that they are about to be somehow absolves them from it.

Francis smiles, Golden walks away, annoyed.

EXT. STRIP MALL, HOLIDAY, FL - AFTERNOON

Ava and Francis walk through a dilapidated strip mall. They pass an auction house, a Cuban restaurant, a drone warehouse...

AVA

I don't see why you wouldn't just enter. You don't have to build something that helps them and you could use the money.

FRANCIS

Uhh because I disagree fundamentally with what they do.

AVA

Yeah, but not everyone has the luxury of morally motivated decisions.

FRANCIS

Yes they do.

...a virtual sweepstakes cafe. Francis stops and looks in the window. The place is half full and no frills, clearly catering to addicts.

Dozens of lethargic people sit plugged into VR devices. On a large screen a slot machine is running and says, "prizes every hour!"

He points in the window.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

That's my dad.

Francis waves. (joking, they are wearing headsets)

AVA (CONCERNED)

Do you want to go in?



FRANCIS

No way.

INT. FRANCIS' ROOM - EVENING

The walls are bare and brown. The room is sparse but messy. Ava lays on her stomach on an unmade bed. Francis sits Indian style behind her, his hand on her back.

AVA

You should paint your walls.

Francis is looking for something on the computer.

AVA (CONT'D)

The wallpaper in your house is the wallpaper in your brain is how I always think about it. Like, it's behind all of your memories. Which is why ads are so bad, whether or not you want it in your head, the sign for the bank across the street is emblazoned in your memories. You know. Francis?

Francis is concentrating.

FRANCIS

Huh?, Yeah.

Ava crosses her arms cutely. She rummages through her bag for something. She pulls out a sharpie and stands up. On the ceiling in giant letters she writes "FRANCIS LOVES AVA"

Francis looks up her skirt as she stands over him. He pulls her down on top of him.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Look.

Ava looks at the screen. It is an instagram account with dated photos.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

It's my moms, from a long time ago.  
It took forever to find. She  
deleted it like ten years ago.

Francis enlarges a photo of a beautiful woman and a cute little kid.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

That's me.

Before Ava can get too gushy he closes the tab.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)  
Check this out too, have you seen  
this one?

Francis plays a video of JEREME DEAN, a gruff comic disheartened by contemporary culture.

We hear him rant while Ava studies Francis' face.

AVA UNEDITED: I want to kill anyone that hurts you.

Ava leans over the keyboard.

AVA  
Yes, this is my favorite.

She pulls up a different video. Jereme looks older, the footage is black and white and a banner with glittery letters reading "do you like me?" Hangs behind him on stage.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The blinds are closed and the lights are off. Students sit sleepily in the blue glow of a movie being played. The movie is "History of the Internet", on-screen is Tim Berners-Lee.

TIM BERNERS-LEE (ON SCREEN)  
In 2005, we created the WST, the  
Web Science Trust, a research  
community dedicated to examining  
the web as humanity connected by  
technology.

Ava lays with her head on her hands, watching the screen intently.

Golden leans over top of her and whispers in her ear.

GOLDEN  
Hey.

Ava sits up and turns her head quickly. Golden doesn't lean back and their faces remain very close.

Ava sits back and Golden smiles at her.

AVA  
What?

GOLDEN  
Do you..

RADNER

Golden.

Radner pushes a chair out next to his desk and motions to it.

Golden rolls her eyes and whispers.

GOLDEN

Turn on your MC.

Golden stands up and walks to the chair next to Radner.

Ava slides on her M.C. and settles back down with her head on her hands.

RICHARD STALLMAN (ON SCREEN)

Proprietary software keeps  
users divided and helpless.  
Divided because each user is  
forbidden to redistribute it  
to others, and helpless  
because the users can't  
change it since they don't  
have the source code. They  
can't study what it really  
does. So the proprietary  
program is a system of unjust  
power.

GOLDEN MC

*DO you want to come over  
today? I'll give you a ride.*

Ava turns her head to the side and the message disappears,  
she focuses on the screen.

INT. GOLDEN'S CAR (DRIVERLESS) - AFTERNOON

Olivia sits in the front seat, Golden and Ava sit in the  
back. The car is full of smoke and hip hop music plays.  
Olivia takes a big rip off a joint and passes it back to Ava.

Ava looks at the burning ember on the end, contemplating.

OLIVIA

You've never?

Ava shakes her head no, but then takes a small pull on the  
joint. Olivia smiles at her encouragingly.

Ava rolls down the window and air rushes into the car.

INT. GOLDEN'S BEDROOM

Ava, Olivia and Golden walk into the bedroom, Golden hangs  
her bag up and Olivia flops onto the bed.

AVA  
Do you mind if I use your restroom?

INT. GOLDEN'S BATHROOM - CONT.

Ava closes the door behind her and studies her face in the mirror. She splashes water on her cheeks and then pulls them down along with her eyelids and makes faces in the mirror.

She steps into Golden's glass shower. There is a screen embedded in the wall. She touches it and it turns on. A photo of Golden in the shower appears. Ava scans through what looks like thousands of photos of Golden. The camera snaps and a picture of Ava appears.

Startled she quickly tries to erase it and takes a few more.

We hear a beep and a small number 1 pops up in Ava's view.

GOLDEN MC  
*Are you taking pictures in my  
shower?*

GOLDEN MC (CONT'D)  
*You're messing up my stream, get  
out here freak.*

INT. GOLDEN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ava walks out of the bathroom, moves to the side of the room and sits on the floor.

AVA  
I was just looking at it, and it  
went off.

GOLDEN  
Yeah right perv.

OLIVIA  
Don't worry, she'll delete them.  
Golden doesn't let *anyone* on her  
stream (mocking).

Golden ignores Olivia.

GOLDEN  
Are you on stream?

AVA  
No, that's the one that's real time  
right? Like pictures of yourself?

GOLDEN  
Yeah. Selfiestream.

AVA  
No.

GOLDEN  
Are you in Dreamhouse?

AVA  
No. My mom is though, I think.

OLIVIA  
Really, that's weird.

AVA  
Well she like, makes stuff for it.

OLIVIA  
Ohhhh, that's cool. Yeah, Golden  
wants to do that.

GOLDEN  
I AM doing that Olivia.

OLIVIA  
Do you want to see ours?

AVA  
Sure.

Golden tosses her a headset. All three girls put them on and settle in.

GOLDEN  
That should be set on the right  
server.

INT. GOLDEN'S DREAM HOUSE - 3D MODELLED VIRTUAL WORLD

The three girls appear as Barbie like avatars in a 3-D home. Ava is much younger and smaller than the other two girls. Their names float above their heads, "actuallyGolden" and "OliviaALive", and footsteps echo in the grand space.

GOLDEN  
You're playing as my sister, sorry.

AVA  
It's cool.

The space is opulent and gaudy. Ava follows Golden and Olivia around as they give her a tour.

We move quickly through the house and hear the following dialogue.

GOLDEN  
So what's up with you and Francis?

AVA  
What do you mean?

GOLDEN  
Did you know him from before or something?

INT. GOLDEN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Olivia lays with her feet up in the air, kicking them. Golden sits propped up with pillows on her bed. Ava sits nervously on the floor, picking at the carpet.

INT. GOLDEN'S DREAM HOUSE - 3D MODELLED VIRTUAL WORLD

AVA  
No, we just met.

OLIVIA  
But are you guys like, together?

AVA  
Yeah, I guess. Well, I think we're in love.

The two girls laugh at Ava.

GOLDEN  
You think?

AVA (WEIGHING THE VALUE OF THE WORDS)  
I know, maybe? *I know*. Or I think, it's hard to say.

On the side we see a separate MC conversation.

OLIVIA MC	GOLDEN MC
<i>Wtf?</i>	<i>I know, she's so weird.</i>

A beep and a small similar looking avatar with "emilybaybeebabe" above her head pops up.

OLIVIA  
Oh, it's Emily! Want to see her house too?

Golden nods to accept Emily's request and the three girls enter a nearly identical dreamhouse.

EMILY  
Hiiiiiii!

They walk through a foyer.

OLIVIA  
Emily did her couch in green.

EMILY  
Guys, come up here, I figured out how to get this record player to work with your headify TM.

**(at the sound of "headify" an add for a new "Beyonce" single pops up, The cover is an airbrushed Beyonce, age 47)**

They follow Emily up an elaborate staircase into a room that looks very similar to Golden's bedroom.

Emily puts on a "record" and music begins to play. Avatar Ava lays down on the carpet and closes her eyes.

INT. GOLDEN'S BEDROOM - SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

Ava lays unmoving on the floor. Golden stands over her.

Golden pulls off her VR headset and Ava's eyes flutter open.

GOLDEN  
Did you seriously just fall asleep?

Ava looks around, confused.

AVA  
Did I?

INT. GOLDEN'S FOYER - CONT.

Ava follows Olivia out the front door. Olivia turns to her conspiratorially.

OLIVIA  
So, have you guys, like hooked up?

AVA  
Um, well, we kissed.

Olivia looks at her like a child.

OLIVIA  
Aw, how sweet.

EXT. GOLDEN'S DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

A driverless car pulls into the driveway.

OLIVIA  
There she is.

The car honks twice.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)  
I see you, I see you.

Olivia turns to Ava.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)  
Need a ride?

AVA  
No, mines coming, thanks though.

INT. ENGINEERING CLASSROOM - DAY

Golden sits in front of Francis, she turns around and puts her arms on his desk.

GOLDEN  
So I hear you're a super stalker.

FRANCIS  
How do you mean?

GOLDEN  
Ava told me you knew like everything about her before you guys even started hanging out.

FRANCIS  
She did?

GOLDEN  
Yeah.

FRANCIS  
Not everything, well not anymore than anyone else.

GOLDEN  
So you stalked everyone?



FRANCIS  
I didn't say stalk you did.

GOLDEN  
Well, how'd you know that stuff  
about her?

FRANCIS  
I ran a bot.

GOLDEN  
What kind of bot? That you made?

FRANCIS  
Yeah, I made it when I was younger -

Francis smiles

FRANCIS (CONT'D)  
A "blackmail bot".

Golden looks at him imploringly.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)  
There was a district judge in  
Holiday that wanted to limit our  
ISP's, turns out he likes to get  
peed on.

Golden nods.

GOLDEN  
Right.

FRANCIS  
I didn't find anything that good on  
anyone here.

Golden considers.

GOLDEN  
Will you give me access to your  
repo? I've done some scraping but  
never turned up anything that good.  
Mostly just targeting followers for  
my stream.

Francis shakes his head.

GOLDEN (CONT'D)  
What?

FRANCIS  
That doesn't embarrass you?

GOLDEN  
No, why would it?

FRANCIS  
That unabashed narcissism?

GOLDEN  
I don't see it that way.

Francis nods.

GOLDEN (CONT'D)  
So is that a no? On inviting me to  
your repo?

FRANCIS  
No, I'll invite you. It's really  
basic though. You have to tailor it  
to what you're trying to find.

EXT. PERFORMANCE AUTO-BODY SHOP - DAY

A relic. A small home-grown auto-body shop. The sign  
"PERFORMANCE" in red neon over a checkered racing flag hangs  
over top the garage. Photos of bright old cars line the walls  
and Hank Snow wails in the background.

INT. PERFORMANCE AUTO-BODY SHOP - CONTINUOUS

FRANCIS  
Ok you have to leave your phone,  
MC, anything connected to the  
internet here.

Ava begins removing a handful of devices from her person and  
bag. Francis opens a drawer in a large tool box.

OTIS (OFF-SCREEN)  
Francis.

FRANCIS  
Hey Otis.

OTIS  
You got company?

FRANCIS  
Yeah.

OTIS  
Well come on in here and look at  
this a minute will ya?

Francis looks at Ava.

FRANCIS

You wanna meet my grandpa?

Ava nods excitedly, they make their way into the back of the garage. OTIS, 81, slow and calloused, kind and southern lays on his side propped up next to the wheel well of a driverless car. He has a laptop next to him for reference.

OTIS

They make it so you can't hardly  
see what's goin' on in here.

Ava hangs back, studying the photos on the wall, Francis bends down next to Otis. He looks at the wheel and at the screen. He points to a part on the tire.

FRANCIS

You can't use that one, you have to  
use a Volt(TM) one.

**(A volt banner ad scrolls along the back wall of the shop)**

OTIS

Same thing.

FRANCIS

No they make it so it only works  
with theirs, it's proprietary.

OTIS

But you can't hardly get those, how  
you sposed to fix it?

FRANCIS

They don't want you to fix it, *they*  
want to be the only ones who can  
fix it.

Ava walks over to where they sit.

FRANIS

Grandpa, this is Ava, Ava, this is  
Otis.

Otis wipes his hands on his shorts.

OTIS

Nice to meet you Ava.

AVA

It's nice to meet you too. I love  
your shop.

Otis studies her face and she allows it.

AVA (CONT'D)

It's sad there's so few places to drive these days.

OTIS

Don't I know it. We keep meanin to get Francis out to the track so he can give it a try.

AVA

You've never driven?

FRANCIS

No, have you?

AVA

No, but I just figured, with this -

Ava motions to the garage.

FRANCIS (TO OTIS)

Yeah, you would think.

Francis stares at Otis.

OTIS

Allright now, y'all goin out back?

FRANCIS

Yeah.

Francis grabs Ava's hand. Otis notices. Ava waves goodbye, Otis winks at her.

EXT. WOODS - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Rows and rows of tall pine trees create slices of setting sun. Francis leads Ava along a footpath.

AVA

Did you guys make this up?

FRANIS

No, like, we made this one. But we didn't make up "no-nets" there's lots of them. I think they started in Tallahassee or something, but they're all over.

AVA

How does it work?

FRANCIS  
Triangulated ground satellites,  
they disrupt any signals.

They arrive at two pine trees that have been painted red.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)  
Through here.

Ava ceremoniously steps between the trees.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)  
How does it feel to step out of a  
panopticon?

Ava takes a deep breath and spins.

AVA (SARCASTIC/JOKING)  
It's like, I can breathe.

He puts his arm around her and they head towards a clearing.

INT. NO-NET CLEARING - CONTINUOUS

There are a handful of multicolored beach chairs and the  
trees have been painted different colors.

A BOY, 14, dressed like Sid Vicious, sleeps in a chair near  
the perimeter.

TWO GIRLS, 16, both with neon yellow hair and shirts that  
read "*you laugh because I'm different, I laugh because you're  
all the same*", play chess.

A small, pretty, Puerto Rican girl runs up behind them.

VIRGINIA  
Boo!

She pushes Francis.

VIRGINIA, 17, playful and nurturing, beams at them. Behind  
her is NICE GUY DAVE, 17, tall and lanky with a buzzed head,  
wearing an Ada Lovelace t-shirt.

FRANCIS  
Ava, Virginia and Nice Guy Dave.

Virginia sticks her hand out like a ball of energy.

VIRGINIA  
Hi!

Ava shakes her hand.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)  
Is this your first time here?

AVA  
Yes.

VIRGINIA  
Ohhh, do you go to school with  
Francis? East Lake, with the  
richies?

AVA  
Yeah.

VIRGINIA  
Cool, well welcome.

Dave nods and smiles at her.

Virginia pulls a plastic garbage bag off of a boom box. She  
puts on a loud drumming recording.

The sleeping boy makes a face and turns over on his chair.  
The two girls look up from their game and look back down.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)  
Sorr-rrry!

Ava smiles.

FRANCIS (TO DAVE)  
Get this, a dude from Halcyon has  
been recruiting me.

NICE GUY DAVE  
He wants you to join the Hitler  
youth?

Francis looks at him. Dave is pulling apart pine needles.

FRANCIS  
Yeah actually, I think so.

NICE GUY DAVE  
Assholes.

He throws the pine needle on the ground.

EXT. NO-NET ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Ava is stepping back and forth over the line. Virginia leans against a tree.

AVA  
I'm trying to see if I feel  
different.

Virginia starts stepping with her.

VIRGINIA  
You'll see, the more time you spend  
here. It isn't physical, you know  
at first. But then like, when you  
get used to the freedom. It's like,  
Pavlov or something. When I see  
these red trees, I feel light, and  
giddy.

Francis and Dave come out from some trees.

NICE GUY DAVE  
Trying to feel a difference?

Dave smiles and Ava nods.

FRANCIS  
Inch by inch we traded freedom for  
convenience, and no one even  
noticed.

Ava turns her head to the side (habit) to access her MC. She frowns.

We hear a slight pitter patter sound. Everyone looks up.

VIRGINIA  
Uh-oh.

Rain starts coming down with increasing intensity.

Virginia runs to cover the boom box.

They start running back along the path out of the woods. Ava and Francis are at the back. Ava stops Francis.

The others run ahead.

She kisses him.

INT. DAVE'S FRONT PORCH- EVENING

Dave, Virginia, Francis and Ava strip off their wet clothes.

PAIGE, 62, healthy and pretty with longish white hair in a braid hands them towels.

VIRGINIA  
Thank you Paige.

Virginia wraps her hair in the towel. Ava smiles at her.

PAIGE  
I love when it rains in the  
afternoon.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The home is cozy, large oriental rugs, soft lamplight and healthy green plants.

Ava makes her way to a bookshelf and scans the titles, the books appear endless.

She walks around the living room, which contains a piano, a harp, a fireplace, but, she notices:

VIRGINIA  
No screens.

Ava looks to her.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)  
They're offline.

AVA  
Oohh, cool.

VIRGINIA  
You should see their garden.

Ava follows Virginia still with the towel on her head into the kitchen.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

A small TV in the corner plays an episode of "Seinfeld". Paige is sauteing garlic on a beautiful range.

VIRGINIA  
Paige loves Seinfeld.



Ava shakes her head, unfamiliar.

PAIGE

It's a show from when I was a kid.

She moves to the wall and flicks a switch. Seinfeld turns off.

PAIGE (CONT'D)

And look it's on loop, so it's like a light, I just flip it on or off.

She flips it back on. We see Elaine push George.

PAIGE (CONT'D)

Richie rigged it up for me.

VIRGINIA

She likes it when she cooks.

PAIGE

Reminds me of my parents.

Ava motions to the appliances in the kitchen.

AVA

So none of this is online.

Paige smiles.

PAIGE

No.

Francis and Dave enter the kitchen.

PAIGE (CONT'D)

We have a computer in the family room for basic things, and of course David has all of his devices.

Nice Guy Dave shakes his head.

FRANCIS

Dave and his evil internet!

PAIGE

Richie and I choose to live offline for the most part, but we want him to make his own decision.

NICE GUY DAVE

Right.

PAIGE  
It doesn't mean I don't attempt  
persuasion.

INT. AVA'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Ava lays amidst her stuffed animal kingdom. Her MC is projecting onto the ceiling. She motions with her head and arms, reviewing the following footage.

Mr. Radner staring out the Window.

Golden and Olivia passing a joint.

Francis on the bus. The bus driver telling him to sit down.

Her mom staring at the computer

Kissing Francis at the beach. She reverses and watches again,  
Kissing Francis at the beach.

Her reverie is interrupted by an MC. *"Accept VC from  
Virginnygingin?"*

Ava accepts. We hear Virginia's Voice.

VIRGINIA V.O.  
Hey girl.

Ava sits up, finds her words.

AVA V.O.  
Hi.

Footage of Ava walking home from school plays on the ceiling.

It becomes apparent that Ava is constantly recording.

VIRGINIA V.O.  
Ok so you and Francis are so  
freaking cute.

Ava blushes.

VIRGINIA V.O. (CONT'D)  
Seriously I have never seen him so  
nice to a girl. And Dave's mom  
loves you.

AVA V.O.  
But I like, barely said anything.

VIRGINIA V.O.

Yeah, but Dave never says anything, she says she can tell you have clean energy.

Ava laughs.

VIRGINIA V.O. (CONT'D)

I know, they're witchy. She wants me to invite you to a party they're having next weekend. It's all the offline people, the church of IRL.

AVA V.O.

The church of IRL?

VIRGINIA V.O.

That's what I call it. All of their friends who are offline too. It's really fun, all these old people get super fucked up and she makes really good food. We always go.

AVA V.O.

Ok, yes, definitely, that sounds great, I, would, love to come.

VIRGINIA V.O.

Ok, just don't bring an MC or anything.

Ava looks up at the footage on her ceiling.

AVA V.O.

Yeah, yeah of course.

INT. ENGINEERING CLASSROOM - DAY

Golden is turned around in her seat, arms on Francis's desk.

GOLDEN

Even though you aren't entering, you are helping me win.

FRANCIS

Hi Golden.

GOLDEN

I've been working with your blackmail bot, but being female and far more intuitive have found more creative ways to link.

FRANCIS

Like what?

GOLDEN

I'm trying to crack unedited's servers, and when I do, that zero day will win the Halcyon competition, and you will have helped.

FRANCIS

Look out Harvard!

GOLDEN

If you want, I'll buy you like a coffee or something.

INT. PERFORMANCE AUTO-BODY SHOP - EVENING

Humid Florida night, frogs croon in the distance. Music plays from the open windows of a car in the shop. Ava leans against a large sink, Francis puts on plastic gloves.

AVA

What's it called?

Francis looks at a bottle of pink hair dye in his hands.

FRANCIS

Fresh catch.

Ava furrows her brow.

AVA

Like salmon?

Francis turns on the water. He pushes Ava's head towards the stream.

FRANCIS

Enough questions.

Ava laughs and shrieks.

AVA

Too cold!

FRANCIS

Oh shit.

He pulls off her MC from behind her ear.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)  
I don't think it got wet.

AVA  
It's ok.

He looks at it, about to put it down.

FRANCIS  
Were you recording?

AVA (QUICKLY)  
No.

INT. CAR - PERFORMANCE AUTO BODY SHOP

Ava sits with a towel around her shoulders and her feet up on the dash. Francis sits in the driver's seat.

FRANCIS  
I think it's time to rinse it out.

Ava takes a big sip from a 40oz and hands it to Francis, he finishes it and turns up the music. The song switches to Mazzy Star.

INT. PERFORMANCE AUTO-BODY SHOP - SINK

Francis turns on the water and tests the warmth. Ava bends over in front of Francis and puts her head under the stream.

He begins rinsing the dye out of her hair.

He pushes her hard against the sink with his hips. She moves against him.

She grabs his hand and puts it in her mouth.

She turns around to face him, pink dye running down her hair and face.

He puts his hand between her legs and they kiss. Ava breathes in sharply.

Francis pushes her to the hood of the car.

Francis lifts up her dress and pulls down her underwear.

FRANCIS  
Are you ok?

Ava looks up at him, her cheeks flushed.

AVA

Yes

They make it on top of the car, Ava's wet pink hair running in lines down her naked back.

INT. AVA'S HOUSE - ENTRY WAY - NIGHT

We hear "Ava's home" and see Ava shut the door behind her.

Her dad is asleep in the living room, the projection screen casting multicolored light upon him.

Ava tiptoes into the quiet kitchen, illuminated by tiny lights of smart devices, every shape and size.

She sips some water and surveys the quiet blinking.

INT. AVA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ava tosses all of her stuffed animals off of her bed and flops down on it. She looks up at the projected stars on her ceiling.

She squeezes her eyes closed really hard and shakes her head back and forth.

Overcome, she rummages through some drawers and finds an exacto knife.

She crudely cuts the word "FRANCIS" into her forearm and then sucks on the light trickle of blood.

She picks up a stuffed animal and hits herself in the head.

She pulls out a screen and takes photos of the blood on her tongue and arm.

AVA UNEDITED: A thousand exclamation points.

INT. SCHOOL BATHROOM - MORNING

A lot has changed between now and 2028, but those black bathroom stalls with little white flecks in them are still standard at public schools.

Ava sits in the cubby formed from a recessed window.

She has elementary school practice paper and is practicing handwriting. Her hand moves slowly and the letters are malformed.

Two K-POP DREAM GIRLS enter the bathroom.

GIRL 1  
I like your hair.

Ava looks up from her writing and smiles.

AVA  
Oh, thank you.

She touches the end of some strands.

AVA (CONT'D)  
I do too.

Girl 2 stands at the sink, washing her hands. She removes a biometric mood ring.

**(Ad for Theraflu scrolls across the mirror, she swipes it away, irritated)**

GIRL 2  
There's something wrong with this thing, EVERY TIME I take it off I get ads for cold medicine.

She inspects the ring.

GIRL 1 (TO AVA)  
You should try circle lenses.

Girl 1 is removing a contact lens and cleaning it. She turns to Ava, one enlarging lens in and one out.

GIRL 1 (CONT'D)  
They would look so foxy with your hair, and seriously, they make everyone look good.

She turns back to the mirror and pops the lens back in, she blinks twice, looks at herself in the mirror, lifting her eyebrows and tilting her head to the side.

INT. GOLDEN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The room looks expensive, oversized white furniture and marble tables. Golden's mother, VALERIE, bejeweled botox mama, sits curled up on the couch with what must be a new breed of miniature designer dog. She watches the T.V. screen.

A rap video, with a Juicy J type song plays. The musicians are in a Japanese robot brothel, bitcoin signs hang from gold chains on their necks.

Valerie bounces a little, weird.

Golden sits next to her, focused intensely on her computer.

Valerie switches to the news.

On-screen we see a story about a member of the Al Nahyan family who has been assassinated by an "economic disparity vigilante".

Footage of supporters gathered outside his trial holding signs and chanting "slit the l%"

Valerie gasps and hits her arm.

VALERIE  
Golden, I'm scared!

Golden looks up at the screen.

GOLDEN (ANNOYED)  
We're not the one percent.

VALERIE  
Well, close.

On-screen we see Golden has unlocked something, passwords start filling her screen.

VALERIE (CONT'D)  
Are you seeing this?

Golden doesn't look up from the screen.

GOLDEN  
Yeah.

EXT. NO-NET - WOODS - AFTERNOON

POV upskirt. Francis lays on the ground and Ava stands with her feet on either side of his head. She sways slightly.

From Francis's POV we see her legs and white underwear. His attention is caught by a tiny lime green spider making it's way up her inner thigh.

She tugs on the long sleeve of her dress, covering her arm.

Francis pulls Ava down on top of him.

She puts her hand between her legs and then rubs the shiny wetness on Francis' mouth.



Music turns on in the distance.

Ava props herself up on top of Francis, listening

AVA  
Virginia's here!

Francis groans.

EXT. NO-NET CLEARING - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Ava sits next to Nice Guy Dave, who is wearing a faded "ELIZABETH WARREN 2020" t-shirt, on a yellow plastic beach lounge. Virginia is in the distance talking animatedly to two OTHER GIRLS.

AVA  
So there's two cows standing in a field, and one cow says to the other, "hey man, have you heard about the mad cow disease going around?" And the second cow says, "good thing I'm a helicopter!"

Dave smiles but doesn't laugh.

AVA (CONT'D)  
That joke has a like, 10% success rate.

DAVE  
Sorry to disappoint.

Ava shrugs.

AVA  
It's kind of hard to get used to not recording.

DAVE  
Yeah, I stopped for the most part when I was little. I don't use anything anymore, do you record a lot?

AVA  
Not like stream or anything - I have an unedited but it's private.

DAVE  
But you put a lot on it?

Ava considers.

They both turn as Francis walks out of the woods.

EXT. NO-NET CLEARING - LATER

ASMR type footage of Ava playing with and braiding Virginia's hair.

AVA  
Sometimes, when I want to feel  
close to someone but I don't know  
what to say I touch their hair.

Virginia laughs.

VIRGINIA  
Well, get as close as you want.

INT. GOLDENS HOUSE - LATER

Golden sits on the couch and we see her screen. Missed messages scroll along the side of the screen.

MC FROM OLIVIA: WHERE ARE YOU?  
HELLOOOOOOOOOOOOOO?

She references her new PW catalogue and logs in to Ava's unedited.

Her eyes go wide. Jackpot.

She scrolls through hundreds of personal posts and photos.

She plays a video from Ava's POV inside a movie theatre. The shot starts on the screen and then moves down to Ava's legs. We hear heavy breathing and see Francis's hand up her skirt.

The photos of Ava's arm and bloody tongue.

Footage of Francis drinking a 40 in the car at Performance.

The inner-workings of Ava's mind.

Golden zones in on information pertaining to her.

*AVA UNEDITED "it's so weird like, all of their "houses" look exactly the same. How do they not talk about that?"*

*Francis: "you should stay away from her, those girls are no good"*

The video Francis sent her of their heads exploding.

INT. RADNER'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Sunlight streams in on the sleepy classroom. Radner paces at the front of the class.

RADNER  
What is dramatic irony?

Radner scans the class, no one volunteers.

RADNER (CONT'D)  
Well Radner, dramatic irony occurs when the audience or reader is aware of something that the characters are not. So in the case of Romeo and Juliet -

**(a small Ad pops up, AMAZON.COM, Shakespeare study guide, a scene everyday, the path to total understanding)**

Radner is making his way down the aisles of students. He bangs on the desk of a sleeping student.

RADNER (CONT'D)  
The biggest example of dramatic irony would be -

He stops in front of Ava, implores her to answer.

AVA  
We know she's just asleep.

RADNER  
Yes, so Romeo's suicide is in vain. We know that she has taken poison and will soon wake up, he doesn't, thus making his decision to take his life all the more tragic.

Radner clutches his heart, dramatically.

RADNER (CONT'D)  
Ok, so that is the most obvious one but there are examples of dramatic irony throughout the play. I want you guys to write 5 examples -

Ava raises her hand.

RADNER (SURPRISED) (CONT'D)  
Ava

AVA

Can you have dramatic irony without an audience?

RADNER

What do you mean?

AVA

Well, Romeo never knew any different. From his perspective, his lover died and so he killed himself. And our version is different because we have more, or different information, and Juliet's is different too. But like, why do we assume, as an audience, that our version of the truth is real. It seems, arrogant or something.

Radner considers.

RADNER

Because we are reading what was intended for us by the author, the creator, we know we have all of the facts because the world doesn't exist outside of these pages.

AVA

But what if he's tricking us too?

RADNER

You think Shakespeare has been playing a centuries long joke on us all?

Ava smiles.

AVA UNEDITED: Yeah Romeo and Juliet are both still alive and we're all a bunch of suckers.

We hear a long tone, a bell, the students practically leap out of their seats.

RADNER (CONT'D)

Ok, five examples of dramatic irony in Act II in my box by tomorrow!

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The students file out of the classroom, Francis waits for Ava.

Golden steps close to him.

GOLDEN  
Did you hear that I won?

Ava steps out of the classroom and stands next to them.

AVA  
The Halcyon competition?

Golden smiles.

GOLDEN  
Yep, thanks to Francis.

AVA  
Really?

FRANCIS  
No, not exactly.

Golden smiles at him flirtatiously.

GOLDEN  
Yes exactly, I built my whole entry  
off of your bot.

FRANCIS  
Well, not really happy to have  
helped.

Golden laughs.

Ava narrows her eyes at Golden. She pulls down on the straps of her backpack, her sleeve pulls up a little. Golden immediately grabs her arm and pulls up her sleeve.

GOLDEN  
Ohmygosh, what's this.

Ava tries to pull back her arm but it's too late. Francis's name cut into her arm is revealed.

GOLDEN (CONT'D)  
Wow, intense.

Ava pulls her arm back and pulls her sleeve down.

GOLDEN (CONT'D)  
You guys are too cute, where's  
yours Francis?

Ava looks down, embarrassed, Golden looks at them with faux innocence.

Francis puts his arm around Ava.

FRANCIS  
Goodbye Golden.

Golden smiles and heads the other way. Ava walks back into the classroom, Francis follows.

AVA MC  
I thought you "disagreed  
fundamentally with what they did".  
Why would you help her of all  
people?

FRANCIS  
I do, I didn't. She is just messing  
with you.

AVA MC  
All of a sudden you know her so  
well...

FRANCIS  
Ava, I didn't help her. She asked  
to look at some of my code and I  
showed her. That's it.

AVA MC  
You're the one that told me she was  
rotten and I should avoid her and  
now you guys have this -

Francis takes off his MC.

AVA  
Why are you turning it off?

FRANCIS  
I told you, I hate talking to you  
like that, talk to me like a human.

The bell rings. She pushes past Francis and out of the room.

INT. AVA'S KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Beth, with a pair of glasses on her face and one on her head, sits in front of the computer. Ava stands over her, looking at the screen.

Onscreen, unreal engine is open and Beth is flipping through wallpaper samples.

BETH

Ava, my wallpapers are the second most popular, how cool is that!

She looks at Ava, who is unenthused but trying.

BETH (CONT'D)

You have to see them in the space - here.

Beth hands Ava a headset. She puts it on and steps into a small DH bungalow with vivid wallpaper.

BETH (CONT'D)

Looks good right?!

AVA

Yeah mom, it's really pretty.

Onscreen: Avatar Ava walks over to a "window" outside of it are rolling green hills with sheep grazing. She opens the window and her avatar's hair blows.

BETH

Ok, hold on a second, I want to show you my new one.

Avatar Ava steps back from the window, the wallpaper in the room switches to a 3D floral pattern - it looks as if flowers are blooming out of the walls.

BETH (CONT'D)

I think girls are just going to love this.

Avatar Ava runs her fingers through the flowers.

Ava takes off the headset.

AVA

It's beautiful mom.

Beth puts her hand on Ava's cheek.

BETH

Is everything ok honey?

INT. AVA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dean sits in his usual spot and Ava sits on the floor, for a change the volume is on. On TV is a Ken Burns type documentary "The Molecule".

The program is interrupted by an advertisement for "Trojan condoms". Dean's eyebrows raise.

BETH (FROM THE OTHER ROOM)  
Who's buying those?

A small beep and number 1. MC from Francis: *Hi fweek.*

Ava jumps up excitedly.

AVA  
I'll be right back.

Beth walks in the room, 3 pens sticking out of her hair. She and Dean exchange glances.

INT. AVA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

AVA MC  
*Hi.*

Ava sits on her bed.

AVA MC (CONT'D)  
*Hey, I'm sorry about before. I didn't mean to be a brat.*

FRANCIS MC  
*I'm sorry too. You weren't a brat. What did you do to your arm?*

AVA MC  
*Oh, haha. I don't know. I'm a freak.*

FRANCIS MC  
*It looks sweet.*

AVA MC  
*Yeah?.*

FRANCIS MC  
*Yeah.*

AVA MC  
*I still don't know why you didn't just do the Halcyon thing. You can be like Kurt Cobain, rot the empire from the inside.*



INT. EAST LAKE HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Golden and Olivia stand at their lockers, they stare at Ava and she walks past. Ava smiles a small smile at them, confused, they stare back at her.

INT. RADNER'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Students file in, passing around screens and laughing, something's rotten in Denmark. (:p)

The bell rings, the class is still rowdy.

RADNER

Ok guys, screens out and over, MC's off.

A few of the students still hold onto their screens, watching, transfixed.

RADNER (IMPATIENT) (CONT'D)

Come on guys, you know the deal, facedown or it's mine.

Radner takes a screen from a GIRL, and in the process pulls the headphones out of their jack.

The sound of what she was watching fills the classroom. It is the sound of two people having sex.

Radner's eyes go wide and he looks down at the screen.

The class erupts into laughter and conversation.

We hear Francis's voice say "you're so fucking hot"

The class loses it. Francis jumps up. Radner fumbles to stop the video. We see the screen, it is Francis and Ava in the woods, from her POV.

RADNER (CONT'D)

Francis sit down, everyone, quiet, now. Everyone in their seats.

Ava trembles in her chair. The class is still snickering.

Radner, at a loss, wheels out a screen.

RADNER (CONT'D)

Ok guys, we are gonna watch act III of Romeo and Juliet.

FRANCIS MC

*Wtf is that?*

AVA MC  
*I don't know.*

He turns on the movie, Claire Danes and Leonardo Dicaprio jump on screen.

Francis receives an MC - it is a link to Ava's "unedited"

MC FROM GOLDEN  
Who knew?

Francis opens the MC and scans through the feed rapidly. He is screen-shotting and sending to Ava.

FRANCIS MC  
*What is this? (photo) Or this?*  
*(photo) Holy shit Ava (screenshot*  
*of intimate video)*

RADNER  
Ava, Francis, can you guys step  
outside for a second.

Radner turns to the class.

RADNER (CONT'D)  
I don't want to hear a sound.

Ava and Francis stand and exit the classroom. We see footage of them walking, Radner behind them, from his body camera.

INT. EAST LAKE HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Ava tries to make eye contact with Francis, he stares straight ahead. Radner closes the classroom door behind him.

RADNER  
I don't know exactly what's going  
on here guys, but I have to report  
all digital citizenship issues to  
the guidance counselor. I think  
it's best if you guys head on down  
and talk this through with her.  
It's too disruptive for you to be  
in my class right now.

Francis nods.

FRANCIS  
Allright.

Ava looks down at the floor. Radner attempts comfort.

RADNER

I'm sure it's not that big a deal,  
will blow over.

Radner opens the door and heads back into the classroom.

Ava and Francis walk down the hallway.

AVA MC

*I'm sorry Francis, I don't  
understand how this happened.*

Francis clenches his jaw, continues walking.

AVA

Francis.

She grabs his arm.

FRANCIS

You were recording all that shit?  
And you put it online?

AVA

I didn't put it online...I put it  
on my unedited, it's private.

Francis laughs.

FRANCIS

Oh yeah? Than why did our whole  
English class just see it?

AVA

I don't know! That's what I'm  
telling you. I don't know what  
happened. I feel like Golden did  
it.

FRANCIS

Golden put it online?

Ava looks down.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

When you put something online it  
isn't yours anymore, it's  
everyone's, doesn't belong to  
anyone. Just a part of the great  
narcissistic wave that's washing us  
all away. You can be a part of that  
- fine, but I'm not. And I never  
agreed to your, surveillance.

Francis waves his hand in front of her face.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)  
Are you recording this right now.

Ava looks down.

AVA  
No...yes.

Ava turns her head quickly to the side.

AVA (CONT'D)  
Not anymore.

She speaks quietly.

AVA (CONT'D)  
If I'm not recording, it just  
doesn't feel real or something.  
Like, it's not happening, or like,  
I'm worried I'll lose it.

FRANCIS  
That's disgusting.

Ava flinches.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)  
You like to pretend that you're so  
above all those girls on  
selfiestream or whatever, at least  
they own it, are honest about it.

AVA  
I never pretended, you assumed.

They reach the outside of the guidance counselor's office.

AVA (CONT'D)  
I guess this is it then?

Francis laughs cruelly.

FRANCIS  
Yeah, absolutely.

EXT. EAST LAKE HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER

Ava walks through the halls - matching shot to the beginning,  
but everyone is staring at her.

Golden and Olivia stand at their lockers. Ava approaches them

AVA  
Why did you do this?

Golden shrugs.

GOLDEN  
You put it online, I just found it.

EXT. SIDEWALK - AFTERNOON

Ava walks down the familiar path to home with her head down.  
A car speeds by and a DICKHEAD leans out the window and yells-

DICKHEAD  
I saw your tits!

Ava watches the car speed away.

INT. SELF- DRIVING BUS - AFTERNOON

Francis sits on the bus, watching the buildings and trees  
fall away as he passes.

M.C. FROM AVA

He turns his head to ignore.

M.C. FROM AVA (CONT'D)

He turns his head to ignore.

Francis takes off his MC and turns it off.

INT. AVA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Ava sits on her bed with a stuffed bunny next to her.

MC: not delivered.

MC: not delivered.

Ava takes off her MC and breaks it in half. She surprises  
herself. Intoxicated, she pulls out her screen.

She deletes her account on Titanforge.

We see the message "do you want to save account information,  
gold, connections, followers for if you decide to reactivate  
or delete permanently?"

She selects delete permanently.

She deletes her unedited.

She is about to turn off the screen when we see:

VC FROM VIRGINIA

Ava touches it and we hear:

VIRGINIA V.O.

AVAAAA!!!! Where are you?! Are you  
still coming tonight? I am going  
over there now I better see you  
soon lovergirl!

Ava pulls out a box from under her bed and empties it's contents. She puts the broken MC and her screen, phone, projector and tablet in it, she scans the room and grabs all other "smart" objects and hastily tosses them in.

INT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

She digs at the ground with her hands like an animal.

She places the box in the hole and then jumps up and down on it. She gets down on her knees and pulls the dirt over top.

Beth sees her from the kitchen window and comes outside.

BETH

Ava, honey what are you doing?

Ava sits with her head in her dirty hands.

Beth pulls her arm towards her, and see's where she has cut in the word Francis. She runs her fingers over it, motherly.

EXT. DAVE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Old cars and bikes and golf carts line the driveway and street. Music plays loudly and distant voices seem to be having a good time.

Ava steps out of her car. We hear the beep and see the flash of lights of her locking it. She makes her way up the driveway.

FRANCIS (OFF-SCREEN)

The whole time I'm just thinking,  
this guys seen my dick.

Ava walks shyly up the sidewalk.

Francis and Dave sit on the front porch like two gargoyles. They see her approach.

Francis doesn't stand, he eyes her coolly. Dave has his back.

Ava wants to die.

FRANCIS (TO DAVE) (CONT'D)  
Give me a minute.

He stands. Dave nods and takes a sip of his beer.

AVA  
Hi.

Francis nods with his head, motioning to go back down the driveway. She walks to the end of it and he follows.

FRANCIS  
What are you doing here?

AVA  
I just wanted to talk to you, to explain, and, Virginia called and said to come and-

FRANCIS  
Virginia doesn't know you've been recording her every move.

AVA  
You're exaggerating.

FRANCIS  
Look Ava, I understand, your trying to make it right. But you can't you should just go home.

AVA  
Like ever? I can never make it right?

She looks at him angrily. He softens.

FRANCIS  
Certainly not tonight

He motions to the party of people committed to living offline.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)  
And especially not here.

AVA  
I'm sorry Francis.

FRANCIS  
It's cool, it's better I found out  
now.

Ava bites her lip, an inhale lifts her shoulders.

AVA  
Ok.

She looks Francis in the eye, he remains closed off. She  
turns to walk back to her car.

FRANCIS  
Hey Ava

She turns around, hopeful. Francis looks handsome, a bonfire  
burns in the distance behind his head.

FRANCIS (SARCASTIC, MEAN) (CONT'D)  
Cool car.

He turns to head back inside. The car door opens for her.

SELF DRIVING CAR  
Welcome Ava, back so soon?

THE END.