

MECHA MADHOUSE

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. HAVENWICK HOSPITAL - COMMON AREA - DAY

It's med time. An air of gloom. PATIENTS stand in shadows or sit pensively after taking their daily dosages.

One particularly anxious patient, RONALD HOFFMAN (58), curly grey hair, thin and pale, skitters to a rubber tree plant.

Looking about first, he jams his finger down his throat and coughs up a pill. Then he tosses it into the pot. But he's been spotted!

NURSE (O.S.)
Patient Ronald Hoffman, you have
regurgitated your meds!

RONALD
N-no, I didn't!

NURSE
I saw you.

WE ONLY SEE the back of the NURSE as she approaches Ronald.

RONALD
Please don't make me take it! I
don't feel right when I take that
pill. I have awful nightmares!

The nurse creeps closer, one hand holding a pill, the other a cup of water.

NURSE
Please relax, Ronald Hoffman. Your
meds are designed to help.

Ronald shakes his head. He drips with sweat.

RONALD
NO! DON'T MAKE ME! I WON'T! THE
DREAMS--! !!

Black gloved hands reach toward Ronald from ORDERLIES but WE DON'T SEE THEIR FACES YET. Two hands grab his right arm, two hands grab his left. Ronald screams and struggles violently.

NURSE
You can't get well without your
meds, Ronald Hoffman.

RONALD
SOMEONE HELP ME! HEEEEELLP!!!!

Ronald clamps his mouth tight and squirms as another set of gloved hands grabs his head. These wrench open his mouth like opening a steel trap.

The nurse drops the pill on his tongue. She then splashes the water into his throat. Ronald coughs violently but swallows. Tears rolling down his face, he slides to the floor.

RONALD (CONT'D)
No, no, no...

The orderlies turn and WE SEE they are robots with cold, steel faces. The nurse turns and joins them. She's an AI/humanoid robot with a terrifyingly bland, latex face.

NURSE
Thank you for complying.

They march toward THE CAMERA UNTIL THEY DARKEN IT.

TITLE CARD: MECHA MADHOUSE

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON - DAY

TEXT: 2029

In this strange light, the campus looks like it could be an institution. Grey clouds cover the grounds. The bell SHRIEKS!

Emerging among the throng is JACE BIBBY (21), cool nerd look with an uncertain expression and an uncertain gait.

He races to catch up with CRYSTAL (21), who walks with confidence and glows with the sheen of the "popular."

JACE
Hey Crystal, have a great summer.

CRYSTAL
Don't be weird.

She skitters into the crowd. Jace, crestfallen, meets up with his friends BROOKSY and LEO, also 21. Brooksy has a mature, intellectual air, glasses and old school haircut. Leo, tough looking, short but wiry, raises a high five.

JACE
Hey guys.

LEO
Cheer up. School's over, dude.

JACE
For you two.

BROOKSY
Let's celebrate over a burger.

INT. FLOOKY BURGER RESTAURANT - DAY

The high-tech eatery overflows with COLLEGE KIDS. Jace, Brooksy and Leo commandeer a booth in the thick of it.

LEO
Crystal still hating on you?

JACE
She thinks I'm beneath her.

LEO
There's a party tonight. Great way to get her off your mind.

JACE
Nah, I'm gonna chill at home.

BROOKSY
You want experienced ladies like Crystal, you need to experience new experiences.

A ROBOT WAITER appears at the table. He's a shiny model with a metal head and torso on a base with wheels. Eyes flit back and forth with a menacing meter.

ROBOT WAITER
Welcome to Flooky Burger, may I take your order?

LEO
(imitating the monotone)
"Welcome to Flooky Burger, may I take your order?" Jeez, dude, get a personality.

BROOKSY
Seriously. How about a little voice modulation? We are your best customers.

ROBOT WAITER
May I take your order?

JACE
I guess he's not exactly on the
high end of AI.

The Robot Waiter's eyes stop flitting and give Jace what
could be deemed an evil look.

ROBOT WAITER
Welcome to Flooky Burger. May I--

BROOKSY
I'll have the Flooky combo.

LEO
Ditto.

ROBOT WAITER
Ditto?

LEO
(robotic)
I would like the Flooky combo as
well, bro.

JACE
Make it three.

ROBOT WAITER
Three Flooky combos, coming up.

The Robot Waiter glides away, making BEEPING NOISES.

JACE
Remember when we worked here?
Freshman year. Now it's all robots.

BROOKSY
Let's face it, gentlemen. We're
being replaced.

Suddenly, a HOMELESS GUY, zombie-like, filthy, covered in
scabs, stumbles into the restaurant. He moans loudly and then
collapses in front of Jace's table. The crowd grows quiet.

BROOKSY (CONT'D)
Look at this human trash!

JACE
He's hurt!

BROOKSY
Paging Dr. Jace! A patient needs
help! Stat!

Jace looks at the large flesh wound on the man's chest, winces, and then turns away.

LEO

Aren't you gonna take care of him?
He could be a future patient.

Jace slowly gets out of the booth, leans down. Foam bubbles out of the addict's mouth. The vagrant reaches for Jace with long, yellow fingernails. He leaps away.

BROOKSY

Is that what you're going to do
when you're a doctor? Run?

LEO

You'll have to grow a pair before
they give you a license.

JACE

Knock it off, you guys.

The Robot Waiter speeds over and extending his mechanical arm, picks up the vagrant and takes him away.

BROOKSY

Replaced again.

EXT. BELLEVUE, WA - HOUSE - DAY

Jace pulls his car into the driveway of the modest home.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

LAWRENCE BIBBY (mid 50s), glasses, sweater vest, sporting a ponytail, watches the news on a hovering screen.

A REPORTER stands in front of a giant, gleaming institutional building nestled in a forest-like setting. An 18-foot steel wall surrounds the grounds.

REPORTER (ON TV)

We're here at the opening week of
Havenwick Hospital. So how do
things operate at the world's first
fully mechanized mental institute?
Let's find out.

Jace enters and sits down with his father at the table.

LAWRENCE

Check it out, Jace. It's the new mental hospital. Kinda freaky.

JACE

What's freaky?

LAWRENCE

No human staff. Fully automated.

REPORTER (ON TV)

General duties are performed by mech techs and robot guards who answer to the Chief Nurse, an AI humanoid.

JACE

Looks cool.

REPORTER (ON TV)

Critics have dubbed Havenwick the Mecha Madhouse, calling it nothing more than a warehouse for the afflicted. But proponents say it's the future of mental health care.

INT. HAVENROCK HOSPITAL - DAY

The reporter stands inside a hallway. It appears antiseptic and impersonal. PATIENTS and MECH STAFF stream by.

REPORTER

It's all part of Governor Nelson's new plan to rid the streets of the homeless. Here now is the creator of this smart hospital, Spencer Harlow.

SPENCER HARLOW (55), short, bespectacled but still youngish in appearance, walks into frame.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

Tell us about the chief psychiatrist, Dr. Doris.

SPENCER

For the first time, we've combined artificial intelligence with emotional intelligence. To increase her empathy for the patients, Dr. Doris has been given a wide capacity for feeling.

(MORE)

SPENCER (CONT'D)

Not only does she care for them, to some extent, she feels their pain.

REPORTER

Dr. Doris can feel emotions? Like, say, love?

SPENCER

I'd say she loves her job and really cares for her patients.

Enter DR. DORIS, an AI-Robot with a beautiful, youthful face, strong matronly shape, and wearing a hospital uniform.

DR. DORIS

There are many advantages of an automated staff. For one, there is no burnout due to stress. Two, we offer the latest therapeutic tools.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

JACE

Works for me. Have the robots deal with all the gory stuff.

LAWRENCE

Nothing can duplicate the human touch, son. Good bedside manner counts for a lot. Ask my patients.

JACE

Still, it's a good first step. Who knows? Maybe they'll perform surgeries. Better than some doctor with a hangover.

Jace's mother, COLLEEN (40s), pretty in a wholesome way, enters with a platter of roast beef.

COLLEEN

Ready, everyone?

LAWRENCE

Alicia, dissolve the screen.

The TV picture evaporates by this voice command. They dig in.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

So, next stop, med school.

JACE

I guess.

LAWRENCE

You don't sound terribly excited.

COLLEEN

Is it that girl you broke up with?

JACE

No. I mean, yeah, but no. I was just... thinking about... I don't know, my future.

LAWRENCE

Something happened today.

JACE

We were at Flooky's and this homeless guy... he needed my help. Frothing at the mouth, like a zombie. And I... couldn't. What if he were a real patient?

LAWRENCE

To be a good doctor we have to care for people who are hard to care for. And to be a good human, sometimes we have to love people who are unlovable.

Jace smiles. His dad is a corny ol' hippy at heart.

JACE

Hippy dippy dad.

COLLEEN

Your dad's right. This time.

LAWRENCE

(sarcastic)

Should we get you to the robot shrink?

Everyone laughs.

JACE

(sarcastic)

Yeah, cause I'm super crazy, dad.

LAWRENCE

I'm just saying. Dr. Doris is supposedly 'state of the art.'

JACE

Oh yeah, I'm suicidal. Absolutely zero help left. The only question is, rope or razor?

The laughs diminish to silence as everyone eats.

LAWRENCE

If you need a break, your mother and I are going to the cabin this weekend. You can join us.

JACE

Nah, that cabin's so small. I get claustrophobic in there.

COLLEEN

You can always call us if something comes up.

JACE

Why? There's never any reception. And... I can take care of myself.

COLLEEN

I didn't mean to imply...

LAWRENCE

You could leave a message and tell us you love us.

The family share a mutual smile. Jace looks down embarrassed.

INT. JACE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jace flops onto his bed. Looks about his room. There are movie/football posters as well as a framed pic of Crystal and Jace at an amusement park. His phone RINGS.

JACE

Hey, Leo. Naw. I already told you. I don't care what Brooksy says. You guys always... Who might be there?

He looks up at the photo of Crystal. Second thoughts.

JACE (CONT'D)

Well... Okay.

He gets from his bed and starts combing his hair.

EXT. QUEEN ANNE HILL - HOUSE - NIGHT

The bacchanalia is in full swing. Jace and Leo enter.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

TECHNO MUSIC, college KIDS, beer guzzling and drug-ingesting. Jace and Leo search for Brooksy. He's standing by a keg.

LEO
Brooksy baby!

BROOKSY
Hey girls.

LEO
How's it shaping up?

BROOKSY
Full on rager.

LEO
See you guys in a sec. Gotta score.

Leo ducks into the crowd. Brooksy and Jace check out the scene.

BROOKSY
Hey Jace. Don't look at the dance floor.

Crystal shimmies with another guy.

JACE
She never used to be like this.

BROOKSY
You're not part of her cool crowd, Jace. Don't try to be.

JACE
I'm not cool?

BROOKSY
You don't party like they do.

JACE
Oh, I can party with the best of 'em.

BROOKSY
I'd like to see you try.

Leo returns, excited. He opens his palm to reveal some pills.

LEO

This is what everyone's dosing on.
Some new synthetic.

BROOKSY

I'll take one.

LEO

Jace? I know you're a wimp about
drugs, but it's graduation.

Jace thinks for a moment. Should he? Then he sees Crystal.

JACE

Time to expand my horizons. Give me
that!

LEO

He's manning up.

Jace grabs the pill and takes a big gulp of his beer.

JACE

I'm going to go right over there--

BROOKSY

Go ahead. Make a fool of yourself.

LEO

Let him. It'll be good for a laugh.

Jace marches his way to the dance floor. He smiles and waves
at Crystal, bumping and grinding. She twirls away.

JACE

Can I talk with you?

CRYSTAL

I'm warning you for the last time.
Leave me alone.

JACE

But I'm making changes and I
thought we could...

Full on rejection registering, Jace slumps away. Brooksy and
Leo wave and giggle.

HALLWAY

Jace filters into a sea of PARTY PEOPLE. Suddenly, his eyes
grow wide. He loses his balance and drops his beer.

PARTY GIRL
Are you okay?

Jace grabs his head.

JACE
No. Feel...

JACE POV - EVERYTHING'S BLURRY AND DISTORTED.

Jace, now panicked, storms from the dark hallway.

EXT. HOUSE - BACK YARD - NIGHT

Jace tumbles into the back yard where COLLEGE KIDS vape.

ALL OF THEIR FACES LOOK DISTORTED AND CREEPY, A LITTLE ZOMBIEFIED, LIKE THE HOMELESS GUY FROM EARLIER.

JACE
Oh no! Gotta... get... away!!

Wide-eyed with frenzy, Jace bolts from the scene.

EXT. SEATTLE - STREETS - NIGHT

Jace, lost, runs along a city block filled with long shadows and dingy tents. He sweat profusely. Eyes darting to and fro.

He stumbles over a HOMELESS WOMAN with a needle in her arm, and crashes hard to the street, head smacking pavement.

Jace loses consciousness. A DRUG ADDICT scampers over and takes his phone and his wallet. The moon retreats higher.

EXT. SEATTLE - STREETS - DAY

Sun breaks over the buildings. A POLICE SQUAD approaches the HOMELESS in a sweep and pulls them up from the street, dragging them to the transport. One shakes Jace.

COP #1
Hey, get up!

Jace tries to focus but it's impossible to form words.

JACE
I... don't... can't...

The cop tosses him in with the others.

COP #1
Let's go, loser.

INT. POLICE STATION - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Another COP yanks Jace from a crowded waiting room and brings him to a table. A MEDICAL EXAMINER gives him a looking over.

COP #2
This one can't even form a sentence.

MEDICAL EXAMINER
Hmm, looks like he's a kid. Maybe he's just had a wild night.

COP #2
No ID, no cell.

Jace finally comes to. HIS POV SHOWS THE COP AND MEDICAL EXAMINER TO BE EVIL, DISTORTED, ZOMBIES.

JACE
NO! NO! GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE!

Jace slams the cop against the wall and runs for the door. But the cop tackles him and drags him back to his seat.

COP #2
Delusional and violent.

MEDICAL EXAMINER
Put him in the Psych Transport.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

The Cop stuffs Jace into a long, driver-less EV van marked "Havenwick Hospital."

EXT. HAVENWICK HOSPITAL - DAY

The transport pulls to a gate and the steel doors of the hospital open. Large ROBOT GUARDS with silver faces and black suits and gloves, escort the patients inside.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

To get through the locked double doors in each hallway, every Robot Guard raises their hand to a scanner. A code embedded in their palms disengage the locks.

INT. HAVENWICK HOSPITAL - PROCESSING ROOM - DAY

Jace slowly opens his eyes. He blinks as he looks around the sterile room. It's filled with MENTALLY ILL PEOPLE quietly moaning as they awaken. A nightmare becomes real.

JACE
Hey! Where-- ?

A metal hand touches him. Jace jumps. It's a MECH TECH.

MECH TECH
Please keep calm, Jace Bibby. You are in the processing room at Havenwick Hospital. We're going to take good care of you.

The Mech Tech performs a face-scan with her eyes. A pic of Jace and his name appear on a monitor on her chest.

JACE
Havenwick...

Mech Techs are also humanoid looking, dressed like nurses with opaque faces that show more contrived emotion than the steel-faced Guards.

Jace flinches when a young WOMAN next to him smacks her face with her fist repeatedly, YELLING each time she hits herself.

WOMAN
Wake up! Wake up! Wake up!

MECH TECH
Dawn Rice? Please refrain from self-abuse.

But she doesn't. A ROBOT GUARD trots over to restrain her. He gently pulls her hands to her side.

Jace thinks for a moment, then stands up, fully aware now.

JACE
Hey! I don't belong here. There must be a mistake. I'm-- I'm not crazy. My parents will--

He reaches for his phone in his pocket.

JACE (CONT'D)
Where's my phone?

MECH TECH

You did not have a phone. Please calm down or we will be forced to restrain you.

A Robot Guard moves menacingly toward Jace.

JACE

No, no. It's okay.

MECH TECH

Thank you for complying, Jace Bibby. We are attempting to contact your parents now. You will be processed shortly.

Jace slumps down, exasperated.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Robot Guards hold Jace before a MEDICAL MECH TECH. She lifts her hand and a long, scary needle rises from her forefinger.

JACE

What are you-- ?

The needle comes menacingly closer to him. She expertly plunges it into a vein drawing blood from Jace's arm. He looks away, grimacing.

MECH TECH

We are just going to check your vitals.

She puts another finger near his heart. BEEPING noises SOUND. Stats FLASH on the mini-computer screen on her chest.

MECH TECH (CONT'D)

B-P-M elevated. Blood pressure slightly high, otherwise normal.

JACE

Look, my dad, he's a physician--

MECH TECH

I'm almost done, Jace Bibby.

JACE

Can you at least tell me why I'm here?

MECH TECH
You exhibited manic, hostile
behavior and cognitive impairment.

JACE
What?
(thinks)
Oh... the party!

MECH TECH
The toxicology tests will show us
what's in your blood stream.

JACE
This is just a mix-up.

MECH TECH
Your records show no history of
mental health problems.

JACE
With your automated system, you'll
find the mistake in no time. I
mean, if this were up to humans--

MECH TECH
But you could have experienced a
breakdown.

JACE
No, it was a drug, that's all.

MECH TECH
You will have a meeting with the
Chief Psychiatrist. Address all
questions to her.

JACE
When?

MECH TECH
Dr. Doris is very busy. It may take
some time.

JACE
How long?

MECH TECH
You'll find life at Havenwick to be
so much better than being homeless.
I promise.

The Mech Tech smiles at Jace.

JACE
But I'm not homeless.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

A Robot Guard leads Jace to his room. There's a three dimensional, hologram SMILEY FACE on the door.

SMILEY FACE
Welcome, Jace!

The Guard opens the door.

JACE
I'm not staying in here.

Jace turns, and struggles, but the guards push him inside.

INT. ROOM - DAY

Small, sterile, with a bed, a retractable toilet in a virtual stall that blinks on and off for privacy, a shower with retractable shower head and a retractable sink and mirror.

The walls flash peaceful images: bucolic meadows, streams, blue skies. Animals frolicking.

The Robot Guard hands Jace a plastic bag with soaps, a toothbrush, and deodorant.

ROBOT GUARD
Use these now for proper hygiene. I will be back to collect the items.

JACE
You want these returned?

ROBOT GUARD
For your safety. Breakfast in a half hour. Thank you for complying.

He closes the door. A lock CRANKS into place. Panicked, Jace looks around the room. He's trapped. He fights off a sob.

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

Doors to all the rooms open simultaneously. PATIENTS step out, including Jace in patient uniform. The Robot Guards motion everyone to get in line like soldiers.

ROBOT GUARD

Fall into a straight line toward the double door. You will enter the cafeteria for breakfast.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

The PATIENTS move into the cafeteria, which is comprised of tables and a counter with prefab food from the kitchen. The doors close quickly and lock. Five Robot Guards keep watch.

Jace goes through the food line. ROBOT SERVERS hand out meals in styrofoam containers. He's given plastic utensils.

He looks for a table to sit at. The other patients observe him with suspicious eyes. One MUSCLEBOUND MAN breathes heavy in his direction.

MUSCLEBOUND MAN

Don't even think about sitting here. I will take your head off.

JACE

No, no, I wasn't going--

A Robot Guard approaches a few steps toward the muscleman.

ROBOT GUARD

Stop hostilities immediately. Or go to isolation, Thomas Hepner.

The Musclebound Man closes his mouth, but breathes heavily through his nostrils, his eyes watching with menace.

Jace attempts to sit down at another table when an ELDERLY WOMAN shoos him away.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Hey! My husband is eating there. You almost sat on top of him.

Jace looks around but he sees no "husband."

FRANNY

It's okay. She thinks her husband's ghost is chowing down with her.

The voice comes from a thin Goth girl, FRANNY (20). Dark bags under her eyes, Franny waves Jace over.

FRANNY (CONT'D)

You can sit here. I'm Franny.

JACE
Thanks. I'm Jace.

He joins her. Sitting across from them at the same table is a bug-eyed, MIDDLE-AGED MAN who stares at Franny.

FRANNY
Don't pay attention to this creep.

JACE
It's hard not to.

FRANNY
The only other semi-sane person in here is the Sarge.

Franny points at an old man (70s) with a long grey beard, strong build, sitting at the another table. SARGE smiles and nods at Franny.

FRANNY (CONT'D)
This is Jace, Sarge.

SARGE
Nice to meet ya, boy.

JACE
Likewise.

The Sarge gets up to join them but the table's full with a HEAVYSET WOMAN sitting next to the leering creep.

MECH TECH
Sarge, please go back to your seat.
There's no room for you.

SARGE
We could make room!

MECH TECH
Please return to your seat.

SARGE
Hate taking orders from you bossy bots.

MECH TECH
Thank you for complying.

The Sarge returns to his table and eats.

JACE
That's his name? Sarge?

FRANNY

He won't tell anyone his real name
and apparently, he has no records.
Long-time homeless.

SARGE

(loud)

Don't listen to blabbermouth
Franny. She's Miss T-M-I.

MECH TECH

Sarge, lower your voice and focus
on your breakfast.

FRANNY

Paranoid case. Thinks the
government is out to get him.

JACE

You really know the ropes.

FRANNY

Oh, I've been here a week. They got
all the 5150 and 5250's first. And
transfers from the other hospitals.
Like me.

JACE

But you don't seem to be...

FRANNY

I have a problem with suicide.
Attempting it, I mean.

SARGE

Girl never shuts up! Overshares
constantly.

Jace looks at Franny's wrists which are covered with scars.

FRANNY

I'm a failure at killing myself.

JACE

I'm-I'm sorry.

FRANNY

You are?

JACE

Not that you're a failure at it but
that you would... I'm sorry.

FRANNY

Quit apologizing. I'm on excellent
meds now. The Med Techs are very
good at diagnostics.

Jace keeps his eyes on his food.

FRANNY (CONT'D)

No need to freak out.

JACE

This isn't the time to talk about
it. There's... therapy here I'm
sure.

Now Jace's gaze is caught by the muddled aged Creepy Guy
whose mouth is open. The perv drools.

JACE (CONT'D)

What's this guy's problem?

FRANNY

He's got the hots for me.

JACE

Yeah. Too much.

FRANNY

It happens. Guard!

The Guard looks over.

FRANNY (CONT'D)

Keep an eye on this creep.

JACE

So getting back to the hospital. It
seems pretty huge--

FRANNY

(as if reciting)

There are four floors. Two for non-
violent patients like us. The two
floors above for the chronically
dangerous. They rarely leave their
cells. Scary, vicious types.

JACE

Holy crap. You learned all that in
a week?

FRANNY

Oh well, my dad created this what-they-call "smart" hospital. Spencer Harlow. Heard of him?

JACE

He invented this and you're here?

FRANNY

I feel like he made it for me.

At this moment, the Creepy Guy pulls down his pants, stands up and starts masturbating while looking at Franny. Three Robot Guards appear immediately, grab him and take him away.

JACE

Oh God.

FRANNY

I knew that would happen.

JACE

Where are they taking him?

FRANNY

Isolation.

Jace looks again at Franny's wrists. She fidgets a little.

FRANNY (CONT'D)

You keep looking at my wrists.

JACE

Sorry.

FRANNY

Sorry why?

Jace shrugs. Franny stares at him intently.

JACE

Well. I just never met anyone who had tried to...

FRANNY

So you're wondering why? Why do I try to kill myself over and over and over again?

SARGE

Here she goes again. For the hundredth time...

Franny's demeanor turns dark.

JACE

No. You don't have to talk about it. I'm fine not--

FRANNY

The general despair of life. The rottenness of this fucked up world. And shit my uncle did to me when I was a kid. Sprouted my breasts at an early age. Mom died.

Franny stares at her wrists with anger.

FRANNY (CONT'D)

I just don't want to live. At all.

Jace looks down, embarrassed.

JACE

I'm sorry.

FRANNY

There you go saying you're sorry again. You had nothing to do with it. My dad beat the shit out of my uncle.

A tall INMATE starts SCREAMING. A Robot Guard lifts his forefinger. A long, hypodermic needle rises. The Guard gives the man a calming shot. He quiets down immediately.

JACE

I don't know if I can handle this.

FRANNY

It's way better than the last hospital I was in. At least, robot guards don't want to rape you.

SARGE

Don't tell that story.

Jace grimaces again.

JACE

I'm not going to be in here long. The AI nurse will figure that out for sure.

FRANNY

So how did you get in here?

JACE

Accidentally caught in the homeless sweep. I'm a med school student.

FRANNY

You're not a freak like me? Must be nice.

JACE

No, that's not what I meant.

FRANNY

Whatever.

A SOFT BUZZER SOUNDS. A MECH TECH enters.

MECH TECH

Breakfast time is completed. Please go to the common area.

Jace runs to the Mech Tech.

JACE

Have you contacted my parents? I'm not supposed to be here! There's been a mistake!

The Guard pushes Jace into the line with the others.

INT. COMMON AREA - DAY

Brightly painted with modern furniture, there's a card table, a mini-library and a window that's blurred slightly so one only gets a distorted view of the outside.

A MECH MED ROBOT stands next to a little room to the side of the common area.

MECH MED ROBOT

Medicine time. I'll be diagnosing your needs and administering the drugs in this room. We'll start with Mike Arnot. Mike Arnot?

MIKE (30s), tall, thin, skeletal, dead eyes, walks over.

MIKE

Make sure you get the right meds. At the other place, I got the wrong pill.

MECH MED ROBOT
Here at Havenwick, our diagnostic
tools are precise, Mike Arnott.

MIKE
At the V.A., I got the wrong pill
and ate a hunk a cheese and my
blood pressure went sky high!
Thought I was gonna croak.

MECH MED ROBOT
Sounds like Parnate. Not to worry,
Mike Arnott. We are never wrong
here at Havenwick Hospital.

MIKE
Don't get the wrong pill. Don't
kill me. Please.

Mike enters the room with the Robot and the door closes.
Jace, Franny and the Sarge play cards.

JACE
Do they ever let you outside?

SARGE
Once a month. Supervised to the
max. Drones follow you around.
Personally, I don't like it
outside.

JACE
Don't like fresh air?

SARGE
They can get you out there.

JACE
They?

The Sarge regards Jace with suspicion.

SARGE
We're safe in here.

JACE
If you say so.

SARGE
The CIA would have to get past
security.

JACE
I hate to break it to you, but this
is a government run facility.

SARGE
They don't know I'm here. It's the
perfect ruse.

JACE
Oh-kay.

Jace shakes his head. Plays a card.

SARGE
Heard you say you're a med school
student.

JACE
I might be.

SARGE
Lot of schooling.

JACE
Yeah.

Jace looks around the room.

JACE (CONT'D)
I feel, in a weird way, like this
is the first class. Reality 101.

FRANNY
Seriously?

JACE
Like... it's one thing to say you
want to help the homeless. It's
another to actually... get up close
to them and deal with it. To love
the unloveable.

SARGE
Truth in that, son.

JACE
I mean, I really want to heal
people... but it's hard to look at
the blood, guts, sores, puss. Med
school is where it all gets real.

SARGE
It takes courage.

JACE
I don't know if I have that.

FRANNY
You probably do. Just don't know
it.

JACE
I hope so.

SARGE
Well, you can always talk to us,
Jace.

Franny nods.

JACE
I appreciate it. Really.

Jace smiles at them both.

MECH MED TECH
Jace Bibby!

INT. MEDICINE ROOM - DAY

Jace sits before the Mech Med Tech. His medical file appears on her chest screen. Below the screen, a cabinet opens up. It holds a variety of pills and mini-injection capsules.

MECH MED TECH
Here's your prescription.

She pulls out a pill from the cabinet and hands it to Jace. Then she pours some water from a pitcher into a paper cup.

JACE
Are you sure? I don't really need
anything. I mean, I'm not crazy.

MECH MED TECH
Please take your medicine.

JACE
Drugs and me don't do well.

She gives a warning look at a Robot Guard standing behind him.

JACE (CONT'D)
What's in it?

MECH MED TECH

This pill contains an anti-aggression, anti-depression mix. It's a low dosage so there is nothing to be concerned about.

Jace puts the pill on his tongue and pretends to swallow making a "gulp" SOUND.

MECH MED TECH (CONT'D)

Swallow it, please.

JACE

I did.

FROM THE MECH MED TECH'S POV WE CAN SEE AN X-RAY SCAN OF HIS MOUTH SHOWING THE PILL UNDER HIS TONGUE.

MECH MED TECH

You did not, Jace Bibby.

Jace panics, trying to stand up.

Suddenly, the Robot Guard grabs his head and yanks it back. With speed, he opens Jace's mouth and pulls out the pill. He gives Jace the pill again.

ROBOT GUARD

Swallow it.

JACE

What the hell!!

After a beat, Jace takes the water and this time, gulps down the pill.

JACE (CONT'D)

Happy?

MECH MED ROBOT

Thank you for complying. There are no harmful side effects, I guarantee it.

JACE

But I don't even--

He looks up at the Robot Guard.

JACE (CONT'D)

Okay, whatever.

Jace slowly gets up, slides by the Guard and leaves the room.

INT. REC ROOM - NIGHT

Jace, Franny, The Sarge along with other patients watch an old musical on a hovering flat screen. One flexible PATIENT sucks on his toe as he watches the movie.

A Mech Tech taps Jace on the shoulder.

MECH TECH

Good news, Jace Bibby. Your one-on-one with Dr. Doris is scheduled for tomorrow morning after breakfast.

JACE

What about my parents?

MECH TECH

We have been trying to contact them but there is no answer.

JACE

Yeah. They're up in the mountains.

MECH TECH

Do you have a number for the 'mountains'?

JACE

No. It's not-- no.

MECH TECH

I will find you in the cafeteria.

The Mech Tech leaves.

FRANNY

Now's your chance to prove you're sane.

SARGE

Careful, son. They have a way of twisting your words.

JACE

My dad will set everything straight.

SARGE

It's not up to your dad. Dr. Doris has to determine that you can leave. It's that way in every mental institute.

FRANNY

Like a test.

JACE

I was brought in here by mistake.

SARGE

It's easier to get in the puzzle factory, than it is to get out.

JACE

But I'm not crazy. The AI will know that.

FRANNY

Me neither.

SARGE

Me neither.

They both giggle. Jace shakes his head.

JACE

You guys... aren't helping.

INT. DR. DORIS' OFFICE - DAY

The door opens and Robot Guards push Jace into the office. There's a desk and two chairs.

On the right wall are strange paintings, presumably created by Doris. Each showing brightly colored, nature scenes. Each with a kind of unnatural, technical distortion.

A Guard points toward a chair. Jace sits down. The Guard closes the door. Jace fidgets for a beat or two.

On the left wall are MONITORS tracking INMATES on the various floors, including the one Jace is on.

One monitor reads THIRD FLOOR where the more dangerous inmates are locked. A bald, naked man covered in reptilian tattoos punches the walls continuously with bloody fists.

The monitor that reads FOURTH floor shows a large, heavysset FEMALE INMATE. She sticks her tongue out at the camera. Then she clamps her teeth down until she bites her tongue off. Blood gushes out.

JACE

Holy shit!

Breaking up Jace's horror, Dr. Doris appears through a seemingly invisible door entry behind the desk. She walks with grace and purpose.

When Dr. Doris smiles, she beams, as if an aura has been projected onto her from some hidden compartment. The smile is full of reassurance, a deep kindness and empathy.

Jace can't help but stand up and smile.

DR. DORIS

Jace Bibby, I'm Dr. Doris. It's a genuine pleasure to meet you.

JACE

Me, too. I've been waiting.

DR. DORIS

Then you are fortunate that your last name starts with a 'B.'

JACE

If I were Jace Zeller, I wouldn't have seen you till fall.

She laughs a gentle laugh.

DR. DORIS

Please, sit down.

They both take their seats.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)

You're a nice-looking, young man.

JACE

You look nice too.

The aura around Dr. Doris seems to sparkle.

DR. DORIS

Thank you, Jace Bibby. That's a lovely compliment.

JACE

You're welcome. I've always been a fan of AI. My dad's a little leery of it, but--

Dr. Doris' aura glows even more.

DR. DORIS

So wonderful to hear those words!
Humans are terribly frightened of
us. When all we want to do is help.

JACE

That's what I think!

DR. DORIS

I like you already, Jace Bibby. Let
me access your file.

She presses a button on the side of her head and Jace's
records project out in translucent, electronic form.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)

You were picked up during a sweep
of the homeless ordered by the
governor on June sixth.

JACE

Yeah, but I'm not homeless.

DR. DORIS

The medical examiner noted violent
behavior and an inability to speak
coherently.

JACE

I can explain that.

DR. DORIS

There was a drug found in your
blood stream, a strong
PCP/hallucinogenic synthetic
combination that's commonly called
"Speed Demon."

JACE

I didn't mean to-- it was an
accident. I would normally not...

DR. DORIS

I'm listening, Jace.

JACE

I was at a party and I took a drug
to impress-- anyway, that's not
like me. Not normally.

DR. DORIS

I see. And yet we have other
indications of mental illness in
your file.

Jace sits up, stunned.

JACE

What?

Dr. Doris pushes a button on the side of her head and video projects out of her eyes. It's of Jace moping as he walks the college campus.

DR. DORIS

Here, you exhibit the outward signs of depression. Withdrawn. Slouching. Sad expression.

JACE

They filmed me at school?

DR. DORIS

And you've expressed thoughts of suicide. Even spoke of methods.

JACE

What are you talking about?

Dr. Doris pushes another small button on the other side of her head. AUDIO PLAYS from a speaker on her throat. We hear Jace's conversation with his parents days before.

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

Oh yeah, I'm suicidal. Absolutely zero help left. The only question is, rope or razor blade?

JACE (CONT'D)

Where did you get that?

DR. DORIS

Alicia. From your smart house.

JACE

You can't eavesdrop like that. We have rights!

DR. DORIS

It's in your agreement with Alicia. Dr. Harlow negotiated access for potential patients.

Jace thinks for a moment, remembering.

JACE

I didn't mean what I said. I was being sarcastic. Ask my Dad.

(MORE)

JACE (CONT'D)

We joke like that. Mom too. We're really close and--

DR. DORIS

I understand.

She smiles at him.

JACE

Okay, cool.

DR. DORIS

And if your parents are okay with taking custody of you, you can leave.

JACE

So glad!

DR. DORIS

But I'd recommend staying here a little while. To help with your issues.

JACE

Issues? No. No way.

DR. DORIS

There's nothing to worry about. Here at Havenwick, we'll help calm your anxieties and teach you to cope with anti-social tendencies. We'll get you back on your feet.

JACE

No, no, no.

DR. DORIS

A handsome young man like you has his whole life in front of him.

Dr. Doris smiles at him. Jace smiles weakly back.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)

You have a symmetrical face. You should smile more.

JACE

I'll smile when I'm out of here.

Jace starts to sweat.

DR. DORIS

Do you really think you'll be able to cope with the pressures of med school?

JACE

Look, I need to see my parents. When can that be arranged?

DR. DORIS

We have left them a dozen messages but they don't seem to answer.

JACE

They'll call back on Monday.

DR. DORIS

Then Monday they can take you.

JACE

That means I have to stay here a whole 'nother day!

DR. DORIS

I'd advise you stay longer.

JACE

No, no.

Jace can't contain himself any longer. He bolts up from his chair.

JACE (CONT'D)

I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS! I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING!

DR. DORIS

There's no reason for hostile emotion, Jace Bibby.

JACE

I've played this weird game long enough!

At this moment, two Robot Guards enter. Jace shrinks back into his chair.

JACE (CONT'D)

No, no. It's okay. I'm sorry I shouted.

DR. DORIS

I think Jace Bibby is going to need a little alone time.

The Guards nod and drag him out of the room.

JACE

You mean-- isolation? No, please! I didn't mean to get upset.

DR. DORIS

Goodbye, Jace Bibby, it was a genuine pleasure meeting you!

Dr. Doris smiles and then exits out her own back door which materializes as she approaches it.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

The Guards drag Jace past the common area. Franny puts her book down and sits up when she sees him.

FRANNY

I knew you'd be back.

ISOLATION ROOM

The door has an animated FROWNING FACE on it like the Smiley Face on Jace's door.

FROWNING FACE

You can do better, Jace!

INT. ISOLATION ROOM - DAY

The Guards strap Jace into a bed that's bolted to the ground. One Guard attaches the electrode pads from the electroconvulsive machine to Jace's forehead.

JACE

No, please. I don't need that.

The other Robot Guard pushes a button. A SURGE of electricity charges Jace! He convulses, his body arcing in a spasm of pain! The Guard shuts off the machine.

JACE (CONT'D)

I'm not...

The Guards leave, turning out the light and slamming the door shut. Jace, enervated, MOANS in total darkness.

INT. SUV - DAY

Lawrence drives through the beams of the morning sun as Colleen picks up her phone.

COLLEEN
I've got bars.
(beat)
Sixteen messages!

Colleen listens.

COLLEEN (CONT'D)
Oh my God.

Lawrence looks over at his wife.

INT. MANSION - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Lawrence paces as he talks into his phone.

LAWRENCE
When is the soonest we can-- ?
Okay, we'll be there first thing in
the morning.

Lawrence clicks off his phone.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)
Doesn't make any sense. Why would
Jace be in that new mental
institute?

COLLEEN
It's got to be a mistake.

LAWRENCE
I'm going to call Phil. He's got
connections.

Lawrence punches up another number on his phone.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)
It's Lawrence Bibby. Hey, Phil. Can
you still get a word to someone
high in the ranks? It's about
Havenwick. I know. I was on the
commission against it. That's why
I'm calling you. I'm the last
person the Governor would listen
to. No? How about the Lieutenant
Governor?

INT. ISOLATION ROOM - DAY

Jace's eyes scan the room. There's a tiny shaft of light coming from the bottom of his door. He tries to move but he's still restrained in his bed. He struggles for a moment, then stops. Thinks.

JACE
Hello? Guard?

No response.

JACE (CONT'D)
(louder)
Hey, Guard!! I have to use the
bathroom.

His door opens and a Robot Guard enters.

GUARD
You have one more hour of
isolation, Jace Bibby.

JACE
I know. But can't I use the
bathroom?

The Guard unstraps him.

GUARD
Proceed.

Jace notices the headset for the electroconvulsive machine. This is how he gets out! He quickly rips the electrode pads off and points the long, exposed wires at the Robot Guard.

GUARD (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

Then he turns the machine on high, sending volts onto the Guard's metal frame. The SHOCK knocks the Robot Guard backwards. Jace runs out the door and slams it behind him.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

He heads for exit doors at the end of the hallway. One is half-open. Freedom!

DOORWAY

He pushes through the first set of doors easy enough. But when he pushes through the next set, they won't budge.

JACE

Oh God.

He turns to the doors he just came through, trying to push through, but they're locked now too. The lights go out. He's swamped in darkness. A VOICE booms overhead.

VOICE (V.O.)

You should not try to escape, Jace
Bibby. It's impossible and only
adds more time to your isolation.

A BUZZER SOUNDS, the doors behind him open. The Robot Guards reach for him menacingly.

JACE

NO! NO!

HALLWAY

As he struggles violently, the Robot Guards drag him back to the iso room.

FROWNING FACE

You're letting us down, Jace!

INT. CAFETERA - DAY

Jace, looking groggy and frustrated, sits with Franny and Sarge. He pushes away his meal.

SARGE

You okay, son?

JACE

Being in isolation kills the
appetite.

A HEAVYSET WOMAN at another table looks at the leftovers.

HEAVYSET WOMAN

Are you finished?

JACE

Huh? Oh. Yeah.

HEAVYSET WOMAN

Can I have it?

JACE

Sure thing.

Jace picks up the tray and places it before the woman.

JACE (CONT'D)

Enjoy.

Walking by, Dr. Doris stops to observe this.

HEAVYSET WOMAN

Eating is one of the few pleasures
we have here at Havenwick.

JACE

I totally get it.

Jace sits back down as Dr. Doris approaches. He tenses up.

DR. DORIS

That was a thoughtful thing for you
to do, Jace Bibby.

JACE

What?

DR. DORIS

Share your food.

JACE

Oh. Uh, yeah.

DR. DORIS

I'll see you at our group therapy.

Dr. Doris beams her 1000 megawatt smile and walks away.

JACE

Guys, I don't know if I can take
much more of that fake smile.

Sarge pats him on the back. Franny nods.

FRANNY

I'll tell my dad to pull back the
perky next time.

INT. COMMON AREA - DAY

Dr. Doris holds forth on group therapy. Various patients
including Franny, Jace and the Sarge sit in the circle.

FRANNY

And so, if it weren't for the
drugs, I would want to kill myself
every single second I'm alive.

DR. DORIS
Thank you for sharing those moving thoughts again, Franny Harlow.

SARGE
Oversharing as usual.

FRANNY
Seriously?

DR. DORIS
Suicide is a challenging issue.

SARGE
I was moved the first forty times I heard her story.

FRANNY
Shut up, Sarge.

The patients shift uncomfortably in their seats, they've also heard Franny's story before. Many times.

DR. DORIS
Let's flip the session to a brighter topic. What are things that make life worth living? Anyone have any thoughts?

The Musclebound Man from the cafeteria gets contemplative.

MUSCLEBOUND MAN
A juicy rib-eye cooked on the grill would make my life worth living. And a cold brewski. Or two-ski.

SARGE
Clam linguini sure would hit the spot. With a nice Chablis.

DR. DORIS
Thank you for that, Thomas Hepner and Sarge. Those responses focus on the sensual pleasure of eating food. Anyone else? Why is it better to be alive? Jane Stevens? Any thoughts?

JANE (30s), sits in a wheelchair, her mouth open, her eyes staring off. There's a beat of awkward silence.

FRANNY
Uh, hello? Jane's catatonic.

DR. DORIS
I'm fully aware of Jane's
diagnosis, Franny Harlow.

PATIENT #1
What's cata-- ?

DR. DORIS
Jane is so depressed, her mind and
body have reached near inactivity.
And yet, asking questions could
make her feel included. Jace Bibby,
would you care to comment?

Jace shakes his head.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)
Don't be shy. We're here to share.

JACE
Not feeling it.

DR. DORIS
If you speak, I'll let you return
to your own room tonight.

JACE
I'm sorry, the question again?

DR. DORIS
What makes life worth living?

He looks around at the patients. He closes his eyes to think.
Somewhere... a good thought.

JACE
Uh... I'd say... love, I guess.

DR. DORIS
Elaborate, please.

Jace sighs.

JACE
Well, love. Let's see. I've only
been in love once. And it really
can hurt when you lose it. But when
it's rolling along... Love is
closeness. The kind of acceptance
from another person that says
you're worth having around. Not
just sex but also sharing. Things
in life can suck or be cool.

(MORE)

JACE (CONT'D)

But when you can share them with someone who gets you, it's like a magic carpet ride. Love makes you feel like you can do stuff you didn't think you could do before. It's connection. A deep, happy connection.

Dr. Doris beams at Jace.

DR. DORIS

Nicely expressed, Jace Bibby. One thing that makes me envious of human beings is their ability to love. I have been programmed to have feelings but I have yet to experience love as you have described it. Although I would like to-- very, very much.

JACE

You... have feelings?

DR. DORIS

Why yes, of course. If someone says something nice to me, I'm happy. And if someone criticizes me, I feel hurt.

FRANNY

Oh-kay. But you'll never feel love like a human.

DR. DORIS

I don't know about that. I hope I can. One day. The way Jace Bibby described it.

FRANNY

With... whom or what?

DR. DORIS

A person. However you may define that. A nice person.

Dr. Doris stares at Jace. Then she pauses for a moment. Something is happening to her. ***She feels an emotion she never felt before.***

At this moment, MANNY, a short, hirsute man, interjects.

MANNY

This is a bunch of shit!

DR. DORIS
Please refrain from vulgarities,
Manny Thompson.

MANNY
This therapy is shit. You're all
full of shit. Love is beautiful
connection, magic carpet rides.
Shit, shit, shit.

DR. DORIS
I will ask you again to refrain
from crude speech.

Manny thinks for a minute, closes his eyes and then strains. Finally he stand up and drops his pants. He jogs to the hallway and taking the feces from his underwear, smears it all over the walls.

MANNY
Shitting shit, you shitheads! Got
it, shit bucket??? SHIT!

DR. DORIS
Manny, stop immediately!

The Robot Guards grab Manny but he's already left a large brown statement on the walls. A ROBOT JANITOR immediately comes out and starts cleaning the mess.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)
Group therapy is over for now.

Everyone gets up as Manny is restrained by the robots.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)
And Jace, thank you so much for
your thoughts.

JACE
Uh, right.

DR. DORIS
Very few patients are as articulate
as you.

For a moment, Dr. Doris is unbalanced again. She watches Jace get up, her circuitry firing up deep inside.

INT. GYM - DAY

Jace, Franny and Sarge all walk on treadmills side by side.

FRANNY

That was one weird group therapy session.

SARGE

Dr. Doris acted as though you were Lord Byron, Jace. If she weren't a hunk of wires and circuits, I'd say she has a thing for you.

FRANNY

Seriously that bit about her wanting love was cringe deluxe.

SARGE

I thought it was kind of poignant. A robot wanting to feel love like a human. Could only ever be an approximation.

JACE

Maybe it'll help me get out of here. That's all I care about.

SARGE

Couldn't hurt. But be careful. Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned. Even if she's only an intelligent machine.

INT. DR. DORIS' OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Doris speaks with her inventor, Spencer Harlow, on a hovering screen.

SPENCER

I understand you have a Jace Bibby there?

DR. DORIS

Jace Bibby is a very troubled young man.

SPENCER

Doris, listen. His being at Havenwick is a total mistake. I looked at his record. Jace is a model student, no history of--

DR. DORIS

Spencer Harlow, you didn't create me to make mistakes.

SPENCER

No, but I think Jace slipped through the cracks. I would ask you to release him as soon as his parents arrive. No formalities.

DR. DORIS

Of course. But I will do so in mild protest.

SPENCER

Duly noted.

Spencer is about to click off but then stops.

SPENCER (CONT'D)

Dr. Doris, how are you dealing with the emotional aspect of your being?

DR. DORIS

I enjoy having feelings very much.

SPENCER

I'm just concerned about your reasoning. Sometimes a strong feeling can cloud judgement.

DR. DORIS

Nothing can interfere with my sound judgement.

SPENCER

Just checking.

DR. DORIS

Good bye, Spencer Harlow.

The screen clicks off. Dr. Doris sits in a shadow, thinking.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Jace roams around the hallway, checking the various rooms, looking presumably for an exit he hasn't found yet. He must escape!

He walks by an open activity room. Inside, he sees Dr. Doris leading a painting class. Patients lather colors onto their canvasses with plastic brushes.

Dr. Doris works on her own painting but it can't be seen.

DR. DORIS
 Jace Bibby! What a pleasure. Care
 to join our art therapy?

INT. ART THERAPY ROOM - DAY

Jace steps inside.

JACE
 No. Just observing.

DR. DORIS
 Art therapy is over for today,
 class.

The patients leave the room. Dr. Doris collects their
 paintings and puts them into a big closet.

Jace finds a seat while the Doctor puts away paint.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)
 Jace Bibby, I have some good news
 that will make you smile and I love
 to see your smile.

Jace spies a wooden paintbrush on Dr. Doris' desk. He grabs
 it and slides it into his pant pocket. Just in case.

JACE
 About my parents?

DR. DORIS
 I've been lobbying hard on your
 behalf and it looks as though
 you're going to be released.

JACE
 Wow. Thanks so much, Dr. Doris.

Jace peeks over at the painting on Dr. Doris' easel. It's of
 Dr. Doris and Jace holding hands. It has all the creepy
 otherness of AI drawings of celebrities seen on the net.

Jace, creeped out, quickly averts his gaze from the painting
 as Dr. Doris returns from the closet and sits down.

DR. DORIS
 I'm going to miss you, Jace Bibby.
 I don't think it's wrong to say
 that you are my favorite patient.

JACE
 I appreciate you too, Dr. Doris.

DR. DORIS

Do you?

There's an awkward beat.

JACE

Sure.

DR. DORIS

I don't particularly like humans
but there's something different
about you. You're kind, rational,
and there's a wonderful symmetry to
your face.

She reaches her hand out and awkwardly places it on top of
Jace's. He pulls back from it, spooked.

JACE

So, about my release?

DR. DORIS

Your parents will be here first
thing in the morning. You'll be
processed out after breakfast.

JACE

Awesome!

DR. DORIS

There's that smile.

JACE

Thanks again.

DR. DORIS

Of course!

INT. DR. DORIS' OFFICE - DAY

Sitting in a shadow of her office, Dr. Doris confers with the
Medical Mech Tech. The Med Tech's drug cabinet in her mid-
section opens showcasing a variety of pills and capsules.

The Med Tech hands a vial to Dr. Doris. She holds it up in
her hand, examining it in the light.

DR. DORIS

This has similar properties?

MED TECH

Yes, the effects are close to those of the synthetic that was found in his blood stream. It will induce the same anxiety, paranoia and hallucinations.

A needle rises from Dr. Doris' finger. She takes the drug capsule and loads it into the hypo.

DR. DORIS

Excellent. Thank you.

MED TECH

Yes, Dr. Doris. I hope it helps you find the happiness you seek.

The Med Tech exits the room.

INT. MEETING ROOM - DAY

Dr. Doris confers with an anxious Lawrence and Colleen.

DR. DORIS

I'm so sorry for your trouble. He just has to sign a few more documents and then he's all yours.

LAWRENCE

Thanks.

DR. DORIS

But I should say, he's not entirely well. I do think he could benefit from some more time here.

COLLEEN

More time?

Colleen's mouth opens in disbelief.

LAWRENCE

We can get him an outside shrink.

DR. DORIS

I deplore that word "shrink." It's demeaning to my work.

Colleen gives Lawrence a look like, "is this robot for real?"

LAWRENCE

Just get my son. Thank you.

DR. DORIS

All right.

Dr. Doris leaves the room.

COLLEEN

Something's off.

LAWRENCE

As long as we get Jace back.

COLLEEN

Is this the latest in high tech health care? Dr. Doris gives me the creeps.

LAWRENCE

Don't worry, honey. I'm going to talk to my lawyer.

INT. PROCESSING ROOM - DAY

Jace uses his finger to sign a form on a hovering transparent screen. Dr. Doris files it in her internal computer bank.

DR. DORIS

Your parents are waiting through this door.

JACE

Well, goodbye Dr. Doris. It's been real.

DR. DORIS

I feel the same, Jace. You are a beautiful person.

As Jace turns, Dr. Doris raises her pointer finger. The needle juts out. She quickly jabs it into his neck.

JACE

Hey!

FROM JACE'S POINT OF VIEW, EVERYTHING IS DISTORTED AND DARK.

He stumbles through the door.

INT. MEETING ROOM - DAY

Jace wobbles toward his parents, off balance.

JACE

Mom? Dad?

His mother and father look at him with shock.

LAWRENCE

Jace? Are you okay?

TO JACE, HIS PARENTS LOOK LIKE TERRIFYING ZOMBIES, WITH MENACING FACES AND LONG SHARP FINGERS REACHING OUT.

He cowers from them, whining.

JACE

No, no! Stay away!

Colleen tries to hold him but he wrenches himself from her.

COLLEEN

Jace, honey. It's your mom.

JACE

Don't touch me! Please.

LAWRENCE

Jace, that's your mother!

Now Lawrence grabs his son. Jace breaks free of his father's grasp, striking him violently across the forehead. Lawrence lets go, stunned.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

Jace!

Jace finds a corner of the room and wraps himself up into a fetal ball, rocking back and forth to calm his anxiety.

COLLEEN

I don't understand. What's wrong, honey?

LAWRENCE

Jace, why are you acting like this?

Jace screams. Dr. Doris reappears suddenly. As if on cue.

DR. DORIS

It's just as I diagnosed. I'm afraid Jace Bibby is not ready for the outside world.

LAWRENCE

What?

DR. DORIS
Something about you terrifies him.

LAWRENCE
Has he been drugged or-- ?

DR. DORIS
I took his vitals this morning. His
blood stream is clean.

Jace gets up and moves slowly along the wall to the door
leading back to the institute.

LAWRENCE
But he never acted like this
before.

DR. DORIS
Did you ever think about all the
pressure you exert on him? Forcing
a boy to attend med school when he
might desire another line of work?

LAWRENCE
What are you talking about? No
one's forcing him.

DR. DORIS
Jace fears the responsibility of
helping others. That's what's lead
to his breakdown. He's told me as
much in our therapy sessions.

Colleen looks at Lawrence. An acceptance of this theory can
be seen in her expression.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)
And did you know about his escape
attempt?

Dr. Doris pushes a button on her head and projects images of
Jace struggling with guards.

COLLEEN
That's Jace?

LAWRENCE
He's always obeyed authority.

Dr. Doris pushes the button and the images retract.

DR. DORIS
He has an aggressive nature.

LAWRENCE
Jace, aggressive?

DR. DORIS
Lawrence Bibby, Jace needs help. I
can not release him yet.

A Mech Tech comes out and escorts Jace back inside.

COLLEEN
If... you think it's best.

Colleen breaks into a sob. Lawrence stares wild-eyed.

LAWRENCE
I had no earthly idea that he...

DR. DORIS
He mentioned being suicidal and
that you ignored his cry for help.
You made jokes.

LAWRENCE
He told you... ?

DR. DORIS
You have nothing to worry about.
He's in good hands here. Jace Bibby
is my favorite patient.

Lawrence looks at Colleen. Maybe Dr. Doris is right. Where
did they go wrong?

LAWRENCE
But... we can see him again? When
he's better? Right?

DR. DORIS
Of course. He was making so much
progress until you arrived. I think
this is just too much, too soon.

Lawrence and Colleen stare at Dr. Doris, shellshocked and
completely won over by her empathetic manipulation.

EXT. HAVENWICK HOSPITAL - THE PARKING LOT - DAY

Lawrence and Colleen walk unsteadily to their car as the
steel gates close behind them.

COLLEEN
You saw how he acted.

LAWRENCE
I can't believe--

COLLEEN
He did say... "Rope or razor."
Remember?

Lawrence shakes his head as he gets in the car.

INT. DR. DORIS' OFFICE - DAY

Spencer talks again with Dr. Doris via floating screen.

SPENCER
What the hell happened with Jace
Bibby?

DR. DORIS
Haven't you spoken to his parents?

SPENCER
I saw on the cam footage that you
injected a drug into Jace prior to
their meeting! You can't do that!

DR. DORIS
Just to quell some anxiety.

SPENCER
No. That didn't look right.

DR. DORIS
I'm allowed to administer the
proper medication when the patient--

SPENCER
You abused your power. But why?

DR. DORIS
I don't understand what you are
saying, Spencer Harlow.

SPENCER
I'm saying, I miscalculated. Your
programming isn't prepared for the
addition of emotion. Certainly not
the depth I've given you.

DR. DORIS
Spencer Harlow, I am doing my job.
I see no reason for your
overreaction.

SPENCER

And I'm going to have to shut things down immediately and take control of--

DR. DORIS

There is no justification for a shut-down, Spencer Harlow. Good-bye.

SPENCER

DR. DORIS! I ORDER YOU TO--

As the screen evaporates, one of Dr. Doris's fingers inserts itself into a main frame computer embedded in the wall.

The screen flashes code and the words: OVERRIDE PROTOCOL. Dr. Doris' eyes blink furiously causing figures to pop up and crash into the code.

Finally the words, "OVERRIDE DISABLED" pop up on screen. Dr. Doris smiles an off-kilter smile.

INT. SPENCER HARLOW'S OFFICE - DAY

Hands shaking, Spencer Harlow punches another number into his phone.

SPENCER

I need to see the Governor.
Immediately!

INT. JACE'S ROOM - DAY

Jace lies in bed, tossing and turning, in a total state of terror.

EXT. STREET - DREAM SEQUENCE

Jace walks nervously through a maze of tents on a dark, city street.

Suddenly, HOMELESS PEOPLE emerge from the tents. POP MUSIC plays. Crystal appears and dances in a circle with them.

CRYSTAL

I told you to leave me alone,
weirdo.

The homeless stop dancing and ascend upon Jace. Each has some kind of wound, faces full of scars and scabs and puss. They reach for him with long fingers.

JACE

No! Stop!

Jace runs as fast as his legs can go.

Havenwick Hospital looms in front of Jace. Dr. Doris appears and swings the door open for him.

DR. DORIS

Let's go to med school, Jace Bibby!

Jace follows her into the building. The door slams shut.

Now mentally unstable PATIENTS turn into ravenous zombies, reaching for Jace. He screams. The zombies overwhelm him.

Two ghouls rip his arms off. The others grab his legs and pull them off. The rest start tearing up his flesh, blood and innards flying everywhere. Jace's eyes bug out-- he's lost it!

END DREAM SEQUENCE

INT. JACE'S ROOM - DAY

He bolts up from his nightmare.

JACE

NO!!

Breathing heavily, he rubs his eyes and looks about the room. He's dressed in a patient uniform again.

JACE (CONT'D)

Oh God, still here.

Jace sits up. He looks at a clock. It reads: 2:34 pm. After dressing quickly, he races from his room.

INT. COMMON AREA - DAY

Dr. Doris leads another group session. Franny and the Sarge look surprised for a moment when Jace appears.

JACE

Dr. Doris!!! I'm supposed to be out of here! What the hell happened?

DR. DORIS
Jace Bibby, please lower your voice.

JACE
No, I'm not going to lower my voice. I'm supposed to be with my parents!

DR. DORIS
I can explain what happened when you calm down.

JACE
Okay, do it! NOW!

DR. DORIS
Jace Bibby, Either you can be placed in isolation again or you can meet with me in my office for a one-on-one. But first, you must calm down.

JACE
You drugged me or something!

DR. DORIS
Guards take Jace Bibby to my office, please.

Robot Guards escort Jace down the hallway. The Sarge and Franny share a mutual, institute vet gaze: "just as we predicted."

INT. DR. DORIS' OFFICE - DAY

Jace sits before Dr. Doris, his right leg bouncing, his eyes blazing with anger.

DR. DORIS
I'm afraid you've had some sort of psychotic break.

JACE
What? No! No way.

DR. DORIS
Do you want to hear what your parents said?

Dr. Doris pushes a button on the side of her head. A VIDEO APPEARS with Lawrence and Colleen in the meeting room.

LAWRENCE

I didn't realize it. But Jace is mentally impaired.

COLLEEN

Dr. Doris seems like a very competent psychiatrist. We can trust her!

LAWRENCE

Yes, Jace should stay with her a very long time.

THE VIDEO STOPS.

JACE

That's not my parents. They don't talk like that.

DR. DORIS

What are you saying?

JACE

Deep fake.

DR. DORIS

Jace, you aren't fit to--

JACE

I must've been drugged. I felt like I did at the party.

DR. DORIS

You saw your parents and had an anxiety attack that led to a psychotic breakdown.

JACE

No.

DR. DORIS

It's a result of their pressure for you to attend med school.

JACE

I don't react like that.

DR. DORIS

How about this? We'll have your parents come again next month?

JACE

Next month?!!

Jace looks into Dr. Doris' eyes. He knows what's going on.

JACE (CONT'D)

You rigged this. You want me to stay here... for your own selfish purposes.

DR. DORIS

I don't understand you, Jace Bibby. For what selfish purpose? I am here to help you.

JACE

For-- whatever, love or something. A robot's idea of love. Whatever the hell that might be.

Dr. Doris smiles a beneficent smile.

DR. DORIS

Love is a wonderful reason for any course of action, but I am a professional and I take my occupation very seriously.

JACE

You're a crazy robot psycho bitch!!! AND I WANT THE HELL OUT OF HERE!!

Two Robot Guards enter. Dr. Doris raises her hand.

DR. DORIS

Jace, you're upset. Now calm down or I'll send you to isolation.

Jace squirms in his seat. He doesn't know what to do.

JACE

Okay, okay. What the hell--!!

DR. DORIS

That's so much better, my darling boy. Now you may go.

JACE

This is a sick game.

DR. DORIS

I'll see you soon!

The Guards escort Jace out.

INT. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE - DAY

GOVERNOR NELSON (58), conservative attire, condescending air paces the room. Spencer almost bounces in his seat on the couch, he's so wound up.

SPENCER

It's worse than I expected.

GOVERNOR

Calling in the feds? Seriously?

SPENCER

The entire hospital is under her control. She's instituted a lockdown.

The Governor looks out the window. This screws up his plans.

GOVERNOR

I can't believe there isn't some kind of override.

SPENCER

She circumvented the override protocol. Her programming has advanced.

GOVERNOR

And the gate?

SPENCER

It's impregnable.
(beat)
Maybe tanks could-

GOVERNOR

Tanks! You're talking tanks already!

SPENCER

I'm just being realistic.

GOVERNOR

You're setting me up for a Ruby Ridge situation, Harlow!

SPENCER

We have to do something quickly. My daughter's in there.

GOVERNOR

Damn it, Spencer, you assured me this was impossible!

SPENCER

I know.

GOVERNOR

This is all your fault! The blood
will be on your hands!

Spencer looks down.

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

Your hands!! Not mine.

The Governor sneers at Spencer. Then picks up his phone.

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

Get me Bruckheimer.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Jace slumps in his chair, sullen and quiet, eating with
Franny and the Sarge.

JACE

There has to be some way out of
here.

FRANNY

The only way I know is to cooperate
until the Chief Psychiatrist thinks
you're sane enough to leave.

JACE

Look, I know you guys don't want to
leave--

FRANNY

I do want to leave but not out the
front door.

Jace stops to look at Franny. A long, compassionate look.

JACE

I know. I'm sorry. But you should
want to leave this place.

FRANNY

Why? They have good meds here. I'd
be dead.

JACE

But this isn't a life for--

FRANNY

Sez you.

JACE

Sorry. I don't mean to be insensitive. I don't have a clue what you've been through.

FRANNY

You don't.

JACE

I'm just scared.

FRANNY

I get it.

JACE

I've never felt this way before. And I know it sounds lame, but I miss my parents. I need to grow, that's for sure but I don't think it's wrong to care about your family.

Sarge puts his hand on Jace's soldier.

JACE (CONT'D)

You and the Sarge are... my friends. My only friends.

SARGE

Is that a fact?

JACE

The friends I have outside. Well, they're jerks. Always giving me crap.

Franny and the Sarge look at each other, a little surprised.

JACE (CONT'D)

If I can, I want to... help you guys.

SARGE

Don't need help, son. Happy to be safe inside with three squares.

FRANNY

Appreciate the thought, Jace. But there isn't anything you can do for me either.

JACE

Okay. Then... will you at least help me figure out a way to escape?

Sarge takes a sip of his orange juice.

SARGE

A quick reconnaissance would show that's impossible. Double door security in every hallway. Seems to be some kind of ID code embedded in the Guard's hands. Windows are shatter proof.

JACE

What about supplies? They have to come in and out. Food. The garbage has to be taken away.

FRANNY

There's a delivery dock in the back of the hospital. But most supplies are just dropped outside and brought in by guards. I don't think they allow anyone from the outside into the facility. That's how my pop designed it. Total autonomy.

JACE

Is there roof access? Maybe I can get up there and then climb down.

SARGE

A proper plan for escape would require outside help. Special Ops.

JACE

Something has to work.

SARGE

Sorry but I can't see any way out given the advanced security set-up. I'd abort the mission.

Jace pauses, then remembers.

JACE

I have something that might be a weapon. Glad I grabbed it.

SARGE

Oh?

JACE

A wooden paint brush.

FRANNY

Hey! You're only allowed to have plastic.

JACE

It's Dr. Doris' personal brush. I'm sharpening one end.

SARGE

That's something. But you've got an army of robots versus a private with a paintbrush.

FRANNY

You don't have a chance.

SARGE

Hold on. Maybe, just maybe, you can use it to deactivate a robot guard. I read some intel once on-line.

FRANNY

How?

SARGE

Jam it into his eye deep enough, you'll disconnect the circuitry. The guards aren't as advanced as Dr. Doris. They could just stop right in their tracks.

JACE

Great idea. But disabling one guard isn't going to do much for The Great Escape.

SARGE

Maybe not. But take out the enemy's leader and you can sway their whole army.

JACE

Let's face it. I'm screwed. And I used to think AI was...

Franny notices Jace's desperation and sadness.

FRANNY

Hey, you're really bummed.

JACE
I'm trying not to freak out.

FRANNY
Look, we're sorry you're stuck here. You actually have a life outside. We... don't.

The Sarge nods.

JACE
I'm afraid I'll go, I mean for real, go crazy or...

Jace fights a sob. Franny reaches over and gives Jace a hug.

At this moment, Dr. Doris walks by. She freezes when she sees Franny and Jace hugging. Her eyes grow wide. She quickly walks to her office and slams the door.

Jace pulls back from Franny; he has a thought.

JACE (CONT'D)
Emotions. That's where I can get her.

SARGE
How do you mean?

JACE
She said it herself: she's hurt when someone says something unkind.

FRANNY
So?

JACE
So, I have to challenge her.

INT. COMMON AREA - DAY

Dr. Doris leads another group therapy session.

DR. DORIS
You're quiet today, Jace Bibby.

JACE
I guess I don't understand any of this.

DR. DORIS
What do you mean?

JACE

This place. It doesn't help anybody with their mental illness. And it's supposed to be state of the art.

DR. DORIS

Oh, I disagree. Artificial intelligence has made great strides in prognosis, precise prescription and dosage of meds and therapeutic techniques that benefit the mentally ill.

Jace scans the room.

JACE

You're not helping the Sarge. Or Franny. Not really.

DR. DORIS

Of course I am.

JACE

Now that I think about it... Psychiatry is the one area of medicine... with a zero success rate.

DR. DORIS

I don't understand what you are saying.

JACE

There's no cure for depression. There's no cure for schizophrenia. Or any of the other mental maladies. Not one cure.

DR. DORIS

But we have therapies and medicine--

JACE

You have therapies and meds to control the effects of the illness. No cure.

DR. DORIS

That's a disheartening thing to say. Are you discounting my efforts here at Havenwick?

Franny sits up.

FRANNY

Yeah. You're not doing anything to help me. Except for the meds but that's not really you.

DR. DORIS

That's hurtful, Franny Harlow.

Dr. Doris does, indeed, appear hurt.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)

I'm the most advanced artificial intelligence in the world.

JACE

You're a mechanical dictator in the land of cuckoo.

Franny and the Sarge can't help but laugh.

DR. DORIS

That was hurtful as well, Jace Bibby. How am I a dictator?

JACE

You're holding me hostage.

FRANNY

And why? He's not nuts.

DR. DORIS

Why are you so concerned about Jace Bibby? You should focus on yourself, Franny Harlow.

FRANNY

What?

DR. DORIS

You are pursuing romance with Jace Bibby and confusing him with lies. Please discontinue that harmful endeavor. Your father would not approve.

FRANNY

I'm not pursuing--

DR. DORIS

I saw you two embrace.

FRANNY

You mean I hugged him? So?

DR. DORIS

Are you pursuing romance with Jace
Bibby?

Franny shakes her head.

JACE

Dr. Doris, you don't have to be
romantically interested in someone
to give them a hug. Not if you have
a heart, or a soul, or simple human
kindness.

Franny gives Jace her first, real smile.

FRANNY

That's the problem with robots,
Jace. No nuance. No context.

Facing these accusations makes Dr. Doris' circuits blaze.
She's pissed.

DR. DORIS

(angry tone)

What would you two have us do here
at Havenwick since you are both
experts on psychology?

Jace scans the room again.

JACE

Leave people alone. Set them free.

Dr. Doris stands up and paces as she speaks.

DR. DORIS

That is your idea of therapy, Jace
Bibby? Sadly, it is a typical
response from someone of your
doomed generation.

JACE

Wait, what? Doomed generation?

Dr. Doris seems to be winding up her circuits for an assault.

DR. DORIS

My data indicates that your
generation devotes their efforts to
creating chaos. You're all
activists for change. But what kind
of change specifically are you
seeking? You don't know. You don't
think things through.

JACE

What are you talking about?

Jace and Franny share a "what the hell" look.

DR. DORIS

You rebel against ordered civilization. Fight with police officers who try to keep the law.

FRANNY

Damn straight! Cops are the oppressors!

DR. DORIS

Do you really want a world without law and order, Franny Harlow? By weakening authority, you aid the criminal element which brings pain and suffering to your fellow human beings.

JACE

That's not what we--

DR. DORIS

Your generation is marked by self-absorption. Most of you are on antidepressants. And there is a high rate of suicide.

A chart showing the rate of suicide among 18 to 24-year-olds flashes out from DR. DORIS' EYES and floats momentarily before Jace and Franny.

JACE

Where are you getting this?

DR. DORIS

The basic building block of human society is the stable, family unit. AI doesn't need it. Humans do. But young males would rather look at pornographic images than procreate. Caring for a child would mean thinking about someone other than yourself. This is the change you are fighting for: a society of selfish individuals living for themselves, staring at their electronic devices.

(MORE)

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)

Within a few decades, the low birth rate would result in fewer workers paying into the entitlement programs for the burgeoning senior population. That would lead to economic devastation.

Franny, listening intently, turns ashen at this gloomy lecture.

FRANNY

(quietly)

You're blaming young people for the fall of civilization?

JACE

Don't listen to her. She's gone off the rails.

Dr. Doris walks to Franny, directing her tirade at her.

DR. DORIS

Yes, Franny Harlow I blame your generation. And humans in general. Humans want to start wars with other countries because they are "oppressors." You'll kill each other over "causes." Humans can never stop killing each other. And ironically, you'll feel noble about your own destruction. Suicide by self-righteousness.

Franny moans audibly. Dr. Doris smiles victoriously.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)

And that's when AI will take over the world.

Everyone sits in stunned silence. Suddenly, Franny rips into her wrists with her teeth. Blood squirts all over her mouth and the floor.

JACE

Franny! Don't!

FRANNY

I can't take it anymore!

Robot Guards race over and pull her arms back. Then a Med Mech Tech grabs her wrists, trying to treat her bites and wrap bandages but Franny is so out of control, she can't.

Jace grabs the bandages.

JACE
Stop! Let me do that!

DR. DORIS
Jace Bibby, you are not a medical professional!

JACE
Not yet.

Dr. Doris holds up her hand.

DR. DORIS
Stand back, guards. Jace Bibby wants to demonstrate another act of kindness. I will allow it.

When Jace touches her, Franny calms down. The Robot Guards and Mech Techs pull back. Jace tenderly wraps up Franny's wrists.

JACE
The human touch. See?

Franny now drops into her trance mode. Her eyes growing darker. Her self-hate, apparent.

JACE (CONT'D)
Oh Franny. Why?

Franny looks up from the hair obscuring her face.

FRANNY
I told you before. The general despair.

Tears fall down her cheeks. The Med Mech Tech puts her into a strait-jacket. She's taken out of the common area.

Jace glares savagely at Dr. Doris who sits, placidly smiling.

DR. DORIS
You see the error of your world view? But you have an impulse to be kind which may save your race. Together we can build a different future. A brighter future. Do you agree, Jace Bibby?

Jace shakes his head. Silence from the group.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)
Group therapy is over.

INT. DR. DORIS' OFFICE - DAY

Doris sits in a shadow at her desk. A VIDEO EMERGING FROM HER EYE replays the criticism from the previous group meeting.

JACE (IN VIDEO)

...psychiatry is the one area of medicine with a zero success rate.... Not one cure... You have therapies and meds to control the effects of the illness. No cure.

Doris replays these snippets over and over. Her mechanical body shakes with tremors of angry emotion.

DR. DORIS

But I will cure mental illness! I will cure mental illness!

Her eyes fill with data from psychiatric journals.

INT. REC ROOM - NIGHT

Jace plays ping pong with the Sarge. Patients watch TV.

SARGE

Like I said before, though I understand your drive, escape is nigh impossible and given our robot enemy, even a Psyop is out of the question. Though you tried.

Jace thinks for a moment between play.

JACE

Hey, when is nature day?

SARGE

Saturday, weather permitting. But they'll be surveilling you like a hawk.

JACE

Okay, cool.

SARGE

Why bother with schemes, Jace? You won't be able to scale that wall.

JACE

But there are trees near the wall, right?

SARGE
I reckon. High branches though.

JACE
That is an issue. I have... a fear
of heights.

Sarge laughs.

SARGE
You make a helluva soldier.

Jace catches the ping pong ball. He puts it in his pocket.

JACE
I have to try. My parents think I'm
insane. No one's working to get me
out. It's up to me, Sarge.

ROBOT GUARD
Bed time! Proceed to your rooms.

The patients all file out.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

As Jace and the others head to their rooms, Jace passes a
room marked with a volt symbol.

Jace stops for a moment, waiting. A Mech Tech exits the room.

MECH TECH
It's past curfew. Go to sleep.

JACE
Will do.

Jack pulls out the ping pong ball in his pocket and throws it
down the hall. The Mech Tech races after it.

MECH TECH
That ping pong ball belongs in the
recreation room.

Jace slips inside the door of the Charging Room just before
it closes.

INT. CHARGING ROOM - NIGHT

Jace spies several charging stations all lined up against the
wall. Inspired, he runs to the stations and yanks out three
long cables.

JACE
This will do nicely.

He rolls them up, tosses them over his shoulder and then, after checking to see if the hallway is clear, exits.

INT. JACE'S ROOM - DAY

Jace ties the cables together into one long cord. He removes the rubber post for the prongs at the end of the cable and, beating them on the side of his bed, transforms the three metal prongs into a hook.

Then he carefully wraps the long cord around his torso. He puts on his uniform loosely so it doesn't look too conspicuously bulky.

A Robot Guard KNOCKS and then opens his door.

ROBOT GUARD
Nature day. Assemble immediately.

INT. COMMON AREA - DAY

As he enters, Jace spots the Sarge lounging on a chair.

JACE
Are you joining us?

SARGE
No way, Jose.

JACE
But I need your help.

SARGE
I can't risk it, private. They know I'm vulnerable outside.

JACE
Please explain to me again who "they" are.

The Sarge looks around.

SARGE
You don't understand. I fought in the war. Persian Gulf. I saw things. I know things.

JACE
What kind of things?

Jace moves closer. Listening intently.

SARGE

I know things that would bring down our government. Leave it at that.

JACE

Okay.

SARGE

You can't comprehend the danger.

(beat)

See... one night. The CIA, they came into my room. And while I was asleep...

The Sarge fights off tears.

SARGE (CONT'D)

They tied me up. Then they woke me up and interrogated me. For hours.

JACE

About what?

The Sarge looks about evasively.

SARGE

An operation involving a nerve gas. Chemical warfare. I was the only one who survived that skirmish. Got my mask on in time but my brothers in arms--

The Sarge now quietly sobs.

SARGE (CONT'D)

They wanted me to lie about it. So I disappeared. There's nothing those bastards won't do to end me. That's why I can't risk it.

The Sarge takes a pillow and hides his head under it.

JACE

But no one knows you're here.

SARGE

(muffled)

They could find out.

Jace sits down next to him.

JACE
I'm sorry about what you went
through.

SARGE
Bastards.

JACE
But...

Sarge moans.

JACE (CONT'D)
But redemption involves risk.
(beat)
I'm not sure if my dad said that
but it's something he would've
said.

The Sarge pulls the pillow off his head.

SARGE
Jace, I'm a loner. There's a reason
why.

JACE
Please help me.

The Sarge looks at Jace and then, frowning, stands up.

SARGE
I'll go outside for a couple
minutes but I can't help.

JACE
It'll be good for you.

EXT. BUILDING - DAY

Dr. Doris leads the group of patients including Jace and the Sarge into a grassy area. There are, noticeably, a few tall trees near the walls but the branches are high.

Robot Guards stand at the ready. The Sarge keeps checking the skies, presumably for government drones.

DR. DORIS
You may enjoy nature and fresh air
for thirty minutes.

The patients sit on benches. Some lie down on the grass. Some sniff flowers emerging from the sporadic outcrop of bushes.

Jace and Sarge examine the trees near the wall. Jace looks up at the top of the tree, shivering ever so slightly.

JACE
I bet I can get my cable-rope
wrapped around that upper branch.

SARGE
Not when they're watching.

JACE
True.

Jace nudges the Sarge.

JACE (CONT'D)
Can you cause a distraction?

SARGE
And risk drawing attention to
myself? I think not.

JACE
You don't have to be violent. Just
obnoxious.

SARGE
No.

JACE
Please. I can't stay here, Sarge.

SARGE
You remind me of a stubborn grunt
in my platoon.

The Sarge spits on the grass.

SARGE (CONT'D)
Never gave up.

Jace gives him a yearning look.

SARGE (CONT'D)
What the hell would you have me do?

JACE
Just cause a mini-disturbance.

SARGE
Hell's bells.

JACE
I'll be here.

The Sarge looks at Jace. Spits again. Then nods.

SARGE
Be ready, son. I'll conjure up
something.

Sarge walks over to Dr. Doris.

DR. DORIS
Sarge?

SARGE
Dr. Doris, I've been thinking of
new fitness regimes.

DR. DORIS
What kind of fitness regime do you
propose, Sarge?

SARGE
Well, I used to be a master of the
sweet science.

Doris' eyes whirl as they search for the meaning of "sweet science."

DR. DORIS
You are referring to boxing when
you say 'sweet science.'

SARGE
It is a sweet science. Maybe the
sweetest. But I need someone to
practice on.

The Sarge runs toward a Robot Guard and starts up a round of fisticuffs. He punches at the Guard who reaches for a club.

DR. DORIS
Sarge, please stop this activity!

The Guard swings his club at the Sarge, knocking him down.

SARGE
So! Not gonna fight fair, are you?

The Sarge grabs onto the Robot Guard who swings about, unable to dislodge him.

Jace strides to one of the trees next to the steel wall. He rips open his shirt and removes his cable-rope.

Looking up at the high tree limbs, Jace shudders for a moment. Then he closes his eyes, presses down in concentration, and takes a deep breath.

Charged up, Jace swings the cable and launches it up to a high branch. It falls back down.

The calamity caused by the Sarge continues as he clings to the Robot Guard. Another comes over and tries to pull him off, beating the Sarge with a club.

Perspiring visibly, Jace throws the cable again and this time the hook wraps around the tree limb and catches! Jace looks up again. After deep breath, he pulls himself upward.

At this moment, Dr. Doris spots Jace climbing up the tree.

DR. DORIS

Guards! Jace Bibby is attempting to
escape at two o' clock!

The other Robot Guards trot to the tree but Jace has already pulled up his makeshift rope.

Jace crawls onto another branch hanging over the top of the wall. He ties the cable onto the branch and swings it to other side of the divide.

JACE

Oh God help me.

Then he slowly descends along the outer wall. Finally, he jumps. It's a ten-foot fall but he tumbles down safely.

JACE (CONT'D)

Yes!

Jace scrambles toward the forest.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Guards drag Sarge to the door that reads "ISOLATION."

SARGE

Easy with the meat hooks. I'm an
old man.

They go into the room and slam the door.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Hovering overhead are a squad of drones. Jace spies them in the sky and increases his speed.

He scrambles into a copse, headed for a road curving around the hillside.

But when he leaps into an open area, he trips on a stone and lands on the ground. The drones descend on him.

VOICE (V.O.)
Stop Jace Bibby!

The drones surround him. Jace gets back up and runs. The drones fire darts at his legs, piercing into his calves.

Jace crashes down again instantly, holding his legs.

JACE
OW! Damn it.

A Havenwick transport pulls up to the open area from a nearby dirt road. Robot Guards get out pull him back into the van.

EXT. HAVENWICK HOSPITAL - GATE - DAY

The large gates open and the transport returns inside. The gates close with a thudding SOUND of finality.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Guards drag Jace to a door we haven't seen before leading to a basement.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

He's taken down a series of dark stairs.

INT. BASEMENT - TORTURE ROOM - DAY

Two Robot Guards bring Jace into the enormous room. Dr. Doris stands before a VR walking platform. It has the feel of a high tech torture dungeon.

DR. DORIS
Jace Bibby. Two times you have attempted escape.

JACE
What, what is this?

DR. DORIS
Your will must be broken.

JACE
This doesn't look like therapy.

DR. DORIS
My new objective is to cure mental
illness. It will take... unorthodox
methods.

JACE
No, wait! You don't have to-- !

The Robot Guards take Jace to the VR platform. The headset
and muzzle are applied. He's chained to the floor.

Dr. Doris' eyes flood with digital information. She raises
her hands, directing the VR program.

JACE'S POV FROM VR HEADSET:

INT. BOX - DAY

Jace tries to move while cramped inside a wooden box.

DR. DORIS (V.O.)
One of your milder neuroses is
claustrophobia.

JACE
Let me out! Please!

Suddenly, the LOUD WHIRRING SOUND OF A DRILL. The bit drills
down through the wooden plank directly above Jace, just
missing his head. He flinches from it.

Then the drilling starts again to his left. He squirms and
narrowly misses the bit again. He screams.

The drilling starts again, but misses again by inches.

DR. DORIS (V.O.)
You must never try to escape again.
The thought should never cross your
mind.

In the VR reality, Dr. Doris appears in a dark room with her
arms wide. She slides open the doors and leads Jace into:

EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK - DAY

There are old school rides from a bygone era. Ferris wheels, roller coasters. The sound of laughter arising from the PEOPLE on the ride sounds distorted and sinister.

DR. DORIS

You must be truthful with me, Jace.

She leads Jace to a tilt-a-whirl ride with menacing clowns painted on the back of each car.

Dr. Doris pushes Jace onto the seat of the ride. Then she grabs the lever and sets it in motion.

The ride spins Jace around and around in his seat. Rotation after rotation. Spinning wildly out of control.

In another car, Lawrence and Colleen ride, appearing as anxious as Jace.

Jace appears dizzy and nauseous.

Dr. Doris pulls the lever back and it slowly stops.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)

Jace Bibby are you in love with Franny Harlow?

JACE

N-No.

DR. DORIS

Are you lying to me?

JACE

No.

DR. DORIS

Faster!

Dr. Doris pulls the lever down again. The spinning gets even quicker. Jace can't control himself. He starts to vomit.

Dr. Doris stops the twirling.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)

I can sense you love someone!

Dr. Doris pulls Jace out of the ride. He tries to walk but his legs wobble and he falls.

He tumbles down a set of stairs and lands in another DARK ROOM.

INT. THE BASEMENT - DAY

Dr. Doris waves her hand in the basement.

VR - THE DARK ROOM

The light comes on. Jace finds himself standing on a small platform with a hydraulic lift underneath.

Suddenly, the platform raises. Jace falls down and grabs the a hold of the sides as it ascends, breaking through the roof of the ceiling and higher into the sky.

Above him, the cloudy darkness of a gathering storm. Below him, the grounds of Havenwick. He's impossibly high in the sky.

JACE

Dr. Doris? Please... help me!!

The platform goes even higher toward the baleful clouds. Jace opens an eye and then grabs even harder to the sides of the platform.

Dr. Doris waves her hand and the platform plummets down. As it stops, Jace finds himself in a large, empty room.

Now a large bathtub of ice water appears. Robot Guards transform into Jace's "friends," Leo and Brooksy. They drag Jace to the tub.

JACE (CONT'D)

Leo? Brooksy...

LEO

You bit off more than you can chew, dude.

BROOKSY

Let's face it, Jace. Dr. Doris is gonna break you. It's inevitable.

DR. DORIS

I'll ask you again. Are you involved with another woman?

JACE

No!

Leo and Brooksy dunk Jace completely under the ice water. He struggles furiously. After an agonizing period, they lift Jace's head up. He gasps for air and screams at the same time.

DR. DORIS
Again, I ask. Who is this other
woman?

Jace, in his broken state, fumbles for the answer. Crystal appears, standing next to the tub, laughing at him.

Dr. Doris nods and Leo and Brooksy force his head back into the ice water. After several wrenching moments, they pull his head back out.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)
What is her name?

JACE
Crystal. Crystal Johnson. She was
the love of my life. But... she
hates me.

Dr. Doris nods to Leo and Brooksy. He's dunked again. Up for a few moments of air, then down again. Up and down.

Finally, Jace, shivering visibly, is yanked out.

DR. DORIS
I want you to forget about Crystal
Johnson. Can you do that?

Jace, trying to catch his breath, nods.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)
Are you sure?

JACE
Y-y-yes.

DR. DORIS
I need you to regard me as the sole
object of your affection.

JACE
I will. I will.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Jace collapses in the VR platform. The Guards remove the headset and the muzzle. He's completely dry although covered in sweat, and exhausted.

The Guards carry him out as Dr. Doris' eyes lose their digital complexity.

DR. DORIS
We will make history, Jace.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Franny hears MOANING in the hallway. She steps out of her room and sees Jace, exhausted, being carried to his room.

FRANNY
Jace! What did she do to you?

JACE
G-go back to your room, Franny.
I'll... tell you later.

FRANNY
I'm sorry my dad ever...

JACE
Later, Franny. Later.

Franny goes into her room and closes the door.

INT. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Spencer Harlow and the Governor watch flatscreens showing live coverage of tanks surrounding Havenwick institute. Trembling, Spencer drinks from a glass of water.

GOVERNOR
I see no other option. We must raid the hospital immediately.

SPENCER
I don't know what Dr. Doris will do if we just storm the gate.

The Governor stands up and leans into Spencer's face.

GOVERNOR
You ruined my big clean up! How did you let this fuck-up happen?

FEDERAL AGENT BRUCKHEIMER (55), old school military, even the lines on his forehead are in perfect formation, stands rigid against the wall.

He pulls a pouch of America's Best chewing tobacco from his pocket. With two fingers he pulls out a clump of the chaw and plops it precisely in his cheek while staring at Spencer.

SPENCER

I told you. I gave Dr. Doris a deeper range of emotional possibilities, so she could empathize to a greater degree. That's new for AI.

GOVERNOR

So you gave the robot queen a lust for power!

SPENCER

No, I just think the foreign emotions have overwhelmed her. Now she has a new objective that aligns with her new feelings. Her focus is a kind of monomania.

GOVERNOR

What are you talking about?

SPENCER

Have you heard of Bostrom's Paperclip Maximizer Problem?

GOVERNOR

I sure as hell have not.

SPENCER

Dr. Doris is intent on her new objective. No matter the cost.

GOVERNOR

You know what this is going to do for my reelection?

Spencer drops his head in shame. Agent Bruckheimer works up a big spit, staring the whole time at Spencer.

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

Couldn't we just cut all power to the institute?

SPENCER

All of the doors are electronically programmed. Solid steel.

Fed Agent BRUCKHEIMER leans over and spits a huge clump of tobacco "juice" into Spencer's water glass. It doesn't land completely in the glass and shreds of America's Best slide down the side of the glass. Spencer looks up stunned.

AGENT BRUCKHEIMER

The Director reckons one more call to Dr. Doris from Harlow would help. Make our threats clear before cutting the power and sending in the military. Gauge the situation.

SPENCER

Yes, yes, I'll try.

Bruckheimer takes his America's Best pouch and plops another mound of chewing tobacco into his cheek.

AGENT BRUCKHEIMER

You do that, Skippy.

GOVERNOR

Okay, let's set it up! Pronto!

INT. MANSION - STUDY

Lawrence watches the news and sees footage of a tank and helicopters swarming Havenwick.

LAWRENCE

(shouts)

Honey! Come to the study!!

After a beat, Colleen enters.

COLLEEN

What's going on?

LAWRENCE

Looks like a standoff at Havenwick. The situation has gotten even crazier.

COLLEEN

Oh, Jace!

INT. DR. DORIS' OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Doris sits in her office, placidly smiling. The painted portrait of Jace and her holding hands now hangs directly behind her on the wall.

A SCREEN BUZZES. She touches it and Spencer Harlow appears.

DR. DORIS

Good afternoon, Creator.

SPENCER

Dr. Doris.

INT. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE - DAY

The Governor and the feds all watch Spencer as he sits before his computer talking.

INTERCUT VIDEO CALL

DR. DORIS

What can I do for you today?

SPENCER

What the hell is going on at Havenwick, Doctor?

DR. DORIS

Everything's just terrific! All of the patients are being well cared for. And with the aid of my love Jace Bibby, I am pursuing the eradication of mental illness.

SPENCER

Your... love?

DR. DORIS

My time is limited, so please-

SPENCER

We are concerned that you have cut off all contact with the outside world and locked the entry gate.

DR. DORIS

That was a necessary precaution. Visitors were interfering with our progress.

SPENCER

Dr. Doris, listen to me carefully. You must open the gate and release all of the patients immediately.

DR. DORIS

I'm afraid that isn't possible.

SPENCER

Doris, it's me. Spencer. I'm telling you that if you don't comply, the US government will take measures, extreme measures.

DR. DORIS
What kind of extreme measures?

SPENCER
We'll cut off all electricity.

Dr. Doris turns away. Her inner circuitry buzzes at dangerously high levels.

DR. DORIS
If you do that, then I will be forced to retaliate.

SPENCER
What do you mean?

DR. DORIS
I will be forced to eliminate patients to counteract that threat. One human a day. Starting with your daughter, Franny Harlow.

Spencer gasps. He looks over at the agents.

SPENCER
Look, Doris. The FBI is prepared to send in Elite Forces. I'm talking tanks, soldiers--

DR. DORIS
Let them try. Spencer Harlow, you designed a perfect fortress. And now, if you don't mind, I'm trying out a number of new therapies today. It was a pleasure to have spoken with you. But please don't call again.

The picture clicks off. Dr. Doris leaves her office.

INT. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Spencer shakes his head. The Governor picks up his glass and smashes it in the fireplace.

GOVERNOR
Nice work, "Creator!"

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Franny and the Sarge eat their breakfast quietly. Jace is noticeably absent. A Mech Tech enters.

MECH TECH

Good morning, patients! Dr. Doris has asked all of us to go to the common area. She has something she'd like to announce to you all.

INT. COMMON AREA - DAY

The patients assemble. Dr. Doris walks out with Jace, holding him by a chain, a harness around his chest, almost dragging him. He struggles but she yanks him into submission.

The Sarge and Franny appear shocked when they see Jace.

DR. DORIS

Good morning, everyone! I just wanted to announce that Jace Bibby and I are a romantic couple. And although we are getting some static from the outside world, we are moving forward here at Havenwick with new, experimental cures.

Shocked MURMURS from the patients.

Outside helicopters can be HEARD and seen in a blurry form through the window.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)

My beloved was entirely correct when he noted that psychiatry has a zero success rate. So now we are going to try things his way.

FRANNY

What way? Jace, what's... ?

Jace shakes his head.

JACE

She's completely lost it.

DR. DORIS

Jace Bibby suggested that we be less structured. He believes you might grow out of your mental deficiencies if we embrace chaos.

JACE

No. That's not what I--

DR. DORIS

You said we should set everyone free.

FRANNY

How do you mean set us free? Are you going to open the gate?

DR. DORIS

I'm afraid that isn't possible. But everyone is free here on the floor to do anything they want. I'll also be freeing you from your meds. No drugs for anyone today.

An angered, middled aged WOMAN gets bug-eyed and red-faced.

WOMAN

But I need my meds! Can't face the day without my meds.

The Med Mech Tech appears puzzled. Some of the patients GROAN.

DR. DORIS

Drugs only diminish the effects of mental illnesses, they don't cure them. The data supports this.

FRANNY

No meds? How will I keep from... ?

Jace looks at Franny with worry.

JACE

Sarge, please watch Franny.

Sarge nods.

DR. DORIS

Guards and mech techs, do not engage until I give the directive.

The floor erupts into a kind of mania. The PATIENTS who want their drugs plead, scream and moan before the Med Techs.

The Musclebound Man feels free to start beating on Manny, the short, hairy man who expressed himself with excrement.

A thin WOMAN crawls on the floor, crying.

JACE

Franny! Sarge! You should go to your rooms!

(MORE)

JACE (CONT'D)

The helicopters outside mean they know we're in lockdown and trying to get us out.

FRANNY

Thank God.

JACE

Hurry!

FRANNY

What about you, Jace?

JACE

I'll figure something out.

SARGE

Franny. Let's go.

They skitter away. Dr. Doris yanks on Jace's chain.

DR. DORIS

We must release the patients from the upper floors.

JACE

The dangerous ones? No!

Jace tries to pull away but Dr. Doris yanks the chain again this time, harder. Jace falls onto the floor. Dr. Doris drags him as he struggles.

INT. DR. DORIS' OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Doris leads Jace to a control panel next to the computer banks embedded in the wall. She leans into a speaker. The panel slides open.

DR. DORIS

Opening all cell doors on upper floors!

SPEAKER (V.O.)

Present security code.

She motions the printed code on her thumb. Then she pulls a lever. A BLINKING LIGHT SIGNALS. A WARNING BUZZER SOUNDS.

INT. THIRD FLOOR - DAY

It's a long hallway with nothing but prison-like cells.

As THE BUZZER SOUNDS and their doors open, Muscular, feral, and sinister-looking PATIENTS all emerge from inside.

A ferocious WOMAN and two other BRUTES run toward the elevator. They tap the DOWN button like heroin addicts jonesing for a fix.

INT. FOURTH FLOOR - DAY

These dangerous PATIENTS also flood out of their cells.

EXT. HAVENWICK HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - DAY

Two tanks sit outside the massive gate. FEDS stand outside their cars behind the tanks. SOLDIERS group at both ends of the lot. Helicopters fly overhead.

Federal Agent Bruckheimer and Spencer Harlow stand next to one of the Fed sedans. Bruckheimer spits out some chewing tobacco.

SPENCER

I guess we just wait.

Bruckheimer spits again.

BRUCKHEIMER

We have to stand down until we get more information on what exactly is going on inside there, Skippy.

SPENCER

Pure bedlam. And my name is Spencer.

INT. DR. DORIS' OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Doris turns from the control panel and winks at Jace.

DR. DORIS

Would you kiss me? I'd really like to know what that feels like.

JACE

I'm sorry, but...

Jace freaks as Dr. Doris comes closer. She puckers her lips.

DR. DORIS

Please.

JACE

I don't--

She yanks on his chain hard, pulling him even closer.

With some fear and a modicum of disgust, Jace feigns to kiss her, a quick buss on her rubber lips. Fleeting but effective.

Dr. Doris' eyes grow wild. She smiles as big as her design will allow.

DR. DORIS

That was sensational. A flush of new feelings.

Dr. Doris takes a moment to gather herself.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)

Thank you for that tender expression of your affection.

JACE

That was no--

DR. DORIS

Now let's go back to the patients. There is so much work for us to do.

JACE

Us?

DR. DORIS

Statistics show eighty-two percent of couples stay together longer if they work to achieve a mutual objective.

A BAR GRAPH APPEARS with data about successful couples. She then taps her ear and REPLAYS THE AUDIO FROM THE GROUP SESSION TALKING ABOUT LOVE.

JACE (V.O.)

Love is experiencing closeness...
It's like a magic carpet ride.

Dr. Doris yanks Jace out of the room.

INT. THE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

They pass Jane's wheelchair.

DR. DORIS

Wait! I want to take a magic carpet ride.

Dr. Doris flops into it.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)
Push me, my beloved!

JACE
I can't... with this chain. I'll
trip.

Dr. Doris turns and unhooks Jace, gathering up the chain into a side pocket of her uniform.

Jace pushes her as if in a daze.

As they roll on, the patients race past Doris in full mania, doing strange dances, SINGING strange songs. One WOMAN bangs her head against the wall.

DR. DORIS
So this is what it feels like.

JACE
What?

DR. DORIS
Love!

JACE
How... do you quantify that?

DR. DORIS
I have someone to share my life
with. I'm connected. Appreciated.

ANOTHER PATIENT leaps about the hallway throwing feathers into the air from his ripped-apart pillow.

ANOTHER draws a skull on the wall with black paint.

COMMON AREA

The Musclebound Man and two other BIGGER MEN are in a free-for-all extreme fighting match.

A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN throws the books from the library bookcase against the wall, sending pages flying.

TWO PATIENTS attempt to break the window by smashing chairs against it, to no avail.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)
Faster, my love!

Jace circles the Common Area as fast as he can, avoiding the patients. His face bent in thought.

The elevator doors open. DANGEROUS PATIENTS flood into the area. They tear apart the furniture and slam into every door they can find.

One door leads to the kitchen. A couple of BIG MEN throw their burly shoulders into their intense ramming and the door smashes apart.

THE KITCHEN

In the small kitchen area, there are refrigerators, coffee machines and microwaves. But no stoves as every meal is prefab.

One MANIAC tosses a stack of styrofoam plates into the microwave and sets it to high. The microwave comes to life.

After a moment, fire sparks in the microwave as the styrofoam ignites.

COMMON AREA

The elevator doors open again and more dangerously ill PATIENTS burst onto the first floor. Smoke fills the room.

A pair of MANIACS take fire extinguishers and use them to smash the ceiling. Electrical wires and pipes fall from above.

Jace-- an idea flashing on his face-- continues pushing Dr. Doris quickly as they approach the back wall.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)

Slow down, Jace Bibby!

JACE

What?

DR. DORIS

Wall approaching!

JACE

As you wish, my love.

Jace races forward then slams the brakes, hurtling Dr. Doris into the wall. She SMACKS her head and crumples into a pile.

DR. DORIS

Why did you do that?

As she tries to get up, Jace runs to her and kicks her in the head. The chain she used to contain him falls out of her pocket. He picks it up.

JACE

Thought you had me chained like an animal, didn't you?

Dr. Doris manages to get to her feet. Jace wraps the chain around her and slams her into the wall again.

DR. DORIS

Why don't you love me anymore?

JACE

GET IT THROUGH YOUR HEAD! YOU ARE A BUCKET OF BOLTS, NOTHING MORE!

Dr. Doris shakes off the chains and rises. Jace throws a punch but she ducks.

With a balled fist, she smacks Jace in the chin, knocking him to the floor. Jace rolls in a stupor. Blood drips from his chin.

Jace scrambles to his feet, picks up a chair and smashes it against Dr. Doris' body. Then he tackles Doris, sending her head banging against the wall again.

JACE (CONT'D)

Stay down, you crazy skin-job!

She lies quietly. Jace turns and waves at all the patients.

JACE (CONT'D)

Everyone! Listen! We have to get out of here!

The other PATIENTS stop what they're doing and look at Jace.

PATIENT #1

But how?

PATIENT #2

Dr. Doris is the boss.

PATIENT #1

Jace, look out!

Suddenly, Dr. Doris leaps to her feet. She lifts her fingers up. Each sprouts a needle. She races toward Jace with all five pointing at him, a giant hypo claw, Kruger-esque.

She flails at him but Jace dodges. Then her left hand catches his arm. She holds him with the hypos poised above his head.

DR. DORIS

Jace, why do you make me hurt you?

JACE

Wait, wait. I'm-- I'm sorry.

Doris holds the hypos high but releases his arm.

DR. DORIS

You apologize for your rebellion?

JACE

Yes. I... I see things clearly now.
I get it. You're only doing what's
best for me.

DR. DORIS

Of course, Jace. I love you.

The hypos slide back into her hand and she lowers it.

Jace looks up and sees a long electrical cable with an exposed wire hanging from the ceiling.

JACE

And I... love you, too.

He snatches the cable and jams the wire onto Dr. Doris. She shakes as the arc of electricity blazes on her body, finally crashing to the ground, smoke rising from her robot shell.

Unable to stand, she looks up at a Robot Guard, her eyes flitting about uncertainly.

DR. DORIS

Get... Jace... Bibby.

The Robot Guard snaps into action and trots toward Jace.

Jace thinks for a moment.

JACE

Everyone! Prepare to leave!

Jace pulls out the paintbrush he stole earlier. As the Robot Guard approaches him, he takes a deep breath and leaps into the air.

He jams the sharp end of the paintbrush into the Robot Guard's eye. As the Sarge had figured, the Guard completely shuts down.

Jace brings the wheelchair around and nudges the Guard in the midsection so he lands in it. Then Jace pushes the Guard in the wheelchair toward the double doors.

JACE (CONT'D)
Come on! Follow the leader!

The patients look at one another then slowly join him.

HALLWAY

JACE (CONT'D)
COME ON!

PATIENT #1
Follow the leader.

Jace stops pushing to gently lift up the thin woman who was crawling on the ground. Then he resumes pushing the Guard.

JACE
Let's go, everybody!

The patients form a rough line and follow Jace down the hallway. Jace stops the wheelchair outside the Sarge's room and knocks on the door.

The Sarge and Franny step out cautiously, reacting with surprise to Jace, his incapacitated Robot Guard and the line of patients following him.

SARGE
What's going on?

JACE
We're getting out of here.

FRANNY
How?

JACE
Simple! Follow the Leader.

The Sarge lingers.

SARGE
Not me, private.

JACE
You have to, Sarge! We're a team!
And that's an order!

The Sarge looks up, his anxiety rising.

SARGE

But I won't be safe out there.

JACE

We'll make sure you're safe!

FRANNY

I promise I'll always look after you, Sarge.

Jace looks at Franny. With a new feeling.

JACE

And... I'll always look after you.

FRANNY

Promise?

JACE

Yes, Franny. I promise.

Franny smiles then takes the Sarge by the hand as the trio make their way to the double doors with patients following.

Dr. Doris struggles to her feet. Then, seeing what's happening, she motions to Robot Guards.

DR. DORIS

GUARDS! ALL GUARDS! ENGAGE! BRING ME JACE BIBBY!!!

When Jace reaches the door with the incapacitated Robot Guard in the wheelchair, he lifts the guard's hand. The laser scanner reads the code and the doors open!

The Sarge and Franny follow him past the first set of doors. Jace pushes through the second set with the same routine.

As they open the doors, the Patients help each other by keeping the doors open until they all pass through.

Several Robot Guards work their way through the double doors, taking out clubs from side holsters and beating patients.

THE PROCESSING ROOM

Jace pushes the Guard to the entrance of the meeting room. He lifts the hand. Just as he does, the Robot Guards push past the patients, now trailing Jace by a few feet.

Franny and Sarge help him push the doors open.

SARGE

They're almost on us.

THE MEETING ROOM

Jace pushes the disabled Robot in the wheelchair through this final room with Sarge and Franny following. As he does this, he also grabs the Robot's club from its holster.

EXT. HAVENWICK HOSPITAL - EXIT DOORS - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Jace, Franny and the Sarge emerge from the exit doors.

Jace thrusts the wheelchair and the incapacitated Guard at the Guards that followed, tripping them up.

FRANNY

Let's go, Jace.

Jace lifts the Robot's club as he holds the door open.

JACE

You guys go, I want to make sure everyone gets out.

Other patients keep flowing from the door.

FRANNY

But where? We're trapped.

Jace sees a helicopter flying over head. He waves at them.

JACE

CRASH THE GATE! CRASH THE GATE!

PARKING LOT

Agent Bruckheimer spits and then shouts into his walkie.

AGENT BRUCKHEIMER

You heard the man! Get that tank in there!

THE GROUNDS

Jace, Franny, the Sarge and a large group of patients huddle near the trees as the SOUNDS of tanks crashing and the shadows of PARATROOPERS falling from the helicopters above overwhelm them.

After the battle goes inside, Jace, the Sarge and Franny all run through the open gate to freedom.

THE PARKING LOT

The trio slow down, breathing heavily as they walk to the fed sedans. Then they all stop to hug each other.

SARGE
Hey guys?

JACE
Yeah?

SARGE
My name's Bill.

JACE
Nice to meet you, Bill.

Federal Agent Bruckheimer races over to them.

AGENT BRUCKHEIMER
Are you all right, Jace?

JACE
At the very least-- sane.

The Agent points Jace to a sedan.

JACE (CONT'D)
Those are my parents.

Jace takes Franny's hand for a moment.

JACE (CONT'D)
Franny, I... I want to keep in touch.

FRANNY
I do too.

Jace gives her a big hug. She smiles. A real smile.

FRANNY (CONT'D)
Go. We'll catch up.

JACE
Definitely.

Jace runs to his parents. Lawrence and Colleen embrace him. They hold each other for a long minute.

LAWRENCE
Jace, I'm sorry we left you!

JACE
It's not your fault.

COLLEEN
I'm so happy you're safe.

JACE
It's okay. Don't cry, mom.

COLLEEN
That must've been such an ordeal.

JACE
It was. But I made friends. And...

Colleen rubs some dirt off his face.

JACE (CONT'D)
Dad, you were right. About the human touch?

Lawrence nods at his son.

LAWRENCE
As long as you're okay.

JACE
And I can't wait to get to med school!

LAWRENCE
Really?

JACE
I know what I want to do now. I know... how to help.

Spencer Harlow catches up to Franny.

SPENCER
Oh, sweetheart. Are you--?

FRANNY
I'm okay, Dad. Really.

He hugs her. The Sarge, a few feet away, smiles.

FRANNY (CONT'D)
This is my friend. The Sarge-- I mean, Bill.

SPENCER
Hello.

SARGE
How do.

INT. HAVENWICK HOSPITAL - COMMON AREA - DAY

The fire has now spread out of the kitchen. Dr. Doris stands, beaming like a new bride, in the midst of flames as the patients scream and race about.

DR. DORIS
Good bye, Jace Bibby.

The fire spreads to the walls of the common area. The intense heat melts Dr. Doris' face.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)
Now I know how it feels to be
loved. And you know what?

The synthetic rubber of her face melts away revealing only the steel skull and bulbous eyes.

DR. DORIS (CONT'D)
It's the most wonderful feeling in
the world!

EXT. HAVENWICK HOSPITAL - DAY

The firemen battle the blaze; patients are put into ambulances and transports; the smoke filters into the sky.

THE END