

1 "BUYING FATE" 1  
2 FADE IN: 2  
3 EXT. ALLEY BETWEEN TWO BUILDINGS - NIGHT 3

Three men are stumbling down the alley, clearly intoxicated. KYLE JOHNSON (21-years-old) is slightly ahead of the two other men: VINCENT (28) and BRENDON (24). All three are nicely dressed, Kyle's neck is rimmed with a black bow-tie that had been tied hours earlier but now hangs limply around his neck.

Kyle rubs his shoulder against the brick wall and Vincent and Brendon grab either arm to hold him up.

VINCENT

I just wish you'd be able to remember this moment. It's a treasure, man. Believe me.

Kyle's head rolls backwards over his shoulders.

The three take a right at an intersection and come to a stop at a building with a walls made of glass. In the background, we can hear the two men singing "Happy Birthday" off tune and out of sync, laughing all the while.

Sitting in the middle of the glass wall is a box with a large keypad and this is what Kyle is focused on. Using his left arm for balance on the glass, he types a complicated number and then places his hand on a scanner. He releases his hand and the scanner glides to the front of Kyle's belly button, where red beams scan the rest of his body.

There is a click and deep hum and the glass Kyle has been leaning on pushes forward revealing a door. Kyle stands straight as the door slides out of the way.

CUT TO:

4 INT. ENTIRELY WHITE ROOM - SAME NIGHT 4

The crew stumbles inside.

BRENDON

You have a privilege you gotta obtain to. That's why we're here. That is why we are here today, my friends.

VINCENT

No way you'll regret this, birthday boy. My two-year-old is the greatest thing in my life.

BRENDON

Tell the little warrior I say hi!

VINCENT

Of course, he loves you man.

Kyle has left the two a few steps behind and walks to the back of the room where there is a row of more square scanners spread across an entirely white back wall. Kyle allows one of the scanners to see his half open eyes.

Kyle's identity is accepted and the scanner widens into a black screen and pushes a few inches out of the wall. The screen goes from black to a slightly darker grey as it wakes up.

BRENDON

Where's the vial?

KYLE

(pulling out his wallet and sliding the vial out of it)  
Just where I left it.

BRENDON

Aw, yes! Here we go! Here we go.

Brendon slaps Kyle on the back and Kyle almost loses control of the vial.

The screen continues to warm up.

KYLE

Boys, boys, boys. A lil privacy.  
I'm reproducin' here.

Vincent approaches Kyle and wraps his arm around his shoulder.

VINCENT

Creating my son was the best day of my life, Kyle. But today... this day is going to be the most important day in history. I can feel it. Right, Brendon?

BRENDON  
 (laughing)  
 You can't feel shit, Vin.

BRENDON and VINCENT laugh and stumble around the front of the room leaving KYLE alone at the monitor.

The words INSERT VIAL flash across the screen. Kyle pushes the vial into a circular slot in the side of the screen and the screen then dissolves into a calm blue with a new question, "Are you ready to create your child, Mr. Johnson?"

DISSOLVE FROM KYLE'S FACE...

5 EXT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - MORNING 5

...to Kyle's face 17 years later.

Kyle (now 37) is sitting in the middle of a long table. A pixelated banner behind him has BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS listed in rows. Several microphones of all sizes are across from him with labels on each -- one saying, USA, one with CHINA, one with AUSTRALIA, etc. Several other people in white suits on either side of Kyle. Kyle has smooth skin, bright eyes, and is fairly attractive. He is clearly a customized child. The wall across from the table serves as a screen where interviewers and cameramen stand outside of the Buying Fate headquarters bubble. Bright white buildings that make up the main headquarters of the Buying Fate company are in front of the crowd with a half sphere. A screen appears within the glass of the sphere allowing live communication between the outside world and Kyle.

In this futuristic age, communication with VIP's and the public rarely happen in person, rather they are done so holographically or through screens such as this setup.

The interviewers are shouting questions that morph into one loud, indecipherable voice.

KYLE  
 (Leaning to the microphone)  
 One at a time, please. You sir.

As Kyle speaks in English it is assumed listeners/viewers in different countries are listening to a translated broadcast.

RANDOM PERSON 1  
 How many customized people have  
 died from his outbreak?

KYLE

Our records show a few dozen, next question please.

RANDOM PERSON 2

What is the cause of the "Chosen Virus"?

KYLE

It's a virus that is effecting the immune system of the oldest customized generation.

(pause)

We are in the process of finding an exact cause and a cure.

RANDOM PERSON 3

Why is it just that the customized are effected?

KYLE

Unsure... research will show more.

(pause, many murmurs in the crowd)

It is predicted that the disease is directly correlated to fate as research shows that those who are effected have completed their fate.

Voices raise. Kyle points to another reporter.

RANDOM PERSON 4

What exactly is the company doing to move forward in finding a cure?

KYLE

Research and testing my good man, next?

RANDOM PERSON 5

Where is Dr. Johnson? We want real answers! Give us details!

The crowd erupts again. Kyle is at a loss of words, living once again in his father's shadow. He eventually says:

KYLE

My father and I have the same information. Yes, you ma'am.

The camera zooms out to find Kyle can be seen from a wall screen in:

6

INT. STEVENS' HOUSEHOLD - MORNING

6

Mr. and Mrs. Stevens, Amanda's adoptive parents, are seated on either side of her at a small kitchen table. The house is cozy and resembles a modern household aside from a few pieces of advanced technology such as the wall TV screen. Amanda (16) has wavy brown hair, piercing blue eyes, and perfect teeth -- a customized child. Mr. and Mrs. Stevens are not customized and are slightly short and plump in stature.

AMANDA

Wouldn't getting rid of Buying Fate solve every problem?

MRS. STEVENS

Don't let this stuff worry you, Mandy. There's a cure, they just hype this stuff up for the media.

AMANDA

I'm just saying it would be easier to stop messing with people's DNA. Let em die of old age like you guys.

MR. STEVENS

You callin' this guy old?

MR. STEVENS motions to his arm where flabby muscle hangs loose. He quickly puts his arm down making a face and Amanda laughs.

MR. STEVENS (CONT.)

No but on a serious note, technology has a way of fixing itself. This too shall pass.

AMANDA

Yeah, when every customized individual spontaneously combusts.

Mr. Stevens stands and grabs Mrs. Stevens' empty plate.

MRS. STEVENS

How about you take that creative brain of yours and go ace this exam? Hmm?

AMANDA

Exam? Oh shoot is that today? Guess I forgot to study...

Amanda stands and follows her dad to the sink with her dish. Mrs. Stevens has turned to face the wall TV.

MRS. STEVENS  
Ha. Ha. Very funny.

AMANDA  
It's not funny if I'm being serious, ma.

MR. STEVENS  
You need a ride?

AMANDA  
No, James offered. I'll be home later.

Amanda kisses each parent on the cheek and runs out the door. Mr. and Mrs. Stevens wait in the doorway and watch her go, hollering "good luck".

MRS. STEVENS  
You think she really didn't study?

MR. STEVENS  
Dear, when's the last time you saw her open a notebook?

MRS. STEVENS  
Point taken.  
(pause)  
It's funny how she's still smarter than you dear.

She smiles up at her husband.

MR. STEVENS  
Somebody thinks they were programmed to be a comedian, huh?

MRS. STEVENS  
I'm all natural, I'm programmed to be whatever you want me to be.

She winks and then Mr. Stevens kisses her forehead. They are an affectionate couple middle-aged couple. A perfect image of what true love looks like in the non-customized world. The door closes on the camera.

CUT TO:

7

INT. COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - MORNING.

7

Amanda is surrounded by about 50 college students in a lecture hall. She is at least four years younger than each of them. All are buried deep in an exam, scribbling on paper. PROFESSOR EDWARDS is seated behind a long brown desk off to one side of the room. He is tall and lanky and sophisticated looking.

The scene could easily be taken out of a 21st century film. Old school test taking and lecture halls remain the best way to teach.

PROFESSOR EDWARDS

Time is up! Finish that thought and hand in those exams.

The students rise and walk to the front, flinging backpacks over one shoulder and beginning to converse. Amanda remains seated until they all exit. She then makes her way to the front.

Amanda holds her out exam packet to the professor and before grabbing it he asks:

PROFESSOR EDWARDS (CONT'D)

What did you think?

AMANDA

(shrugs)

I had some difficulty.

PROFESSOR EDWARDS

Expected. Let's see how you did.

(he rises, towering over Amanda)

Follow me to my office, we can grade this right away.

CUT TO:

8

INT. COLLEGE BUILDING HALLWAY - DAY

8

Amanda and Professor Edwards are side by side walking down a tall, narrow hallway with pictures of important looking people hung along the ancient walls. Amanda is still holding her exam.

PROFESSOR EDWARDS (CONT'D)

You may have always been the smartest in your class but I am sure we have found your perfect match this time, Amanda.

Amanda gives a weak smile. She looks small, young, and out of place walking down the hallway.

PROFESSOR EDWARDS (CONT'D)

I am quite ecstatic to have you in my class, by the way. The college could always use a few more brilliant minds to up it's status.

Amanda shrugs and nods as Professor Edwards walks in front to unlock an aging wooden door. Something has her tongue-tied.

CUT TO:

9

INT. PROFESSOR EDWARD'S OFFICE - DAY

9

Professor Edwards enters the office first and Amanda follows him. The walls are layered with shelves decorated in hardcover books. Professor Edwards reaches across the desk and opens a drawer pulling out a small electronic device and his glasses. The device has SCHULTZ etched into the side. He then takes the exam from Amanda and sits in the guest chair by the door.

Amanda walks around the desk, puts her bag in the chair at the head of the desk, and begins to wander the office.

Professor Edwards scans each answer with the small device. He is checking for the right answer but also signs of cheating such as "smart pens" that for a few months answered questions for students.

PROFESSOR EDWARDS (CONT'D)

(flipping the first page over)

Hmm, yes, very good.

Amanda runs a finger over a row of books.

AMANDA

Stephen King is my favorite author. You have a lot by him.

Professor Edwards flips another page, silent.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

My favorite novel is "The Dead Zone," you don't seem to have that one...

PROFESSOR EDWARDS

(interrupting)

Ah, a mistake.



Amanda spins and faces him. She walks over.

Professor Edwards leans back so she can see where he is pointing in her work, the small device is flashing red.

PROFESSOR EDWARDS (CONT'D)

Right here, dear. It's okay, most college aged students don't get this one right. I trip up on it too when I retake the exam every semester.

Amanda studies it for a moment.

AMANDA

Sir I am right.

PROFESSOR EDWARDS

No need to be disappointed, this was your first try--

AMANDA

This step is irreversible. And since that is negative, you only have one answer.

Professor Edwards studies it for a moment. He scans the problem again, it continues to blink red. He puts it down and flips a few more pages and then looks back at Amanda.

PROFESSOR EDWARDS

You aced the exam. That's incredible.

AMANDA

What's surprising me is the fact that you don't have "The Dead Zone."

She grabs her bag out of the main chair and walks toward the door. She turns back to the professor.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Thank you for your time. Should I return for next class?

PROFESSOR EDWARDS

I'll um, I'll let you know.

She exits and closes the door behind her, leaving the professor sitting in the guest chair, spectacles in hand.

CUT TO:

10 INT. COLLEGE LOBBY - DAY

10

Amanda is walking into the lobby where we see James (17) seated on an old blue faded love-seat, leaned forward flipping through an electronic magazine, his hair falling over this forehead.

He hears Amanda's footsteps and rises, placing the magazine in his spot.

This is the first time we get a good look at his full body. He is built and fairly attractive, but a little rough around the edges and not completely put together. There's a hint of rebellion in his tattered jeans and stained striped button up. He is blonde with many freckles.

JAMES

What's up, kid? How'd it go?

AMANDA

It was challenging.

JAMES

Oh, yeah? Ya bombed it?

AMANDA

Something like that.

Amanda leads the way out the front door.

CUT TO:

11 INT. JAMES' CAR - DAY

11

Amanda and James are seated in James' truck. He is driving away from the college. His truck is large and bulky and stands out amongst smaller vehicles in the world. Most other cars are two seaters -- one driver seat and one seat directly behind it.

AMANDA

You didn't have to wait for me. I could have called.

JAMES

Eh, I thought by sitting in a college building I might soak in some intelligence.

AMANDA

You're a dork.

JAMES

And you're a freak robot.

AMANDA

So flattering.

JAMES

Okay, c'mon. You know it's just a little crazy how smart you are. That exam covered an entire masters degree worth of shit and you were there for what, three review days? And you ace it. That's sick.

AMANDA

I didn't actually ace it.

JAMES

You corrected the answer key.

AMANDA

Only a little bit.

JAMES

I've said it before and I'll say it again... You must have been expensive as hell. An intelligence that high! It costs hundreds to buy a normal intelligence. You're years and years ahead.

Amanda is looking out the passenger window in a daze. James looks at her, lifts his hand to touch hers which is on the middle console, and then brings it back to run through his hair as she turns to look at him. She is unaware what just happened.

JAMES (CONT'D)

How could your parents afford that anyway?

AMANDA

Must you ask me that every day?

JAMES

Yes. Because you suck at answering that question.

AMANDA

(a rehearsed answer)

My parents just thought it was of great value. They saved up so I could have the best education possible.

JAMES

(smiling now)

Uh huh, yeah, so why couldn't they have saved a few hundred and given you the ability to drive?

AMANDA

Oh, shut up.

James pulls into his driveway which sits between his house and Amanda's.

JAMES

Yeah, I guess I am pretty glad you don't know how to learn. I know that's the only reason you still talk to me after all these years.

Amanda rolls her eyes and gets out of the truck, James does the same. They begin to walk opposite directions.

AMANDA

I'll learn how to drive someday. Just you wait.

JAMES

Only if your fate is to be a truck driver. Oh wait, what exactly is your fate?

AMANDA

I have no idea why I hang out with you. You're fucking annoying.

JAMES

Ha ha you know I'm kidding! Yo, two days and you'll know your entire genetic makeup. That's more than I'll ever know.

AMANDA

Good bye James.

James watches as Amanda reaches her door, smiling.

CUT TO:

12 EXT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

12

Mobs marching around the outside of the Buying Fate headquarters. The headquarters buildings are protected by a large bubble shaped fence for security reasons. The mobs dance around the edge of this bubble. There is a clear distinction between groups of people and their signs. One group is the customized and one is non-customized. The customized are beautiful yet aggressive with signs supporting the customization of all children. The non-customized come in all shapes and sizes with less high-end clothing and have signs referencing the deaths of the customized. The non-customized are much more creative than the customized.

CUT TO:

13 INT. AMANDA'S BEDROOM - DAY

13

Amanda is sitting on her bed looking out her window. On her window sill sits a metal bird cage. Her window is directly across from James'. He runs across frame and there is faint giggling from a child. Mrs. Steven enters her room.

MRS. STEVENS

Okay I have a few minutes before the afternoons start getting dropped off at the daycare. What happened at the exam?

Her mom sits on the end of the bed next to Amanda.

AMANDA

I killed it mom. Like actually shot it, boom, one perfect little bullet to the brain and it was done for.

MRS. STEVENS

With your track record that's not all that surprising.

AMANDA

Do you not see that as a problem? That is a college class made for college aged customized children. I'm sixteen.

MRS. STEVENS

Almost seventeen... I don't know what you want me to say, Amanda. You're smart.

Silence.

AMANDA

How did you afford to make me so smart?

MRS. STEVENS

We saved up so you could have the best education possible.

AMANDA

You've told me that a million times.

MRS. STEVENS

A million in one.

AMANDA

But how am I that smart? Like how much could you have possibly saved?

MRS. STEVENS

Dear, you're overthinking this.

AMANDA

Okay then what's my fate?

MRS. STEVENS

You'll find out on your--

AMANDA AND MRS. STEVENS

-- Seventeenth birthday --

AMANDA

Yeah, yeah you like to be traditional, I know.

Mrs. Stevens stands and pats Amanda's leg.

MRS. STEVENS

Genetically you don't need to know until you're of that age, regardless of what your friend Taylor says.

They are interrupted by a honk outside. Amanda stands and looks out the window, Taylor is leaning out of her 2-seater car door waving for Amanda to come down.

MRS. STEVENS

Speaking of Ms. Taylor here she is. You guys going out?

AMANDA  
Just hanging at her house.

MRS. STEVENS  
James' joining?

AMANDA  
You've got jokes.

MRS. STEVENS  
Why's that?

AMANDA  
You know they don't get along. I'll  
follow you out.

The two leave the room.

CUT TO:

14 INT. TAYLOR'S CAR - DAY

14

Amanda slides into Taylor's back seat. Her car is clean and expensive. We watch the two exit the messy, homey feel of Amanda's neighborhood and enter a neighborhood with symmetrical white mansions. This shows the difference between a non-customized neighborhood and customized living.

CUT TO:

15 INT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

15

Doors open and KYLE, EMILY (37), and Dr. JOHNSON (83). are escorted to the same set of podiums that Kyle was at for an earlier press conference. Dr. Johnson is low but hiding any discomfort he may feel. The crowd on the screen erupts, directing all comments to Dr. Johnson. The three each take a seat at the table. Dr. Johnson clears his throat and the crowd silences.

DR. JOHNSON  
As always, I am grateful for your continued support in Buying Fate. I apologize for my earlier absence. With no more delay, I am saddened to announce the death of Inventor William Schultz...

The crowd uproars, overtaking Dr. Johnson's words. He lowers his head.

KYLE

Please, please settle down.

RANDOM PERSON 1

You have no right to tell us what to do! You already control our DNA!

EMILY

A cure for this disease is being created as we speak. This is temporary.

RANDOM PERSON 2

Death is permanent!

RANDOM PERSON 3

Why don't you work on a cure for death?

CUT TO:

16 INT. TAYLOR'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

16

Amanda is laying on a white carpeted floor painting her nails a bright red. Taylor (16) is sitting on a white couch. Both are watching the press conference on a TV sitting in the middle of the room. We get a good look at both girls now and they are beautiful. Taylor appears to have a higher fashion sense, perhaps more money, and is a lovely blend of mixed-race parents.

TAYLOR

This is so dumb! Like clearly Dr. J is going to stop this. These reporters are just jealous as shit. You know what I think?

AMANDA

Huh?

TAYLOR

I think everybody needs to be customized. Who cares if you die from some disease if you get to live your entire life in a chosen way. I mean as long as you got money, you're guaranteed to be successful.

AMANDA

The way these people are dying is not worth it.



TAYLOR

The virus is just a temporary flaw in the system. We'll be fine. Maybe we'll even live forever. Oh! Maybe your fate is to find a way to live forever! Use it on me first.

AMANDA

Maybe...

Throughout this conversation the press conference has continued in the background. Along the wall images are flashing of some victims of the virus and what it looks like under a microscope. Amanda glances up to see an elderly man who looks frail and pale and very ill. His skin is burned in patches.

AMANDA (CONT.)

Ick. Yes, I wish this disgusting torture upon everybody. Sounds like a real success story.

TAYLOR

They cured cancer like last year. I'm not worried.

AMANDA

You know maybe, just maybe, it would be okay for the world to not be taken over by this process of choosing a fate. My parents weren't customized and they happen to be great happy people.

TAYLOR

Funnnn sucker. Whatever, I'm over it. Want popcorn?

Taylor jumps up from the couch and scurries to the kitchen without waiting for an answer. Amanda continues to paint her nails and as the images fade from around the main press conference.

CUT TO:

17

EXT. PRESS CONFERENCE - DAY

17

KYLE

We have several victims recovering well from the burns.

RANDOM PERSON 4

When will we have more access to the headquarters? The people want stories. What are you hiding from us?

KYLE

In due time, ma'am. Thank you for your patience. It was a pleasure.

The three push back from the table.

CUT TO:

18

INT. TAYLOR'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

18

Amanda's attention is back on the screen but her interest has not changed. She is still disconnected as any teenager would be watching the news.

Amanda looks back down at her nails, paints her pinky nail gracefully, then picks up the bottle of nail polish with the painted hand, and squeezes it between her fingers and palm until it shatters.

Taylor returns.

TAYLOR

Popcorn is almost done! Get ready to grub--Amanda what the hell happened?

AMANDA

What are you talking about?

Taylor is on her knees, she picks up a piece of the shattered bottle and Amanda looks down and sees the mess and her bleeding hand.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Oh my god, I'm so sorry. It must have been cracked.

TAYLOR

(on her feet looking for tissues)  
My parents are going to flip.

AMANDA

It was an accident. I'll fix it.

TAYLOR

Yeah, you need to. We still can't find the cat. We've got enough to deal with.

AMANDA

I said it was an accident, Taylor, and don't worry I'm fine...

Taylor runs to the bathroom and Amanda has found a kitchen towel and is on the ground soaking up the mess as we settle back on the TV screen which has a feed of just an empty press conference table and a feed of the angry mob.

A door is heard shutting as Amanda leaves, a white towel soaked in red sitting on the carpet.

CUT TO:

19

INT. HEADQUARTER'S HALLWAY - DAY

19

Kyle and Emily are walking side by side down a white hallway. The building matches in design and color scheme to that of the one in the first scene. Screens are built into every wall along with holographic images that float and turn throughout the hallway of important people, new technology, DNA sequences, etc. Offices, conference rooms, laboratories, nerds running around in white uniforms, etc fill the building.

EMILY

You did wonderful today, dear.

KYLE

What the hell am I going to do with this company without my father?

EMILY

You're going to run it as well as he did if not better. It's in your blood.

KYLE

Right, literally. My fate.

EMILY

Your father has some time, you need to focus on you.

KYLE

Yes, yes, I know.

EMILY  
Vincent is waiting in the usual  
spot.

Emily pauses at a fork in the hallway and Kyle turns to her.

KYLE  
(quietly)  
What? Dear there's really nothing  
else I can remember. I thought we  
were done trying.

EMILY  
I know, we were, but it's been some  
time and it's worth a shot.

She pats his shoulder and they go in opposite directions.  
They are an attractive couple, but are not as affectionate  
and perfect as The Stevens. She has a much more confident  
voice than Kyle.

CUT TO:

20 EXT. TAYLOR'S NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

20

Amanda is walking down the street focusing on her hand.  
There is a mixture of red nail polish and blood from where  
the glass punctured her skin. Scars along her arms are  
visible as well.

AMANDA  
What the actual fuck.

Amanda looks up to see an older customized woman gardening.  
She has a confused look on her face. Amanda pulls a sleeve  
over her hand in an attempt to hide it, staining the cloth.  
She waves and the older woman waves back, satisfied.

CUT TO:

21 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

21

Kyle walks into a dimly lit room.

Vincent is at one end of a long table. The other end has a  
chair for Kyle. Cameron (37) sits in the middle. Vincent  
stands and shakes Kyle's hand.

VINCENT  
Good you see you again.

KYLE

It's only been a month or so and  
you already got your beer belly  
back.

The two share a laugh and Kyle releases Vincent's hand.

VINCENT

Well, I'll basically be in  
hibernation trying to untangle your  
fucking mess.

The two laugh and sit.

KYLE

Yeah. So no, uh, no gadgets today?

Vincent has a pen and paper and a tape recorder, an odd look  
for this futuristic community and building.

VINCENT

Not this time. This is all you.

CAMERON

Boss her birthday is soon.

KYLE

Already?

CAMERON

Just a few days. I can go to  
Wisconsin. Help out maybe.

KYLE

Shit.

CAMERON

I can keep an eye on her.

KYLE

Uh, yeah. Talk to dad. He can get  
you a job as chief of police there.  
Then anything goes. Who the fuck  
knows what she can do.

CAMERON

You got it, boss.

Cameron rises and leaves the room.

VINCENT

(voice changing to a strict  
business-like tone)

VINCENT

Tell me, Mr. Johnson, do you have any recollection of what fate you made for your daughter that night many years ago?

Kyle sits back and thinks for a moment.

KYLE

As always, not a clue.

CUT TO:

22 EXT. AMANDA'S HOUSE - NIGHT 22

A shovel sits next to piles of dirt and a large hole in the ground surrounded by flowers. Amanda is holding a shoebox, the bottom of which is stained in a dark color -- probably blood. Her eyes are red from tears. Her hand is bandaged.

AMANDA

I'm sorry. I don't know--I'm just sorry.

She opens the box and drops the remains of a dead cat into the hole. She then tosses in the box and picks up the shovel to push dirt back into the hole.

The camera shifts to see James watching Amanda through the fence. This small opening used to be how the two would sneak into each other's backyards when they were little. He steps away and walks back to his house.

CUT TO:

23 INT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT 23

VINCENT is collecting his notes. KYLE is standing at a window of the room. VINCENT pats him on the shoulder and exits the room. In the distance KYLE sees several mobs marching around the exterior of the bubble. He smiles as he observes the non-customized signs and chants.

DISSOLVE FROM KYLE'S FACE...

24 INT. AUDITORIUM - MORNING 24

...to AMANDA's face. The auditorium is packed full of teenagers. A hologram of DR. JOHNSON is on the stage. His actual body is back in the Buying Fate headquarters. We are entering the auditorium in the middle of his speech.

Signs on either end of the stage read, "50th Anniversary of Buying Fate: This Sunday! Free admission!"

DR. JOHNSON

And as I scan this room I see more  
and more perfect and beautiful  
faces in this room. Whatta show.

A few murmurs come from the crowd. There are many smiles.

DR. JOHNSON (CONT'D)

And you all have perfect skin and  
perfect hair and perfect eyes for  
one reason and one reason only, you  
are all children of the  
customization process. Am I right?

A few cheers and clapping comes from the crowd.

DR. JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Being customized isn't just a walk  
in the park. You may be starting to  
have urges, all different and  
unique from your friends.

(pause)

They may be out of your control and  
unexplainable.

TAYLOR, next to Amanda, huffs. Amanda shifts in her seat and  
pulls her sleeves down over her hands.

DR. JOHNSON (CONT'D)

But you have nothing to fear. These  
urges are all related to your fate.  
Once you complete your fate the  
urges will stop and you will have  
more control over your body. Every  
step in the right direction calms  
your urges more.

Taylor turns to see JAMES walk through the doors of the  
auditorium and lean against the wall.

Leaning towards Amanda, Taylor says:

TAYLOR

Ew, why is he here?

DR. JOHNSON

(continuing his speech)

Now fate is something that is  
inevitable.

Amanda glances back to see James. He is focused on Dr.  
Johnson.

AMANDA

He's always been interested in customization.

TAYLOR

We're not his little science experiments. Ew, just get out.

DR. JOHNSON (O.S.)

Centuries of story telling has taught us that no matter what path somebody attempts to take in life their given fate will inevitably come true.

Amanda catches James' eye. His face lights up. She gives a head nod and turns attention back to the stage.

DR. JOHNSON

Mark your calendars to attend the "Celebration of the Customized" this Sunday to hear my son, the next owner of Buying Fate, honor the 50th anniversary of the program. Members of the Buying Fate community will welcome any questions with open ears and perfect smiles...

CUT TO:

25 INT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY 25

DR. JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Thank you and best of luck completing your fates!

Dr. Johnson smiles as the lecture completes. A light drops off of him concluding the hologram presentation. His smile falls and Dr. Johnson begins to collapse. Several workers in white coats appear in frame, one catching Dr. Johnson and another driving a wheelchair. They lower him into it slowly. He is clearly in much pain.

26 INT. MALL - DAY 26

Amanda, Taylor, and a group of other customized teenagers are walking noisily through the mall.

There is a holographic fountain where a singular hall of stores branches off into two more halls and James is at the fountain with a LITTLE BOY (5) and a LITTLE GIRL (7). The kids are jumping on a ceramic ledge and pretending to touch the water.



Taylor notices James, he is too preoccupied with the children to notice the group.

TAYLOR  
They should just build a new mall  
so we can be separated.

A few chuckles from the group.

AMANDA  
Okay, seriously?

TAYLOR  
(turning to her)  
Why are you defending them? You're  
customized too.

AMANDA  
That doesn't mean I have to think  
like you.

TAYLOR  
Can you please take a joke?

Amanda walks forward and looks at a necklace on a stand at the front of the store. The pendant of the necklace changes shape every few seconds. Taylor follows Amanda up to it. James can still be seen in the background. He leads the children off screen in a random direction. The rest of the group has wandered into the store.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)  
Oooh, wait. That's super cute.

She snatches the necklace from Amanda and slides it into her pocket.

AMANDA  
What are you doing?

TAYLOR  
Girl I know a scholar like yourself  
didn't fall asleep at the Doc's  
talk.

Amanda stares at her puzzled.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)  
Let me spell it out for you. My  
fate is to be a famous fashion  
designer. If I get caught stealing  
this necklace that puts me down the  
wrong path and my fate won't come

TAYLOR (CONT'D)  
 true. But the funny thing is, my  
 fate has to come true. Therefore, I  
 won't get caught.

AMANDA  
 That's not what that speech was  
 about at all.

TAYLOR  
 Of course it is. I'll give you  
 another example. What's your fate?

One of the friends laughs at Taylor's question and Taylor  
 flashes him a grin.

AMANDA  
 Nevermind. Do what you need. I'm  
 gunna go explore.

Amanda leaves the shot and Taylor calls after her:

TAYLOR  
 Wait, where are you going? We still  
 need cute outfits for the ceremony  
 Sunday! Um, okay, I'll pick  
 something out for you!

CUT TO:

27 EXT. MALL EATING AREA - DAY

27

Amanda has wandered into an outside section of the mall.  
 There are round tables spread across the area with a few  
 articles of trash on each one. She is the only person  
 around.

Amanda spots a squirrel on the ground next to a tree eating  
 away at what somebody left of an apple. Amanda picks up a  
 stray fork from a round table, squats down, and stabs the  
 squirrel's tail into the ground.

It gives a shriek and drops the apple remains. It tries to  
 run but struggles.

A hand's shadow appears over Amanda's shoulder. The hand  
 rips the fork from the ground and Amanda looks up to meet  
 eyes with James.

He is puzzled and Amanda jumps up. She is in shock. He holds  
 the fork out to her as the squirrel scampers away leaving a  
 small trail of blood.

JAMES

If you didn't have money for food  
you could have just asked.

Amanda continues to stare at him but takes the fork back.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Actually I know for a fact that  
there's free ice-cream right over  
there.

(he motions behind him)

It's keeping the kiddos occupied.

Amanda remains silent.

JAMES (CONT'D)

You know, maybe I should keep  
this...

He reaches forward and takes the fork from her hand. Amanda then turns and races away, leaving James standing there with a bloody fork.

The little boy and little girl with ice-cream covered faces run up to James and stand on either side of him.

LITTLE GIRL

Was that Amanda?

JAMES

(still staring after Amanda)

Nah.

(he turns and places his free  
hand behind the little boy's  
head)

C'mon let's go find the pet store.  
If you're lucky they might have  
forever puppies.

The kids shriek with joy and run off-screen. James tosses the fork onto what looks like a garbage can. The fork disappears into the surface.

He slips his hands into his pockets and walks after his siblings.

CUT TO:

Kyle is laying on a table unconscious. He has several probes attached to his brain. Dr. Johnson is next to him in his wheelchair, fiddling with a computer screen that projects onto a larger screen. Many men in white along with Vincent and Emily are observing the screen.

DR. JOHNSON

The probes send direct transmissions to this monitor. Any memory, any thought, it can be recreated through this using picture.

Several men in white coats nod and take notes.

DR. JOHNSON (CONT'D)

It's illegal, of course. But... anyway... A night seventeen years ago? No problem... ah. Here we go.

The screen shows Vincent and Brendon stumbling around and drinking the night that Amanda was created. Everything is seen from Kyle's perspective. The crowd watches the scene which becomes blurrier and blurrier.

VINCENT

Is alcohol really outsmarting the system?

DR. JOHNSON

No, we can make this work.

Kyle begins to toss and turn on the table.

DR. JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Hold him please. Somebody calm him.

Several men in white coats hold Kyle down. He settles. The memory becomes slightly more clear. The men are stumbling down the alley to the customization building.

EMILY

Why is he upset?

DR. JOHNSON

He's just uncomfortable. Like a swab hitting the back of your throat...

The memory becomes shaky again. Emily walks to Kyle and places her hands on his forehead. The memory is momentarily clear as the men wander into the building. The screen then goes blank. Silence fills the room. Kyle's eyes blink and he awakens. He looks up at Emily, eyes bright.

KYLE

We did it didn't we? What is she?

EMILY

No, babe. We got closer. You blacked out.

VINCENT

Want to try me again?

DR. JOHNSON

You didn't actually see him create the kid. It's no use.

VINCENT

What about the sound of the buttons? The machine must have spoken. Maybe we just need to listen harder.

DR. JOHNSON

There's nothing. His intoxicated brain is all we have access to. We have mush. We are relying on fucking mush.

Kyle rips the probes from his scalp.

KYLE

When is she seventeen?

EMILY

Tomorrow.

KYLE

Is Cameron there yet?

DR. JOHNSON

Yes, there and settled. He'll be able to keep order for a time. The Stevens will be meeting with him.

KYLE

What about her fate?

DR. JOHNSON  
She won't be receiving one.

Glances are shared. This has never happened before.

CUT TO:

29 INT. AMANDA'S BEDROOM - DAY 29

Amanda shakes awake. Her curtains are closed, however a light thud every now and again can be heard on the window. Amanda rolls out of bed and to the window. She pulls back the shades to see a marble come at her face. She catches it easily with a hand. James is stationed at his window ready to throw another marble from a bag on his window frame. He stops when he sees Amanda and holds up a sign that says happy birthday and a bag. He mouths "happy birthday." Amanda cracks a grin and hears her name called in a sing-songy tone from both of her parents downstairs. She waves to James and drops the shades.

30 INT. STEVENS' HOUSEHOLD - DAY 30

Amanda jogs down the staircase. Her dad jumps out scaring her. He covers her eyes with his hands and guides her to the kitchen table. They are both laughing.

AMANDA  
Must we do this every year?

MR. STEVENS  
Yes. Traditions hold families together. Plus... I love scaring the shit outta you.

MRS. STEVENS  
Quickly, quickly! Our surprise can't wait much longer!

Amanda sits and Mrs. Stevens pushes her chair in for her. Plates clank as an array of breakfast food is placed before Amanda.

MRS. STEVENS (CONT'D)  
Hold out your hands! Hold em out!

Amanda laughs and holds out one hand, expecting an envelope. Mrs. Stevens puts a large box in Amanda's hand which immediately falls to her lap.

AMANDA  
What the hell?

Mr. Stevens removes his hands from her eyes.

AMANDA (CONT'D)  
Wait, but this isn't--

MR. STEVENS  
Open it! Open! Yes.

Amanda follows orders and begins to remove the paper from the package. Inside the box sits neatly placed walkie talkies next to a bundle. Amanda picks up the walkie talkies.

AMANDA  
What are these?

MRS. STEVENS  
Walkie talkies! They were popular in the late 1900s, before kids had phones.

AMANDA  
No way! This is them? I've heard about them but did not expect this at all. They're so bulky. How did you get ahold of them?

MR. STEVENS  
A good friend of mine has a collection of them. There are only so many left in the nation.

Amanda places them aside and moves around the blanket in the box. She gasps.

AMANDA (CONT'D)  
No I don't want it--

MR. STEVENS  
It's okay. Pick him up.

Amanda looks from parent to parent and then reaches into the box to pull out a small dog.

AMANDA  
Is it dead?

MRS. STEVENS  
It's not alive.

AMANDA  
What?

MRS. STEVENS  
And it technically can't die.

AMANDA  
A Forever Puppy? You're kidding.  
You didn't need to. They're so  
expensive.

MR. STEVENS  
No, no. You're worth it. Every kid  
deserves a pet.

AMANDA  
I've had pets, dad...

MR. STEVENS  
This one you can't hurt.

MRS. STEVENS  
Dear!

MR. STEVENS  
Sorry.

Amanda rolls the dog over in her hand and rubs it's stomach until a green light flashes under it's fur. It begins to stretch and squirm. She throws it into her dad's arms.

AMANDA  
I don't want to hurt him.

MR. STEVENS  
You won't.

The dog begins to nibble on Mr. Stevens' fingers and he is in a trance as he plays with it. Mrs. Stevens runs her fingers through Amanda's hair.

MRS. STEVENS (CONT'D)  
He's indestructible, Amanda-proof.

Amanda cracks a small smile which quickly fades. Mrs. Stevens puts the walkie talkies back in the box and puts the box on the counter. Amanda scoots forward to begin eating as Mr. Stevens sits with the puppy in his lap. Mrs. Stevens clicks on the news.

CUT TO:



31 INT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

31

Emily and Kyle stand behind closed doors. Kyle is pacing as Vincent walks up to them.

KYLE

There you are. Any updates?

VINCENT

The Stevens are meeting with him today.

KYLE

Great, perfect.

EMILY

Okay, dear it's time. You ready?

KYLE

Ready as I ever am to get shit on. Check on dad?

EMILY

Going to him now.

Emily kisses Kyle on the cheek and departs down the hallway with Vincent. Kyle takes a breath and pushes open the doors to reveal the long table of the press conference room he has already spent so much time in.

ZOOM OUT:

32 INT. STEVENS' HOUSEHOLD - MORNING

32

FROM KITCHEN WALL TV IN THE STEVENS' HOUSEHOLD.

Amanda is breaking apart bacon and feeding it to the dog as her father holds it. They're laughing. Amanda glances at Kyle on TV. There's a knock at the door and envelopes fly through a golden mail slot on the door. A faint voice hollers "Happy Birthday, good luck!" Amanda turns to look as Mr. Stevens stands and places the dog in her lap. She turns attention to the dog, nervous and out of place. Mr. Stevens picks up the mail and shoves it into his black workbag which lays on the counter.

MRS. STEVENS

Enjoy your breakfast, honey! Come dear.

Amanda looks up from the dog.

AMANDA

What's the rush? Who's your love affair with?

MRS. STEVENS

The daycare calls us, and babe a love affair wouldn't involve us leaving together.

AMANDA

True. Oh wait, did my envelope come?

MR. STEVENS

Not yet.

AMANDA

How'd he know it was my birthday?

MR. STEVENS

You're just so important, that's how.

AMANDA

Dad, really.

MR. STEVENS

Why don't you go ask him?

Mr. and Mrs. Stevens are shuffling around the room throughout the conversation. Mrs. Stevens kisses Amanda on the head.

MR. STEVENS

Really, it'll come.

AMANDA

I've waited seventeen years, what's one more day?

MR. STEVENS

That's the spirit.

MRS. STEVENS (O.S)

Dear!

Mrs. Stevens is at the door glaring at Mr. Stevens. He checks his pockets for his wallet, keys, and phone and looks around for what he is forgetting.

MR. STEVENS

Ah, knew I was forgetting something important.

Mr. Stevens kisses the dog on the head and runs out the door hollering "bye birthday girl" after him. His black bag remains on the counter. Amanda looks down at the dog in her hands.

AMANDA

I won't hurt you. I mean I can't hurt you... but I also don't want to hurt you.

(pause)

If I do I'm sorry. Just know that. But I'm also pretty sure you can't feel pain... because you're a robot...

The dog is smiling up at her and jumps to lick her face. He then leaves her lap and Amanda's attention falls back on the TV. Charts fill the screen with information about the rise in deaths. She is not paying attention to her actions as she cuts her french toast with a fork and knife. Her pressure causes the plate to crack and the table to fall towards her. Plates slide to the ground and food is spilled. Amanda jumps up to grab napkins when she notices her dad's bag is still there. An orange envelope peaks out of the bag and she pulls it out revealing that it is addressed to her.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

No way.

Amanda runs to the window, she sees her driveway is empty. She picks up her phone and says "Dial Taylor." A second passes and Amanda says "Cancel and erase call." She runs out of her house and across her lawn toward James' house.

CUT TO:

33 EXT. JAMES' HOUSE - DAY

33

Amanda knocks aggressively on James' front door. A LITTLE BOY (5) pops the door open a foot. This is the same boy from the mall.

AMANDA

Oh goodness, hi.

The little boy stares at her.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Do you remember me?

The little boy shakes his head.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

I'm James' friend, is he here?

The little boy stares again. The door opens wider. Another head pops around the door. This is a LITTLE GIRL (7), also the same girl from the mall. A toothy grin spreads across her face.

LITTLE GIRL

Amanda! Manda! Manda! Jamie! Manda!

The little girl pulls open the door and jumps into Amanda's lap. Amanda kneels to hug her. The little girl pulls her into the house and the little boy follows a few feet behind.

34

INT. JAMES' LIVING ROOM - DAY

34

The little girl is laying across Amanda's lap showing her a holographic drawing from a handheld device. She's pointing out parts and making it twirl with her finger. James skips down the stairs.

JAMES

Well, well. Look who it is.

AMANDA

Took you long enough.

LITTLE GIRL

No, no Jamie go away. We're having fun.

JAMES

What's the occasion birthday girl?  
You want your gift?

The little boy has been silently watching TV from the ottoman a few feet away.

LITTLE BOY

Happy happy bird-day!

AMANDA

Aw thank you Tommy.

Amanda pulls the orange envelope from behind her on the couch. James eyes brighten.

JAMES

Holy shit!

The little girl rolls over so Amanda can stand up.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Um, shit. Uh, yeah, come up stairs.

He runs up the stairs and Amanda follows.

CUT TO:

35 INT. JAMES' ROOM - DAY

35

James falls into a black rolling chair at his desk. The desk is also black and lined with computers and displays. His bedroom has a dark theme to it, much like a gamer-addict room would be. Amanda has a light theme to her room -- both rooms are opposite their personalities.

JAMES  
Did you open it? What's it say?  
What's the final call? Who the hell  
are you?

AMANDA  
I haven't yet--

JAMES  
No? What the fuck! Give it to me!

Amanda hands the envelope to James and sits on his bed. James holds it for a moment.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
No, I can't, you do it.

He shoves it back at Amanda. He is more frantic than she is. Amanda begins to peel the corner and James rolls into her to stare at the document. She pulls out a certificate and they scan it.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Holy shit it says everything. Your  
intelligence is 15 grand and your  
looks... no wonder you're so  
gorgeous and the--

AMANDA  
There's no fate.

JAMES  
What?

James scans the document. They both stare at the bottom, rereading the same word over and over again. Next to fate it reads: UNASSIGNED.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
How is that possible?

AMANDA  
I don't know.

JAMES  
What does that mean?

AMANDA  
I don't know.

JAMES  
Is this normal?

AMANDA  
I really don't think so.

James takes the certificate and slides over to this computer. He punches some numbers.

AMANDA (CONT'D)  
What are you doing?

JAMES  
Amanda...

AMANDA  
(still stunned)  
What's up?

JAMES  
Your fate... whatever it is... it was over 500 grand.

END OF ACT 1

CUT TO:

BEGIN ACT 2

36 INT. BUYING FATE MORGUE - DAY

36

Dr. Johnson is wheeling himself through the morgue in the headquarters where bodies of customized children have been brought for examination. Visible bodies have extreme burn marks, several are unidentifiable, others have strangely colored skin, some limbs are distorted in unhumanlike ways. Scientists in all white shuffle around the room, blending into the white background of the facility.

LABCOAT 1

It's unlike anything I have ever seen.

LABCOAT 2

As expected, genetic engineering is a fairly new field of study.

DR. JOHNSON

What have you found?

LABCOAT 1

Their brains... upon examination they are literally distorted, dysfunctional. It's clear this occurred before death, perhaps causing the body to respond in these ways. Like whatever soul drives their brain will do anything to escape.. find peace..

DR. JOHNSON

After their fates are complete?

LABCOAT 1

Well... yes. That is a consistent conclusion. Each individual has completed their fate.

DR. JOHNSON

The body shuts down. It gives up.

LABCOAT 1

Not necessarily gives up. But it assumes it's done, per-say.

LABCOAT 2

The brain kind of retires.

DR. JOHNSON

So they reach their end goal, their fate, and slowly the brain shuts down. What's the chance it will happen to all customized children?

LABCOAT 1

Well for anybody with a fate? Unless they die in a freak accident, I'd say it's a 100% guarantee.

Dr. Johnson looks sick. He nods.

DR. JOHNSON  
Thank you. Good work.

LABCOAT 1 AND 2  
Thank you, sir.

Dr. Johnson wheels to the door, pauses for it to peel open, and wheels through into an elevator.

CUT TO:

37 INT. BUYING FATE ELEVATOR - DAY 37

The doors reopen to an entirely white hallway.

CUT TO:

38 INT. BUYING FATE HALLWAY - DAY 38

Dr. Johnson wheels out and Emily emerges from behind a corner. Walking frantically on the phone. She spots Dr. Johnson and lowers the phone.

EMILY  
Doc, we have a problem. The mob is getting violent, disruptive. Several fights have broken out today alone.

Dr. Johnson is frozen in his chair, unable to speak. Emily notices.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
Doctor? Are you okay?

Dr. Johnson leans forward and the momentum takes him out of his seat. He falls to his face. Emily kneels to comfort him. She picks back up the phone.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
Vincent, get the medics in here asap. I think the doctor is having a heart attack.

CUT TO:

39 INT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY 39

Kyle is looking out a window watching the non-customized mob roam and rally. The room he is in is entirely white. He has an odd smirk on his face. A door behind him opens, lighting his silhouette. He turns to see Vincent who's eyes are shining from moisture.



VINCENT  
You're needed, boss.

The two exit.

CUT TO:

40 INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

40

Cameron walks to the front of the police station in uniform. He speaks with somebody at the front desk who points to a couple sitting in a waiting area. Cameron turns to them. It's the Stevens. He walks over and holds out a hand.

CAMERON  
Mr. and Mrs. Stevens. It's a  
pleasure.

The couple nervously take turns shaking his hand. Cameron turns away and the couple follows him to the back of the building.

CUT TO:

41 INT. CAMERON'S OFFICE - DAY

41

The Stevens and Cameron take seats opposite side of a desk. Cameron's office itself is very bare. A few pictures sit on shelves along with a few certificates on the walls -- none of which are Cameron's.

CAMERON  
Well, let's just cut to it. How is  
she doing?

MR. STEVENS  
She's totally fine. Normal.

MRS. STEVENS  
Dear we have to be honest.

MR. STEVENS  
She has some strange tendencies but  
that's normal for adolescent-hood,  
right.

CAMERON  
What do you mean?

MRS. STEVENS  
She has little control over her  
hands.

MR. STEVENS  
A little violent at times.

CAMERON  
Huh.

Cameron is leaned back, looking from parent to parent, tapping a pen on the desk. He looks out of place.

MRS. STEVENS  
Nothing too weird.

MR. STEVENS  
But her make-up--

MRS. STEVENS  
Oh yeah we have that.

CAMERON  
Has she questioned getting her envelope yet?

MRS. STEVENS  
Oh immediately. As expected, any 17-year-old expects to be told immediately. They're promised that much.

CAMERON  
And what's her fate?

MR. STEVENS  
We haven't looked yet.

CAMERON  
You think her violence is tied to it?

MRS. STEVENS  
Should it be?

CAMERON  
Not necessarily... well let's take a look.

Mr. Stevens leans down for his bag which is not there.

MR. STEVENS  
Shoot.

CAMERON  
Problem?

MR. STEVENS  
No, I just ditzed. I forgot my bag.

MRS. STEVENS  
In the car?

MR. STEVENS  
It must be at home.

CAMERON  
Does Amanda have access to that bag?

MR. STEVENS  
She's generally not interested in what we do for work.

MRS. STEVENS  
She's never been much of a snooper.

Cameron stands along with the Stevens.

CAMERON  
Call me immediately when the locate the envelope. Do not open it outside of my presence.

MR. STEVENS  
O..okay.

CAMERON  
Just as you said, Amanda deserves to know who she is but her biological parents are asking to know first. That's all. No need to worry.

The Stevens share a look but agree. They seem unaware of the severity of the situation, but will continue to follow orders.

CUT TO:

42 INT. AMANDA'S ROOM - DAY

42

Amanda is at her window, sitting out of it looking down at James.

JAMES  
Seriously call me after you talk to them, okay? Don't push me out.

AMANDA

I won't, I won't. You're going to  
be late.

James makes a face and slides into his jeep. Amanda gets up from her window sill and replaces a bird cage to where it sat before. She steps inside and turns on the a wall TV she has across from her bed. The words "Breaking News" flash across the bottom of the screen, under a news reporter.

REPORTER

We are still awaiting details on  
the heart attack that occurred  
earlier this morning...

The reporter trails on as Amanda's attention falls on a bird that has entered the bird cage. She stands and walks to the window, slowly closing the door to the bird cage. She begins turning a lever until the cage closes in on the bird. With a small squeak, blood begins to drop from the contraption. Amanda holds it outside the window so it drips on the roof. She moves back inside to grab a shoebox from under her bed. Below James has not left the driveway. He stares up at Amanda's window in amazement. He pops his car into reverse and drives away.

Back in Amanda's room, she drops the bird into the shoebox and slides it back under her bed. Her "Forever Puppy" pokes his nose under the bed sniffing at it. Amanda slowly and casually wipes the blood from the metal bird cage and places outside her window. She returns attention to the TV, poorly hiding the fact that she is upset with her actions.

CUT TO:

43

INT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

43

Kyle is shuffling back and forth within a crowd of white-coat scientists. Machines, screens, holograms of other white coats, etc, fill the white room and there is non-stop chatter. Emily enters the room and wiggles her way to Kyle.

EMILY

Dear?

Kyle is engulfed in his task.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Kyle. I need you.

Kyle turns to her, she holds up a phone.

KYLE  
Can I call back?

Kyle turns back to his work.

EMILY  
It's Brendon.

Kyle turns back to her. They share a look. He removes white gloves from his hands and takes the phone. Emily follows him out of the room.

CUT TO:

44 INT. AMANDA'S HOUSE - DAY

44

There is aggressive knocking at the door. From Amanda's window she can't see who it is. She jogs downstairs to the front door. She opens it and James barges in.

JAMES  
You need help.

AMANDA  
What? How are you here?

JAMES  
I got halfway to school and  
couldn't stand it anymore.

James is pacing back and forth inside the door.

AMANDA  
What do I need help with?

James stops and looks Amanda in the eyes. He holds eye contact.

JAMES  
I saw the whole thing, Amanda.

AMANDA  
What thing?

James runs to the stairs with Amanda following close behind.

AMANDA (CONT'D)  
Stop, stop stop! Okay, okay!

CUT TO:

45

INT. AMANDA'S BEDROOM - DAY

45

James dives under Amanda's bed and pulls out a shoebox. He kicks it open and closes it again, a hand over his mouth. He releases it and takes a deep breathe.

JAMES

Why? I don't get it.

AMANDA

I can't help it.

JAMES

You're insane. Of course you can!

AMANDA

James.

JAMES

The fucking cat, the squirrel, what did the bird do to you?

AMANDA

James I can't help it.

James is sliding the box farther and farther away, pacing again. Amanda sits on the bed.

JAMES

Stop lying. You've never lied to me. Can you even lie? Isn't that like a program flaw?

AMANDA

You aren't listening.

JAMES

I hear you. You find weird pleasure in hurting small animals.

AMANDA

(pause)

It's not just animals.

James meets her gaze. She rolls up her sleeve revealing many scars and bruises. Her face is emotionless.

JAMES

Whaaat are you doing to yourself?

AMANDA

Dude, I can't control it.

JAMES

Do you need a counselor? Your mom is a teacher, she knows people right? What can I do to help--

James puts his hands on Amanda's knees.

JAMES (CONT'D)

What can I do to help you?

AMANDA

You can listen.

James releases his grip, stands straight, and sits next to her.

JAMES

Okay, go.

AMANDA

I cannot control it James. I can't do anything about it. The destruction. The killing. The car crashes. It's like my brain says one thing and I want to do another but I just can't.

James searches her face.

JAMES

It's the customized thing isn't it. From that talk? Wait... THAT's your weird habit? Violence? That's why you can't drive?

AMANDA

I mean maybe? But I've crashed 3 of my parents cars. Like bad crashes. I'm surprised I didn't kill anybody... or myself.

JAMES

That's because your fate isn't to die. So you can't. Have you always done shit like this?

AMANDA

For as long as I can remember... We've never had a pet for longer than a month.

James eyes the puppy that has been gnawing on a shoe in the corner of the room.

AMANDA (CONT'D)  
He's indestructive.

JAMES  
Ah, right. Of course. A forever puppy?

AMANDA  
Yeah! I've tried already, he's not even phased--

JAMES  
I... don't really want to hear it.

AMANDA  
But, yeah. I've... hurt... three things this week. My outbursts are getting more aggressive and faster.

JAMES  
Because you're 17. You're officially on your path to completing your fate.

AMANDA  
My fate that is totally unknown.

JAMES  
Fuck, dude.

AMANDA  
I know...

A voice from downstairs calls Amanda's name. Her parents have returned home.

CUT TO:

46 INT. AMANDA'S HOUSE - DAY

46

Amanda emerges from her room with James and they jog downstairs. Her parents are in the kitchen. Mr. Stevens is shuffling through his workbag. Mrs. Stevens is next to him. They spot Amanda and calm their demeanor. They are surprised to see James.

MRS. STEVENS  
James? No class today?

JAMES  
Amanda's birthday is a national holiday, Mrs. S. Don't ya know that?



Amanda shoots him a look and he shrugs.

MR. STEVENS

Amanda, you haven't uh... you haven't been in my bag have you.

AMANDA

(quietly to James)

Shit, shit shit...

(to her parents)

Um yeah sorry dad. I thought I saw something of mine in there. Why?

MR. STEVENS

Did you take it or anything?

AMANDA

Uh, yeah.

James hits Amanda's arm.

JAMES

(quietly to Amanda)

Lie dammit.

AMANDA

Yeah I looked but didn't find what I thought I would find.

MR. STEVENS

Oh, odd.

MRS. STEVENS

You sure it was in there?

MR. STEVENS

I thought I was.

MRS. STEVENS

I'll check the bedroom.

Mr. and Mrs. Stevens shuffle to their room without another word. James and Amanda run back upstairs to find the envelope.

CUT TO:

47 INT. AMANDA'S BEDROOM - DAY

47

They sit on the bed as Amanda grabs the envelope and holds it in her lap.

JAMES

Weird. So you can lie.

AMANDA

I didn't lie. I said I didn't find what I thought I would find. That's a true statement.

JAMES

Damn... I really need to stop questioning your 15 grand worth of a brain.

AMANDA

Can we go to your house?

JAMES

Of course, but why?

AMANDA

You're a freak, obsessed with customized people. You can figure me out right?

JAMES

Oh, definitely. But freak? Really?

AMANDA

Let's go.

Amanda tucks the envelope under her shirt and they leave the room.

CUT TO:

48 INT. BAR - NIGHT

48

Kyle enters a bar. Nobody notices him. He is just another guy in a bar to the customers and bartenders. They have little interest in politics or news or the money to customize a child. Townies stumble around, mirroring what the men looked like in the opening scene. Kyle spots a man sitting by himself hunched over a mug of beer. Another mug sits next to him in front of an empty chair. It is BRENDON(40). Kyle walks over to him and slides in the seat. Brendon looks up, grins, and wraps an arm around Kyle. Kyle is uncomfortable.

BRENDON  
Loosen up old boy!

Brendon has an unruly beard and uncombed hair. He has let himself go. His breath smells strongly of booze.

KYLE  
How are you, uh, how's everything?

BRENDON  
It's such shit, Kyle.

Brendon still has his arm around Kyle, grinning.

KYLE  
Yeah, okay.

Kyle takes a sip from the beer in front of him. Brendon's gaze doesn't leave Kyle's face, but he releases his arm.

BRENDON  
When's the last time we saw each other? 15 years? 16?

KYLE  
Around that. Yeah, I guess.

The two drink in silence for a moment.

BRENDON  
I need something from you.

KYLE  
Yeah?

BRENDON  
You owe it to me.

KYLE  
Okay.

BRENDON  
Take me fucking seriously, dude.

KYLE  
I do, I do, man.

Kyle is bracing himself, defensive. Brendon has wild eyes.

BRENDON  
You fucked me over, Kyle. Left me in the dirt to claim all this fame and I got nothing.

KYLE

You're a drunk, Brendon. It wasn't even my call. I couldn't have hired you.

BRENDON

You can hire me now.

KYLE

Brendon...

BRENDON

I want half of the company.

KYLE

You're drunk.

BRENDON

So? Your dad is about to die. You're going to accept your role as the new owner, and I want 50%.

KYLE

No chance.

BRENDON

You don't give me half, I tell the world what you did 17 years ago.

KYLE

You're kidding. Brendon you're insane! It's my fate to own the company. it won't work. You know I can't do that.

BRENDON

And I know you can't let that secret out. It'll ruin the company. It'll ruin you.

KYLE

You're just paparazzi. Nobody will believe a drunken asshole.

BRENDON

Well, we'll see about that.

KYLE

I guess we will...

Kyle stares at Brendon in shock as Brendon chugs his drink and reaches for Kyle's. Kyle presses away from the bar. He leaves.

CUT TO:

49 INT. JAMES' BEDROOM - DAY

49

James is at his computer and Amanda sits on the floor with her back against his bed. Her head leans back.

AMANDA  
President.

JAMES  
100,000.

AMANDA  
Pop singer.

JAMES  
15.

AMANDA  
Terrorist leader.

JAMES  
Okay really?

James turns to meet Amanda's eye. She is very serious.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
380.

AMANDA  
What the fuck.

JAMES  
Keep guessing.

AMANDA  
Professional clown.

JAMES  
\$400 flat. You gotta get more creative.

AMANDA  
Nothing on file is coming close to my price.

JAMES  
Think. What about a major CEO?

AMANDA  
Owner of Buying Fate.

JAMES

Oh, great one. Only one of those on file and he was... \$250 grand.

AMANDA

More than the president?

JAMES

More than the president.

AMANDA

What the hell could I be destined to do if I'm twice the price of the owner of the company.

JAMES

Maybe you'll finalize the inhabitation of another planet.

AMANDA

Hm... I mean--

A car horn is blaring from outside. Amanda crawls to the window to see Taylor's car in front of her house.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Oh, fuck. Uh...

James swivels over to see her outside.

JAMES

Why do you still talk to her?

Amanda pulls him out of the view of the window as Taylor looks around. He smiles, enjoying the fact that she has grabbed his arm.

AMANDA

That's really a conversation for another time.

JAMES

Oh is it? I think I'll go say hi.

James darts out of the room. Amanda jumps up and catches a glimpse of her room in the process. Her mom is in it, shuffling papers. She's frozen for a moment, concerned and a little angry, and then hears James open and close his front door. She runs out of the room.

CUT TO:

50

EXT. JAMES' HOUSE - DAY

50

James walks across his yard towards Taylor who is out of her car and curving around it for Amanda's house. She sees James and attempts to ignore him.

JAMES

Hey!

Amanda turns to him.

TAYLOR

Yes. Hi.

JAMES

Amanda's not home.

TAYLOR

Oh. Well. That's weird. Will she be back?

JAMES

Probably not soon.

Amanda emerges from James house and jogs to his side.

AMANDA

Hi, sorry. I forgot we had a lunch date.

TAYLOR

It's... only tradition.

AMANDA

Yeah it slipped my mind, I'm sorry. Reschedule?

James is grinning. Taylor ignores him and pulls Amanda away.

TAYLOR

What about your envelope? I have to get the deets. We've been waiting so long to know.

AMANDA

Oh I don't know my fate yet.

TAYLOR

What? Girl! You are insane.

AMANDA

Seems like it.

TAYLOR

Please keep me updated. Like the second you open it come to me.

(leans in)

I don't want *that* weirdness to rub off on you.

Taylor motions to James who is playing with a blade of grass.

AMANDA

I'll let you know how everything goes.

TAYLOR

Okay good. Also, I have a present for you... his name is Ryan and he's super cute and wants to meet you.

Amanda laughs. James shoots Taylor a look.

AMANDA

Maybe this weekend.

The front door of Amanda's house opens and Mr. and Mrs. Stevens emerge in a rush.

MRS. STEVENS

It's definitely in there.

MR. STEVENS

I'll check the back.

They spot the kids, but don't slow in their approach to their car.

MRS. STEVENS

(while bent over in the car)

Taylor, dear, no school for you today either?

JAMES

National holiday, Mrs. S. Don't forget!

TAYLOR

Just a lunch break, I'd never skip.

Taylor gives an innocent smile while James is grinning and Amanda's brow is furrowed. Mr. and Mrs. Stevens continue to search the car.

Taylor turns back to the duo.



TAYLOR  
So... it looks like your busy right  
now?

JAMES  
Very, very busy.

TAYLOR  
Don't talk to me.

AMANDA  
Rain check?

Taylor hesitates, nods, and begins back to her vehicle. As  
Amanda and James turn back to his house Taylor shouts:

TAYLOR  
Ryan is gunna call tonight! A  
little holographic happy birthday  
wish. Make sure you're alone.

Taylor winks and slides into her car. James flicks her off  
as she drives off. Amanda is unaware of the gesture.

CUT TO:

51 INT. JAMES LIVING ROOM - DAY

51

James and Amanda are walking through his living room to go  
upstairs. The TV is on, left on from earlier that day.

JAMES  
Does it bug you that your parents  
work together?

AMANDA  
No, why would it?

JAMES  
I don't know, it's almost too  
precious.

AMANDA  
Yeah they're perfect.

The TV makes a loud repetitive noise which catches James'  
and Amanda's attention. They stop in front of it.

CUT TO:

52

EXT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

52

A reporter stands in front of the camera with. The typical Buying Fate podiums stand a few yards behind him with nose reporters all around.

REPORTER

We are here with the employees of the Buying Fate company for an emergency broadcast. In just moments, Kyle Johnson Jr. will emerge with an explanation for this meeting.

Kyle, with Emily and Vincent on either side of him, emerges from large white doors of the building and shuffles to the table. Without sitting, he clears his throat.

KYLE

Thank you all for tuning in for his last minute broadcast.

(pause)

I am very upset... very saddened to announce... the passing of my father, Kyle Johnson Sr.

The crowd falls silent.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Although I know he wishes he could be here to live eternally beside his company, he is extremely proud of the support he has received for this child of his. For the community that took Buying Fate under its wing and raised it as their own without a doubt in anybody's mind that it would be something great.

Kyle is speaking slow. Emily and Vincent remain on either side. Both are expressionless. Emily looks like an angel.

KYLE (CONT'D)

My father has left many plans for the future, including new idea proposals for the cure of the "Chosen Virus". He is confident the terror will end soon. At this time, I am cordially accepting my fate as the new owner of my father's company. While I understand this was to take place tomorrow, life

KYLE (CONT'D)  
 has called and without further ado  
 I am honored to be the new owner of  
 Buying Fate. Let tomorrow be a day  
 of celebration for my father's  
 life. Thank you.

The crowd erupts. Kyle spots Brendon in the crowd,  
 slithering away.

CUT TO:

53 INT. JAMES' LIVING ROOM - DAY

53

James and Amanda are shocked, staring at the screen.

JAMES  
 Wow.

AMANDA  
 James.

JAMES  
 Huh.

AMANDA  
 I need to break something.

JAMES  
 What, no, why?

AMANDA  
 I don't know.

Amanda begins toward the TV and James wraps his arms around  
 her pulling her away.

JAMES  
 No, no. No need for this.

AMANDA  
 (struggling)  
 Stop it!

JAMES  
 Amanda you can't.

He's pulling her as she struggles. He gets her out the back  
 door to his backyard and she collapses.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
 Look at me, you're fine.

He's sitting on her stomach. Holding her down. She wrestling with his grip, in a trance. Her eyes are wild. He grabs her hands and holds them to the ground.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Breathe!

Amanda squeezes his hands until his left hand pops. James screams and Amanda releases the grip, relaxing. She pops up on her forearms and James rolls off of her.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Holy fucking shit!

His thumb hangs limply away from his hand.

AMANDA

Oh my god. I'm so sorry. James.

JAMES

No, its fine. I just -- oh my god it hurts like a bitch.

AMANDA

It's dislocated, let me help.

JAMES

It's broken. 100% snapped in half. I can get surgery. My dad knows someone--

Amanda grabs his arm before he can move and pops the thumb back into place. James screams again.

JAMES(CONT.)

You fucking asshole!

AMANDA

Look! It's fine, it'll just bruise. It used to happen to me all the time as a kid.

James looks over his hand. Some swelling has begun. He meets Amanda's eyes, his brow furrowed.

JAMES

You would do this to yourself.

Amanda shrugs.

AMANDA

I would *try* to control myself.

The slick sound of an engine starting is heard. Amanda jumps up and runs to the fence to look out at her driveway. Her parents are sliding into a vehicle together again.

AMANDA (CONT'D)  
Give me your keys.

JAMES  
(watching his hand)  
You think it'll swell more than this?

AMANDA  
James, keys.

JAMES  
(realizing the request)  
You're kidding. You may actually be mentally handicapped.

AMANDA  
Fuck off.

CUT TO:

54 EXT. AMANDA/JAMES HOUSES - DAY

54

As the car pulls out of the driveway, Amanda leaps over the fence into James' driveway. She runs to a second vehicle in her driveway. James follows quite a few yards behind.

JAMES  
Amanda wait!

Amanda is already at the car, she pulls the door open and slides inside. James freezes.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
No way she can start it...

The vehicle roars to life.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Holy shit she started it.

The car flies down the driveway. James stumbles to his bulky truck and follows her.

55

INT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

55

Kyle, Vincent, and Emily are seated at a round table. They are in conversation has as a holographic image of Cameron at his desk appears.

CAMERON

Am I interrupting anything?

KYLE

Perfect timing actually, Cam.

CAMERON

Hey I'm sorry about your loss... it was too soon--

KYLE

It's time for business. Small talk later. You see the parents?

CAMERON

Yes.

KYLE

And the fate?

CAMERON

They forgot the envelope but are bringing it back. Amanda doesn't know she doesn't have one yet.

VINCENT

Perfect.

CAMERON

But one other thing...

KYLE

Shoot.

CAMERON

They mentioned violence.

EMILY

What do you mean by that?

CAMERON

They said it was normal adolescent shit but in a kid like this everything is done for a reason. She's violent.

KYLE  
They give details?

CAMERON  
They just said she doesn't have  
control of her hands.

VINCENT  
That can mean a lot of things.

CAMERON  
Yeah. I'll get you more info when I  
can.

KYLE  
Thanks, man.

CAMERON  
You got it, boss.

His hologram fades away. The trio share a look, all puzzled.

A man in a white coat enters the room.

WHITE COAT  
Sir. There has been a request sent  
in for your presence.

He holds a note in his gloved hand. He walks it to Kyle and  
exits the room.

KYLE  
A mail request? What, is this the  
1800s?

EMILY  
Who's it from?

KYLE  
One Elliot Rodney.

VINCENT  
The Rodney show?

KYLE  
(smiling)  
Rodney was a good friend of dad's.  
The card must be an inside joke.

Emily is reading over Kyle's shoulder.

EMILY

It's a request to be on his show tonight.

KYLE

I think I'm going to do it. May be a good way to regain some trust from the public, show I care and all that. Rodney doesn't take life too seriously, I think it'll be good.

EMILY

I agree, babe.

VINCENT

See if I can get a backstage pass, I love that show.

KYLE

I'll see what I can do. Anybody have the private cell?

Emily pulls a phone out of her pocket, the same one Brendon called on. The three are smiling for the first time in a while.

CUT TO:

56 EXT. ROADS - DAY

56

Amanda is speeding in and out of cars. Up ahead her parents have pulled into the police station parking lot. James slams to a stop a few cars back, unable to push through the traffic. Amanda flies through an intersection, over a curb, across grass, and into a hedge which her car flips over. It lands upside down in the police station parking lot. She rolls out the door to the cement, blood dripping from her forehead. James sees the incident and rolls his truck to a curb, getting out and running through the traffic.

CUT TO:

57 EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

57

Mr. and Mrs. Stevens run to Amanda, holding her up. Cameron emerges from the station slowly. James is sprinting toward the scene.

MR. STEVENS

Amanda what the hell were you thinking?



MRS. STEVENS

How did you even get past the security features of the car?!

AMANDA

(dizzy)

It was too easy.

MR. STEVENS

What were you trying to do?

AMANDA

Follow you.

MRS. STEVENS

You have ways to reach us, dear.

AMANDA

I wasn't trying to reach you.

JAMES

(entering the scene)

Are you fucking psychotic? You cannot drive!

CAMERON

Nope, she can't.

All four look up at Cameron. An officer has followed him out of the building with handcuffs.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

After she gets checked out for any damage caused to herself, she'll be brought in for questioning. Driving without a license is illegal, Ms. Amanda. And so is hi-jacking a car.

Amanda stands obediently as the officer begins to cuff her.

MRS. STEVENS

We gave her permission, please.

CAMERON

Mrs. Stevens, lying to an officer will only make it worse. I just need to ask her a few questions.

JAMES

It was my idea. I hacked into the car. You have to take me too officer.

CAMERON

What did I just say about lying?

AMANDA

Shut up. I'll be fine.

James, on instinct, lunges forward and punches Cameron in the face. Cameron spins James to the ground, holding his head on the concrete.

CAMERON

You're thinking with your ass you know that?

JAMES

(muffled into the ground)

Worth it.

Mr. and Mrs. Stevens are stunned.

Amanda watches her parents' faces, confused. The officer begins to pull her away.

AMANDA

Why aren't you at work?

MRS. STEVENS

We needed to get something done first.

AMANDA

With my envelope?

Her parents look her in eyes, defeated. Cameron has James to his feet and is pushing the other officer forward.

CAMERON

Let's go. Move! You two do not leave.

AMANDA

(yelling over her shoulder)

Why don't I have a fate? Where did the money come from? Who the hell am I?

Amanda is yanking hard at the officer. It is clear he is having difficulty controlling her.

MR. STEVENS

We're sorry, Amanda.

The four walk into the station while Mr. and Mrs. Stevens watch in silence.

CUT TO:

58 INT. BUYING FATE RECORD ROOM - DAY

58

Vincent and Kyle are sitting in a dark room watching physical copies of records from the night Amanda was created. Kyle keeps rewinding, and re-watching the three men stumble around the room and him approach the scanner and create his daughter. Nothing concrete can be seen from the evidence.

KYLE

Violence. Violence. Violence...

Vincent has lost attention in the screen. He is playing with the bottom of his suit pants, bored.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Why did I give her violence?

VINCENT

Self-defense?

KYLE

Hmm... No... That's part of intelligence.

VINCENT

Maybe her fate is to be a professional ninja or some shit.

KYLE

Half a million to be a fucking wannabee superhero?

VINCENT

What about an actual superhero?

KYLE

Nah... I wouldn't think like that.

VINCENT

Just be a 21-year-old for a second. You never wanted to be a superhero?

KYLE

Maybe at age 4... 21...

Kyle is still rewinding and re-watching the tape, moving subconsciously with his body on screen.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Ha, at 21 I just wanted sex. Emily was my life. I wanted her and only her.

VINCENT

Oh, yeah.

Vincent is daydreaming and smiling, shaking his head.

KYLE

She was a babe, huh?

VINCENT

Still is. Man, everybody wanted her.

KYLE

And I got her. And all I wanted was to run away with her. Keep her all to myself. Start a family. Be happy.

Both men are looking at the screen but are entranced in memories.

VINCENT

You guys aren't happy?

KYLE

Sure we are.

VINCENT

When's the last time you took her out? Made her smile even?

KYLE

Anniversary.

VINCENT

Yeah right. Which one?

KYLE

3... 4 years ago maybe. Dude what has happened to us.

VINCENT

Work, life, fate.

KYLE

(scoffs)

Fate. Fuck fate, dude. Fuck all of this. I should have just run off

KYLE  
with her. But no, my damn  
programming wouldn't have let it  
happen. This damn company would  
have held me back. My fucking fate.

VINCENT  
Yeah.

The men watch younger Kyle at the screen, creating Amanda.

VINCENT(CONT'D)  
Yo... Kyle. You don't think...

KYLE  
Huh?

VINCENT  
You don't think you wanted your kid  
to fix it do you.

KYLE  
Fix what? My relationship?

VINCENT  
Your situation.

KYLE  
What do you mean?

VINCENT  
You're saying all you wanted most  
in the world at that time was to  
run away, get away from the  
company, from your fate. What if  
your kid--

KYLE  
What if I wanted her to end it all?

VINCENT  
The violence.

KYLE  
The violence.

VINCENT  
Holy shit.

KYLE  
Think, oh my god, think. How could  
I have done that? What does it mean  
to program her to end the Buying  
Fate company.

VINCENT  
Get rid of the one in charge.

They stare at each other.

KYLE  
Get rid of me...

CUT TO:

59 INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

59

Cameron is sitting at his desk, frazzled. He's looking at his watch, which has holographic music symbols jumping out of it as it rings.

CAMERON  
C'mon, c'mon.

The ringing stops, Kyle's face appears in the air.

KYLE  
Update?

CAMERON  
I have her in custody.

KYLE  
Good, keep her there.

CAMERON  
What? No, wait. She knows she has no fate. But that's all she knows. She stole and crashed a car--

KYLE  
Cameron, do not let her go.

CAMERON  
I can keep her overnight but that's it. If her parents want her out, she's out.

KYLE  
Convince them to keep her there.

CAMERON  
Won't that just cause more questions?

KYLE  
Then put her on fucking house arrest, I don't care. Make up some

KYLE  
bullshit about safety. We have no  
idea what this kid is capable of.  
I'm on Rodney's show in an hour.

CAMERON  
I'll see what I can do. Wait,  
Elliot Rodney? You're on tonight?!

KYLE  
Tune in.

CAMERON  
Will do.

Kyle's face disappears.

CAMERON (CONT'D)  
Boss. Boss? Shit. House arrest?  
Fuck.

Cameron pushes up from his desk cussing under his breath as  
he leaves his office.

CUT TO:

60 INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

60

Amanda is sitting on the floor of a cell against a wall,  
staring at the ground. James is seated on a bench in the  
same cell, leaned forward like when we first saw him at the  
college. A TV hums down the hall. The intro to "Rodney's  
Show" is heard. James is mouthing along to the words while  
staring off into space.

AMANDA  
You're an idiot.

James looks up at Amanda.

JAMES  
I prefer hero. I wasn't going to  
let you rot in here alone.

AMANDA  
I won't rot in prison. This was my  
fourth crash. My parents will bail  
me out like usual and then I can  
promise you honestly I cannot help  
your dumb ass at that point.

JAMES

At least admit you enjoy my acquaintanceship for these few hours.

Amanda smiles at James at a moment.

AMANDA

Yes, thanks for your acquaintanceship.

JAMES

Ah, there you go.

James looks at the metal bars creating the walls of the cell.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Can't you just break out of these?

AMANDA

Easily.

JAMES

But that'll get you in more trouble?

AMANDA

Probably.

JAMES

Welp, might as well get some shut eye if we're gonna be here all night.

James leans back on the bench, covering his eyes with his sleeve.

CUT TO:

61 INT.RODNEY SHOW - DAY

61

The Rodney Show set up looks like a TV talk show of the early 2000s. There is a chair for the host and a couch for the visitor with a small table between them with coffee mugs. There is a live audience, which is surprising to see in this day and age. Along with that, hundreds of cameras fill the room, sending out live feed to monitors all over the world. Rodney and Kyle are both seated, laughing. A jingle is heard and Rodney looks back to the audience. He has a bald head, covered in a cowboy hat, and fat calves that hang over his boots. He has a southern accent.



RODNEY

Welcome back folks! If you are just tuning in we are here celebrating Kyle Johnson Jr. and the success of his newly inherited company Buying Fate. Junior has shared some fun stories, given us the inside scoop on things to come, and I've given him a look into his father's younger years.

Rodney winks and there is a roar of laughter from the audience.

RODNEY

(laughing too)

And now it's time for our special guest segment of the show. You looking forward to this Kyle?

KYLE

Of course, I've been watching this show for years and this is always a favorite.

RODNEY

Well great! Now our special guest is a blast from the past. A good old friend of Kyle's who has been on our butts to get him out here with us today.

Kyle is smiling, lost in the moment.

RODNEY (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen, without further ado please welcome Brendon Kirkpatrick!

Rodney stands and claps as the audience does too. Kyle is frozen in his seat. His face has fallen. He is pale. Brendon appears from off stage. He is well dressed and much cleaner than he was in the bar scene. He straightens his tie and waves at the audience as he walks, grinning. He shakes hands with Rodney and takes a seat next to Kyle, who stares at him. Rodney shares the gaze, and pats Kyle on the leg laughing.

BRENDON

(whispering to Kyle)

You look like you've seen a ghost, kid.

KYLE  
(whispering to Brendon)  
I swear to God I will make you one.

BRENDON  
(whispering to Kyle)  
Now is that anyway to speak to the man who holds your future in his hands?

Brendon turns attention to Rodney. Rodney is explaining the relationship to the audience.

RODNEY  
These two grew up in the outskirts of Houston and moved out west with Dr. Johnson when the company really took off in 2070, right before the 3rd generation of customized children were created. They watched as the headquarters that we all know so well today sprouted from nothing...

Rodney goes on while Kyle and Rodney whisper.

KYLE  
I will give you anything. Money. Land. Mistresses. The company. Take anything.

BRENDON  
Hmmm... nope, too late.

RODNEY  
Now, Brendon. Tell us how growing up with the young KJ Junior was, huh?

BRENDON  
Oh Rodney, my man, I am so glad you asked. Kyle and I were inseparable. I was what? 3 years older in school? But hey with a customized intelligence like yours you were still 3 years ahead of me with the ladies am I right?

The audience laughs, Kyle gives a nervous chuckle.

BRENDON (CONT'D)  
There are so many memories of us, it was hard to choose just one for this segment.

KYLE

Can we take a break? I need a break.

RODNEY

Five minutes, Junior. You can surely hold it in til then.

The audience laughs again. Kyle, who was leaned forward on the couch ready to stand, scoots back.

BRENDON

I chose a memory that I can confidently say has changed the path of my life and affected a friendship forever. It's one of those adolescent things that slaps you in the face one day and says "you! Idiot! It's time to be a man!" and you listen and you grow up. Kyle knows exactly what I'm talking about now, you can see it in his face! This was what? 17 years ago? 18?

KYLE

Yeah...

BRENDON

Kyle was the ripe age of 21. I was 24. He had met the woman of his dreams, Miss Emily, and they were married and happier than ever.

The audience "awes". Kyle gives a half smile.

BRENDON (CONT'D)

But, now, when life is this perfect who are we to go without adversity? You remember what happened next Kyle?

KYLE

Nothing happened next, Brendon.

BRENDON

Well sure it did!

KYLE

I'm telling you it didn't. Please, stop now.

RODNEY  
What is this about boys?

BRENDON  
Kyle created a child.

The audience gasps, some laugh. Rodney laughs.

RODNEY  
That's just insane.

BRENDON  
Is it?

RODNEY  
Kyle?

KYLE  
Yes it's insane. Brendon is lying.

BRENDON  
Stop, Kyle. You made your child  
when you were drunk off your ass  
and gave her away to save yourself  
because you had no idea what you  
programmed her to do.

KYLE  
He's lying!

RODNEY  
What is going on?

BRENDON  
The video. I brought a video.

A screen behind the chairs begins to play a video taken by Brendon on whatever phone he had at the time. It shows Kyle drunk, stumbling, with Vincent by his side. Some of the dialogue from the first scene is heard. Kyle enters the room and heads to the back wall to create a child.

The audience roars - angry.

RODNEY  
(losing his southern accent)  
Cut. Cut now! Cut the damn cameras  
now!

Kyle stands and runs off stage into a group of white suits. They huddle around him, pushing him out of the building. Rodney is running around as producers storm the stage and guards keep the audience calm. Brendon remains still, watching the screen with a grin on his face.

CUT TO:

62 INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

62

James is rolling on the bench. He sits up. He eyes Amanda who has curled into a ball and fallen asleep. James stands and paces the cell. He hears the TV and leans his head on the bars, watching in a bored daze. A woman news reporter is speaking, the news title "RODNEY SHOW UPROAR" flashing below her face.

REPORTER

Just moments ago, footage was released confirming a rumor stated on the Rodney Show. Johnson family friend, Brendon Kirkpatrick, leaked details on the fact that Kyle Johnson Junior, husband to Emily Johnson and father to none, does in fact have a child.

The footage from Brendon's phone plays on the screen.

James is more intrigued now. Brendon's face crosses the screen outside of the Rodney Show building.

BRENDON

A daughter. I'm pretty sure. He always wanted one.

Mumbles can be heard around him as reporters ask questions. Brendon is being thrown side to side, the camera is shaky. Police officers emerge and grab either of Brendon's arms.

BRENDON (CONT'D)

He was too drunk to remember her fate. You can figure everything out with math. Everything but a fate!

He is swept away and the female reporter returns to the screen. James looks down.

JAMES

Everything but a fate?

He turns to look at Amanda asleep.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Everything but a fucking fate!

He falls to his knees next to Amanda and shakes her awake.

JAMES (CONT'D)

You have to see this. Come here.  
Come. Come. It's so crazy it must  
be true.

AMANDA

You're crazy. Quit pulling!

He pulls her to her feet and she follows him to the cell bars. They both watch the news. James' eyes are bright and Amanda is clearly confused. As they watch, recognition hits Amanda's eyes.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

I'm a Johnson?

END OF ACT 2

CUT TO:

BEGINNING OF ACT 3

63 EXT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT 63

Mobs of people are surrounding the Buying Fate headquarters. The usual crowd has duplicated in size many times over. People are banging on the glass, which lets off a little teal spark each time it is touched. A helicopter overhead enters the glass bubble from a small opening on top that quickly closes again after the helicopter enters. It lands on helicopter pad and KJ Junior steps out with Emily and Vincent, he notices the people and it looks like the glass bubble itself is shaking.

CUT TO:

64 INT. JAIL - MORNING 64

Amanda and James are sitting with their backs against the cement wall of the cell. Natural light pours down the hallway from the rising sun.

JAMES

But if you tell them you know they  
could do something drastic.

AMANDA

The chance of my parents doing  
anything drastic is close to none.  
I think they'll be truthful,  
honestly.

JAMES

What have they always said about your fate?

AMANDA

That I'll know it on my 17th birthday.

JAMES

And what do you not know?

AMANDA

My fate.

JAMES

Yeah and what have they done to make up for that?

AMANDA

I dunno, they said sorry.

JAMES

And honestly they aren't even your parents. They can't be. You said that for yourself.

AMANDA

Fuck this is fucked up.

JAMES

You can't win the game if you never play along.

Amanda looks at James. She is torn. A door opens down the hall. Cameron walks in front of the cell with Mr. and Mrs. Stevens. Amanda stands.

AMANDA

Guys, I'm sorry. It won't happen again. You can believe me.

MRS. STEVENS

We know dear, we know. We do.

MR. STEVENS

You're free to leave with us.

AMANDA

Thank you. Oh my gosh, thank you.

CAMERON

Under one condition.

AMANDA

What is it?

CAMERON

House arrest.

AMANDA

What? Why?

MR. STEVENS

Just for now. Just to make sure you're okay and something didn't trigger the outburst.

MRS. STEVENS

Remember like we used to do?

AMANDA

The groundings? Mom I made a mistake, I didn't kill anything.

MRS. STEVENS

Dear, we know. It's just a precaution.

Cameron pushes open the jail cell door and Amanda walks out, hugging her parents. James walks up to Cameron as the family embraces.

JAMES

She puts on a good show, huh Cam?

CAMERON

What the hell is that supposed to mean?

JAMES

Don't worry about it.

CAMERON

Next time I'll keep you in here for life.

JAMES

Look forward to seeing your beautiful face every day! If only that could happen sooner.

James winks at Cameron who pushes him aside. Cameron bends down and attaches a metal device to Amanda's ankle. He stands up and meets her eye.



CAMERON

You do anything dumb. This thing catches it. You take one foot outside this thing tells me immediately.

JAMES

What about walking her dog? She can't do that. What if it runs away?

Amanda grins at James. Mr. Stevens puts an arm around James and covers his mouth.

MR. STEVENS

Please excuse our adopted son. He left his filter at home.

Cameron stares as the four walk off frame. He shakes his head and speaks into his watch.

CAMERON

(into wrist)

Send Kyle a message. Say house arrest is in motion and the parents have strict orders to remove all access to TV. This will blow over soon, boss.

CUT TO:

65 INT. STEVENS' HOUSEHOLD - DAY

65

Amanda is sitting at her kitchen table. The forever puppy is sniffing at her tracking device. She swings her leg, playing with the dog. Her parents are in the kitchen packing food into bags.

MRS. STEVENS

We'll be home closer to 7:15 tonight.

AMANDA

You do know I can refigure the TV right?

MR. STEVENS

Of course we know that.

AMANDA

Then why cut the signal to begin with?

MRS. STEVENS  
 Because we raised a daughter to  
 have integrity.

Both parents look at Amanda who shrugs. She knows that  
 statement is true. Mrs. Stevens pauses in front of her  
 daughter.

MRS. STEVENS (CONT'D)  
 You sure you'll be okay?

AMANDA  
 Yes.

MRS. STEVENS  
 You believe me when I say we're  
 going to figure all of this out?

AMANDA  
 Yes.

MRS. STEVENS  
 Do you have a fate, you know.

AMANDA  
 Yes, mom. I know.

Mrs. Stevens searches Amanda's eyes and then stands.

Amanda's parents leave the front door. Amanda plays with the  
 dog for a few more moments and then jogs upstairs. She opens  
 her window and takes the marble she caught from James' on  
 her birthday and throws it at his window. It cracks. James  
 pulls back his shades. Amanda mouths sorry, then motions for  
 him to come over.

CUT TO:

66 INT. STEVENS' HOUSEHOLD - MORNING

66

Amanda lets James in the front door.

JAMES  
 What's the chance you can pay for  
 that?

AMANDA  
 Maybe my real parents will cough  
 over some cash.

JAMES  
 Oh imagine the luxury.

AMANDA  
Alright I have a plan.

Amanda sits on the living room couch, folding her ankle onto her other leg.

JAMES  
Yo I don't know if that's a great idea.

AMANDA  
Who's the genius here?

JAMES  
Why do I even try.

Amanda fiddles with the device, examining it for a second. She puts her fingers carefully on it, and it comes apart. She looks around. James is in awe.

AMANDA  
Indy! Come!

The forever puppy sprints to the couch. Amanda clips the device back around its neck, it fits perfectly.

JAMES  
You're an evil genius.

AMANDA  
I know. Now let's go. It'll take some time to get to Texas.

JAMES  
Oh, shit. We're going?

AMANDA  
Yes. Why do you think I needed you? Do you have your keys?

JAMES  
And just when I thought you appreciated my friendship.

AMANDA  
I appreciate having a friend with a car, yes. Let's go.

Amanda hustles out of the house, James close behind. They get into his car. The forever puppy can be seen in the house window, ecstatic about its new collar.

CUT TO:

67 EXT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY 67

The media mob outside the headquarters bubble continues to grow.

CUT TO:

68 INT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY 68

Kyle is sitting with his face in his hands at the long table in the media room. Emily is on one side of him, rubbing his back, Vincent is standing behind his chair.

EMILY

You can do this. Nobody can touch you.

KYLE

I don't care about any of them. I killed my father's dream.

EMILY

Maybe not quite. People love drama. You're just adding a reality TV show to a major corporation.

VINCENT

Yeah, dude, maybe you'll get a TV show out of this. You'd like that more than running the company anyway.

Kyle cracks a grin at that. Then takes a breath. He nods at Emily who is led out by Vincent. It is time to face the public. The wall in front of him erupts to life with the outside world. The mob notices him, and strengthens its voice.

KYLE

Please, please. Let me speak.

The crowd continues to yell.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Can I at least give reason to my decision?

The crowd feels no sympathy.

KYLE (CONT'D)

It wouldn't have been fair...

The crowd is not stopping.

KYLE (CONT'D)

As the new fucking owner of this company I command you listen to me!

The crowd quiets.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Take some damn notes. It was a joint decision between my wife and I to put our child up for adoption. This is no atmosphere to raise a child. While I am sorry it has been kept a secret for this long, I am happy to address the matter now.

Kyle points to a man in the crowd for questioning.

CUT TO:

69 INT. JAMES' CAR - DAY

69

Amanda flicks off a small holographic TV set in James' car. She had been watching Kyle's announcement. James glances from the road to Amanda, trying to read her face.

JAMES

You know it's okay to be upset.

AMANDA

I'm not.

JAMES

How?

AMANDA

Not programmed to be.

JAMES

Right... So... you feel nothing weird about your parents not really being your parents? Or about the fact that you are genetically attached to this multi-billion dollar company? Or that the world may someday know who you are? Or that you have no fate?

AMANDA

James.

JAMES

Yeah?

AMANDA  
Wanna help me snap a tree in half?

JAMES  
Absolutely not.

AMANDA  
Okay then.

CUT TO:

70 EXT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY 70

James pulls his truck to a stop several hundred yards from the Buying Fate headquarters. He and Amanda observe the massive mob.

JAMES  
What now, boss?

AMANDA  
We get inside.

JAMES  
How?

Amanda has already started moving away from the truck. James quickly jogs out and jogs after her.

CUT TO:

71 EXT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY 71

Amanda is pushing through the crowd with ease, James pushes after her. They eventually make it to a TV screen at the front of the mob. The glass bubble has several screens playing the same live feed of Kyle. They watch. Amanda searches for an entrance.

CUT TO:

72 INT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY 72

Emily is in the hallway with Vincent watching the live coverage of Kyle and the live mob outside. Dozens of screens fill the wall in the hallway. A particular one grabs Emily's attention. She moves towards it. She spots a girl in the crowd--a beautiful girl, the perfect girl... It is Amanda. Emily gasps and looks at Vincent to see if he's paying attention to her. He's not. She quickly runs down the hall.

CUT TO:

73

EXT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

73

Amanda and James are wandering the edge of the bubble in an area where less reporters are. The live feed screens are on the opposite side.

JAMES

We could scale it?

AMANDA

We could. May be too obvious though.

JAMES

Wait till night fall?

AMANDA

I can't wait that long.

JAMES

You've waited 17 years. What's one more night?

AMANDA

It's nothing... but I don't feel well. Something is very off.

JAMES

Sick?

He moves toward her and she steps back.

AMANDA

I wouldn't come that close...

A small car is speeding towards the duo. James and Amanda turn and stare at the car.

JAMES

Do we run?

AMANDA

I don't think so.

The car spins so the side faces the kids. Emily, in the front seat, motions for them to get in. They follow orders. The car speeds back toward the bubble, dipping into an underground entrance seconds before smashing into the glass.

CUT TO:

74

INT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS GARAGE - DAY

74

Emily slams the car to a stop in a garage with many of the same cars. She pulls Amanda by the arm down several hallways and into a dark room. James follows. Emily slams the door and stands in front of it.

EMILY

Are you suicidal, child!

AMANDA

No?

EMILY

Kyle knows who you are. Everybody in this building knows who you are.

JAMES

How did you find her then?

EMILY

Maternal instincts. I was programmed to be a mom and well, I can't not be good at it.

AMANDA

So it's true.

EMILY

Yes, Amanda. I am your mother.

There are tears forming in Emily's eyes. James looks more shocked than Amanda is.

JAMES

I'd like to speak for everybody in this room by saying what you did was pretty fucked up.

EMILY

I can only tell you how much I fought to keep you. You can believe it or not.

AMANDA

I believe you.

JAMES

How do you believe that?

AMANDA

She can't lie.



Footsteps are heard down the hall. The room all silent for a moment. Emily pulls in towards the kids.

EMILY

It's not safe for you here. The life of Buying Fate is greater than anything else in the eyes of the people here. Why did you come here in the first place? To meet your parents?

AMANDA

Instinct.

Emily stares at Amanda for a moment. Her wrist watch begins to ring, small holographic music symbols bounce off of it.

EMILY

Shit. Um, don't move. You'll be safe here. Promise me.

JAMES

We won't.

Emily steps out of the room. Her footsteps fade. Amanda stands and reaches for the doorknob but James steps in front.

JAMES (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

AMANDA

Leaving. I can't be in here.

JAMES

Why not?

AMANDA

I just can't. Move, please.

JAMES

We just promised your mom person.

AMANDA

You promised her.

James stares Amanda in the eyes.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

James can you trust me?

JAMES

Yes.

AMANDA

Something is telling me I need to go. I can't explain it, but it's stronger than any urge I have ever had.

James continues to stare, searching her face. He eventually steps aside and pulls the door open.

JAMES

Okay. Lead the way.

Amanda grins, looks like she is about to hug James but then runs out the door. He follows, a little caught off guard by the almost hug.

CUT TO:

75 INT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

75

Kyle stands from the table and walks into the hallway where Vincent stampedes him.

VINCENT

Amanda escaped house arrest.

KYLE

What the hell? How? Why?

VINCENT

That's all Cameron said.

KYLE

What's her location?

VINCENT

No idea... she took off the tracking device. That's how we know she's gone...

KYLE

Shit.

Emily runs down the hall and grabs Kyle's arms.

EMILY

I need to talk to you.

Kyle's wrist watch begins to ring.

KYLE  
It's Cameron, I gotta take this.

EMILY  
Kyle, please.

KYLE  
Give me 2 minutes. I feel  
suffocated here.

Kyle walks past Emily and Vincent and out a door. He is outside, but still within the glass bubble.

CUT TO:

76 INT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

76

Amanda is back in the garage with the parked cars. She runs to the driver's door of one of them.

JAMES  
Oh no, no, no. You can't.

AMANDA  
James.

JAMES  
What?

AMANDA  
Trust!

JAMES  
At least let me drive.

AMANDA  
Absolutely not, now get in.

JAMES  
I'm actually listening to a  
lunatic.

James crawls into the backseat. Amanda reverses the car to the garage door which opens automatically.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Can you at least tell me where  
we're going?

AMANDA  
No clue.

JAMES

The reassurance is comforting.

A hundred yards in front of the car is Kyle, speaking into his watch, pacing. Amanda spots him. A fire is lit in her eyes. She speeds up.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Who is that?

Amanda continues to speed.

AMANDA

Dad.

JAMES

Oh, fuck.

James ducks for impact. Amanda nails Kyle full speed. He flies to the ground and the car topples several times before coming to a stop.

CUT TO:

77

EXT. BUYING FATE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

77

Emily runs out of the building. She sees Kyle and falls to his side. He is clearly dead. Amanda and James roll out of the vehicle. Blood covers Amanda's forehead and James lip and shirt are badly torn. Amanda turns back and sees Kyle lying motionless on the ground. James is now kneeling next to her. She looks at him. She dives forward into his arms. James is caught off guard. Amanda begins to sob on his shoulder.

JAMES

It's okay. You're okay.

AMANDA

I know. I'm done.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END!