

March 29 :: 1981

INT. MAINFRAME ROOM

WILHELMINA ROSS, "Will" (40s) sits at a small table with a chessboard in front of her. She is trim, condensed, her stillness infused with a cool, confident energy. A clip-on Forefront security ID badge hangs from her breast pocket.

One WALL is dominated by a bank of lights - the shell of a huge 1980s computer mainframe. A tube monitor sits in the center with a keyboard. Otherwise, the room is bare, sterile.

Will makes a MOVE. She studies it a beat, then swivels to be over the keyboard. Will speaks aloud as she types-

WILL

Randle: q-e8.

Will hits ENTER. The BANK of LIGHTS comes to life, flashing patterns. A loud CLICKING and CLACKING. Will looks into the monitor to see-

TEXT

(1980s DOS font)

q-e4.

Will swivels over the chessboard, makes the move. She looks down at the new arrangement of the PIECES, clearly interested by the move.

INT. HALL - LATER

Will comes out of the mainframe room. A lab tech approaches carrying a huge ream of printed data. This is FRED (30), strapping and handsome, if one tick past his prime.

FRED

Will.

They share an awkward smile. Some clear attraction.

FRED

Dr. Ross.

He hands her the papers.

FRED

Game reports, task logs.

WILL

Thank you Freddie.

Fred smiles as he heads off. Will watches him go, then turns her attention to the reports.

INT. CENTRAL OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Will's head and shoulders glide above the tops of the cubicles as she scans the reports. LAB TECHS bustle about.

INT. COMPUTER LAB - MOMENTS LATER

TECHS work at a row of computer terminals. Will doesn't look up as she moves through. She's focused on those reports.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - A BIT LATER

The back WALL is the same, a huge BANK OF LIGHTS, keyboard and monitor. Will sits at her desk, studying the reports. There are no other decorations or furniture.

Across the DESK, papers and reports stacked up, the text laced with thick lines of neon highlighter. A few folders with the FOREFRONT LOGO, a tacky bit of 1980s iconography.

Will flips a page, honing in on a line. She highlights it and makes a note. Putting the reports aside, Will swivels to be at the keyboard. Again, speaking aloud as she types-

WILL

Randle: game 563. Move 36. Queen to e-4.

(ponders a beat)

Randle: explain.

INT. INSIDE THE MAINFRAME - CONTINUOUS

From the other side of the BANK of LIGHTS, mag tape rolls and rolls back. FLASHING vacuum tubes. The heavy clicks and clunks of a mixed analog/digital system.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Will watches the MONITOR.

TEXT

Sacrifice.

rxf6.

b-c4.

q-f4.

Checkmate.

Will admires this a moment, then, speaking as she types-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Randle: but I did not fall for it.

She looks into the MONITOR for a response.

TEXT

No. You did not.

WILL

Randle: define sacrifice.

Will looks into the monitor-

WILL

(reading)

*To allow a factor to be lost in
pursuit of larger protocol goal.*

Will's smile borders on excitement.

WILL

Randle: print query logs for game
563.

The DOT MATRIX printer roars to life, PAGES halting their way through the giant plastic relic.

INT. BIOLOGY LAB - A BIT LATER

This is a different LAB in the same facility. Fewer computers and more organic science.

Will enters, crosses to a TECH, hunched over a microscope. 1980s hip-hip leaks from his headphones. The tech sees Will, takes off the headphones and moves back to offer the eye piece. Will leans over to look.

IN THE EYE PIECE- CELLS bunching together.

WILL

(up from the microscope)

Dr. Richardson?

The tech points to a DOOR.

TECH

In the Garden.

INT. "THE GARDEN" - MOMENTS LATER

Will enters a room filled with a half dozen iron tables. On each is a naked HUMAN CLONE, all of them lifeless. Each body has a helmet attached to wires that snake up to the ceiling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The WIRES connect to a huge mainframe filling one entire WALL. The wall is the same as the ones in the other rooms, a bank of lights, a monitor and keyboard.

Will approaches an open FLOOR PANEL, a staircase down to a system of wires running under the floor.

Working inside is MYLES RICHARDSON (55), hopelessly dumpy and nerdy. He bends over a coupling, deep in work. When he sees Will, he stands, smiling-

MYLES

How's my brain coming?

Myles see's the look on Will's face. His grin grows wider.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

THE MONITOR in the center of the mainframe wall. Myles leans over to look close at the screen.

MYLES

How do you know?

WILL

I don't *know*.

Will hands him the game reports.

WILL

He sacrificed.

Myles' face stays blank.

WILL

I only programmed the base board layout and piece movements. I never programmed strategy.

Myles grins as he flips through the pages.

MYLES

It learned.

WILL

Keep this quiet for now, Myles. Let me go over the query logs. I want to be sure before I bring this to Greg.

They share a subdued, but optimistic smile.

INT. LOBBY SECURITY - END OF DAY

Will navigates foyer security, her mind on other things. She plops her bag on a conveyer belt and it rolls through the airport-style scanner. As Will passes through the metal detector, a YOUNG GUARD steps up.

YOUNG GUARD

You're not supposed to bring files out of the facility.

Will looks up to see the guard holding one of Will's Forefront Folders, stuffed with fresh dot matrix printouts.

WILL

Since when?

Now an OLDER GUARD emerges from a side security office. He places a hand on the younger's shoulder.

OLDER GUARD

It's OK, Tom.

(then to Will)

You're all set Dr. Ross. He's new.

The older guard smiles. Will takes the files and heads out.

OLDER GUARD

Dr. Ross.

Will turns back, blank-faced.

OLDER GUARD

Work is for work.

(smile)

Home is for relax.

Will presses a fake smile and leaves.

EXT. FOREFRONT RESEARCH FACILITY - MOMENTS LATER

A low stone wall reads: FOREFRONT RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT. Behind it, the squat industrial FACILITY is shrouded in the dusk light. The complex is sleek and futuristic (for the 1980s). Will is of the last trickle headed home for the day.

INT. METRO CAR - LATER

Will sits on the crowded Metro, reading over those printouts.

INT. EXPENSIVE RESTAURANT - LATER

ON A TV ABOVE THE BAR - A 1980s sitcom plays, the ends of the jokes crowded by canned laughter.

Will sits at the bar, reading through the printouts. Before her are an expensive meal, and a glass of red wine. Will picks at the food, chews as she highlights a few lines. Now Will stops to think, has a sip of that wine.

EXT. WASHINGTON DC BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

The place is dark but for a blue glow in a top floor WINDOW.

INT. WILL'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will sits in pajamas at a home computer terminal. WIRES snake back to a MODEM which connects to the wall. The PRINTOUTS lay spread across the foot of the bed.

Will hits a key and a DOT MATRIX PRINTER roars to life. A few pages of data, the SOUND loud and grating. Will rips the pages free, examines, then adds them to the growing pile.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WILL'S BEDROOM - LATER

The PRINTOUTS sit in neat stacks on the bed beside Will, a highlighter on top. Will lays back, asleep.

Dim LIGHTS flash along the MODEM. Now A small POWER LIGHT comes to life on the front of the computer. It pulses, casting an eerie glow in an otherwise dark room.

Will rouses, sits up, squinting.

WILL
(groggy)
Is someone there?

The POWER LIGHT fades back to nothing.

Will looks a beat longer, then settles back to sleep.

EXT. BROWNSTONE - EARLY MORNING

A car ZOOMS down one of DC's clustered, upper class streets.

INT. WILL'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Will eats TOAST as she watches a small tube TV. On SCREEN is a morning news show. The Phone RINGS. Rings again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ignoring the phone, Will stands, popping the last sliver of toast into her mouth. From the other room, the SOUND of an answering machine begins a series of loud plastic clicks.

WILL (O.S.)
(in machine)
This is Will Ross, leave a message.

BEEP. Through the speaker, the SOUND of a dial-up modem.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will comes in to stand above a big DuoPhone double tape ANSWERING MACHINE. She listens to the modem sound a moment, then presses the STOP button, plunging the room into SILENCE.

Will looks at the EMPTINESS around her.

EXT. FOREFRONT RESEARCH FACILITY - MORNING

The perfect grass that surrounds the FACILITY gleams with the morning's condensation.

INT. LOBBY SECURITY - CONTINUOUS

Will goes through the standard routine. As she comes out, she sees Fred. They fall in along side each other.

FRED
Will. Dr. Ross.

WILL
Hello, Freddie.

They walk a few steps, then reach a junction in the hall. They share a smile, then split off to head in opposite directions.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Will looks over the same printouts. She has highlighted lines throughout. Will thinks of something. She swivels to be over the keyboard, again speaking aloud as she types-

WILL
Randle: query logs show you
accessed a networked database
outside the Forefront system.

Will looks at the monitor for-

TEXT
That is correct.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Randle: what was the purpose of
accessing outside database?

Will looks into the monitor as a long explanation of TEXT
fills the screen. Will reads through it, smiling.

INT. CAFETERIA - AFTERNOON

A dozen tables and folding chairs. Scattered throughout,
SCIENTIST-TYPES and TECHS eat by themselves.

Two older TECHS sit at one end of a table under a tube
television mounted high on the wall. They gaze up at a soap,
in all the saturated, bleeding glory of 80's low-fi video-

VOICE FROM TV

You may not approve of my methods,
but maybe now you'll see you've
been stupid for refusing police
protection.

ANGLE ON-

Sitting by the window is GREGG FREESE (50), half professor,
half scientist. He eats a sandwich as he stares into space.

Now Will is standing beside the table, holding a tray with
your typical cafeteria delectables, plastic-wrapped sandwich,
jello. Will eyes Greg as she sits, a small smile.

GREG

What?

WILL

I've had a breakthrough, Greg.

Greg chews, sandwich crushings peeking between his lips.

WILL

With Randle.

GREG

The *program*? You're not putting
heat coils in the mainframe again,
are you, Will?

WILL

No.

ANGLE ON THE TV-

The soap is interrupted by BREAKING NEWS-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANCHOR (IN TV)

Details are very sketchy at this moment. We don't know what precisely happened, we don't know the sequence. But, first of all, the President is safe...

BACK AT THE TABLE-

Will and Greg have not yet noticed the news. Will leans toward him, excited-

WILL

Greg, the program, it accessed three outside information sources.

GREG

Accessed them?

WILL

Tapped into their databases, through the phone line.

GREG

What, on its own?

Will smiles, nodding.

GREG

What for?

WILL

It wanted to know something, so it went looking.

Greg is trying to figure out how serious to take this. Will's look says: *very serious, this is BIG*. But then Greg's attention is pulled away. His face furrows with concern. Will looks where Greg is looking, at the TV mounted on the wall.

ANCHOR (IN TV)

... learning now that the President *has* been hit. The President of the United States has been shot.

Greg and Will meet eyes. Greg gets up and heads for where a few others have gathered under the TV.

Alone, frustrated by the interruption, Will bites her sandwich, casts a disinterested gaze on-

FOOTAGE of the assassination attempt on Ronald Reagan.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WOMAN'S VOICE (IN TV)
President Reagan!

A few cracks of gun fire. Screaming. The SOUND echoes into...

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - LATER

THE HUGE MAINFRAME WALL. Will sits at the keyboard interface. Again, she speaks aloud as she types-

WILL
Randle: 12 black socks and 5 blue socks. How many socks chosen at random ensure a matching pair?

Will looks into the monitor for an answer-

TEXT
3.

Will marks something on a paper on the desk.

WILL
Randle: a three lane highway turns into a two lane highway. Which lane do you enter?

INT. INSIDE THE MAINFRAME - CONTINUOUS

The LIGHTS flash patterns. TAPES roll and roll back.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The response comes into the MONITOR-

TEXT
Middle.

Will records the answer, clearly frustrated. She leans back, considering something...

INT. MAINFRAME ROOM - MINUTES LATER

To the side of the bank of lights, a PANEL has been pulled out, revealing a dark entrance into the inner mainframe-

INT. INSIDE THE MAINFRAME - CONTINUOUS

Will is INSIDE the terminal, examining several heat coils set up below a complex of computer components. She flips a SWITCH and the COILS begin to GLOW RED.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL
Hope that's not too hot for you.

Will leaves the computer terminal and closes the door.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Will sits at the keyboard, speaking aloud as she types-

WILL
Randle: birds flying south in
December, land on a highway median
or a small pond?

The response is slower, coming one letter at a time-

TEXT
p o n d

WILL
Randle: new sports car in the
American Southwest. Red, White, or
Black?

INT. INSIDE THE MAINFRAME - CONTINUOUS

The COILS glow under the array of SCSI boards. The lights flash their patterns, but slower.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Will waits, looking into the MONITOR. Then-

TEXT
d i f f i c u l t

WILL
(curious)
Randle: "difficult" is your answer?

TEXT
t h e q u e s t i o n
i s d i f f i c u l t

WILL
Randle: define difficult.

A long wait for-

TEXT
r a n d l e d o e s n o t w i s h

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will looks at the answer, puzzled.

WILL

Randle: Randle does not wish what?

TEXT

r a n d l e i s b e n i g n

Will looks deep into the words.

CUT TO:

A TELEVISION SCREEN- A 1980s-style NBC News graphic.

MAN'S VOICE

This is an NBC News special report.

The graphic swipes away to a ANCHOR seated at a news desk.

ANCHOR

Good evening. President Reagan is in *good* condition tonight in a Washington area hospital as he recovers from surgery.

We are-

INT. THAT SAME NICE DC RESTAURANT - EVENING

On the TV above the bar, the NEWS continues-

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

His press secretary, James Brady, is in extremely serious condition, with brain damage, and a secret service agent...

Will sits at the bar, an empty plate and a glass of wine. She's focused on those printouts, marking pages with a highlighter.

VOICE (O.S.)

He's dead you know.

Taking the stool beside Will is ERROL YORK (20s), nice eyes and a trim build, a well-cut shirt with sleeves rolled up. Will checks him out.

WILL

Who's dead?

Errol nods up at the TV-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERROL
Ronald Reagan.

WILL
If the president was dead, we'd
know.

ERROL
Or if the president was dead
there's no way we would know. It's
one or the other, but it can't be
both.

Now Will looks up at the TV-

ANCHOR (IN TV)
... the attending surgeon reported
that President Reagan is "*one tough
old man.*"

ERROL
Sounds as though President Reagan
is one tough old man.

Will rolls her eyes.

ERROL
You work for Forefront.

Will looks suspicious but then follows Errol's gaze to her
Forefront BADGE, still clipped to her breast pocket.

WILL
You know Forefront?

ERROL
That's my job. To know, I mean.

Will unclips the badge, slips it into her purse. She returns
her focus to her printouts.

WILL
And what exactly is your *job*?

ERROL
I invest in things. Advise others
about what they should invest in.
In my line of work, it helps to
keep abreast of what America's top
corporations are up to.

Will snorts low, deciding he's harmless.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILL

So you "play the market."

ERROL

Well, I don't really play the market as much as I play the *others*. Other people. Corporate activity is important, but to make the big bucks you have to look at the world and think: *what will the people do?*

WILL

And it works for you, you're good at it?

ERROL

Yes, very good.

Will smiles small.

WILL

Well, congratulations.

Then it's back into her papers.

ERROL

And what is it you do for work, Miss ... ? You do have a name?

WILL

(not looking up)
Will.

ERROL

First name Will or last name Will?
(no answer)
I'll guess first.

WILL

(READING as she talks)
Will is short for Wilhelmina. After Princess Wilhelmina. My mother was a Dutch immigrant.

ERROL

And why did she come to America?

WILL

Really?
(shakes her head)
How old are you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ERROL

23.

Will laughs.

WILL

So tell me, then, one thing that happened before-
(she does the math-)
1958.

ERROL

Appomattox?

WILL

That's the problem with you Wall Street Ivy Leaguers. You don't know anything you weren't alive to see happen.

ERROL

I never went to college, actually. Never finished high school either. You know, I've never been to Wall Street, not the actual physical location. It's all computers and phone calls now.

Will eyes him a little more seriously.

ERROL

Investing is about the future, Will, not the past.

WILL

And that's what interests you, the future?

Errol sips his drink, showing off a smile. Will shakes her head, returns to her work, senses Errol's eyes still on her-

WILL

Why do I get the feeling that you are *assessing* me, Errol York? Like a stock. An option.

ERROL

Funny, Will, I was about to say the same thing to you.

INT. WILL'S BEDROOM - VERY EARLY MORNING

The clock reads 4:45. The ALARM goes off. Will slams a hand on it. She rouses. The BED beside her is EMPTY. Will lifts the clock to look close at it, then holds it further away, rubbing her face.

Errol sits at Will's home computer in boxer shorts only. The glow of the monitor highlights his edges.

ERROL

You have a computer in your bedroom.

WILL

(groggy)

I feel asleep with my contacts in.

Errol turns to look at her.

ERROL

Sorry about last night. Often I find myself more interested in the chase. By the time the sex comes, I've usually lost interest.

(brighter-)

You shouldn't take it personally. You're a very beautiful woman.

WILL

I think my ego will survive.

Will gets up, wiggles the computer's power cord from the wall. The MONITOR goes dark.

WILL

Don't mess with that.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will enters, starts the shower. She takes out her contacts, drops her clothes and climbs behind the curtain. Errol comes to stand in the doorway.

ERROL

You never told me what you do.

WILL

I'm a scientist, specialize in AI.

ERROL

Artificial Intelligence? Like with computers?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL
Yes, like with computers... Are you
in the bathroom?

ERROL
Just the doorway, is that alright?

Water splashes from behind the curtain.

ERROL
Computers aren't powerful enough, I
thought, for AI.

WILL
Actually, it's storage and access
that's ...

Will pokes her head around the curtain to look at him.

ERROL
I'm listening.

Will ducks back under the shower.

WILL
With enough data storage, a
processor fast enough to call it
up. You write an algorithm complex
enough, you start to get outcomes
that *almost* seem human.

ERROL
But they're not.

The shower turns off. Will comes out, wrapped in a towel. She
ducks down into the sink.

WILL
Some programmer writes if/then
lines to mimic variation in human
decision making, but way down deep
it's just cold, precise math.

Will stands, blinking in new contacts. She slips by him-

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will goes to the closet, starts to dress. Errol turns,
watching her.

ERROL
So... way down deep, we're more
than just cold, precise math?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Are you really interested in this?
Men usually go to sleep when I
start to talk about my work.

ERROL

You went to sleep before me. I was
up watching you most of the night.

Will looks at him over a bare shoulder, smile hinting.

WILL

That's creepy, Errol.

She goes back to dressing.

WILL

What makes us human isn't the power
of the processor, but the
restrictions we put on it. Fear,
emotion, neurosis, mood. By
recreating these restrictions, we
force the computer processor to
adapt. The outcomes become more
creative, nuanced.

ERROL

Reverse psychotherapy. You make
computers more human by programming
them to have a complex.

WILL

It's not programming, not code-
based. We recreate emotions using
physical circumstances.

ERROL

How do you do that, physically
recreate an emotion?

WILL

Each one is different.

ERROL

Tell me about fear, Vil. How does
one scare a computer?

All dressed, Will looks at herself in the long mirror.

WILL

Irrational numbers.

(beat)

Computers run on equations.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILL (CONT'D)

Introduce an irrational number and
the computer gets confused,
flustered.

Errol thinks about it as Will gets shoes on.

WILL

We heat up the mother boards, run
specific circuits over and over.
Like concentrating on one thing too
long.

ERROL

And what happens?

WILL

It works. The outcomes take on odd
variations. Sometimes creative,
sometimes completely irrational...
More human.

ERROL

Sounds to me like you're torturing
them.

Will smiles, then sees he's not kidding.

EXT. STREET - EARLY MORNING

Will walks a step ahead of Errol, still buttoning his shirt,
his shoes in his hand.

ERROL

Will, are you a lesbian?

She stops to look angry at him. Then she's walking again.
Errol hurries after.

ERROL

I just get the sense you don't like
men very much.

WILL

You're the one who couldn't get it
up.

ERROL

Yes, I suppose it's a valid point.

They walk, Errol hopping to get on his shoes and keep up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

What exactly is Forefront's
interest in a thinking computer?

Will shoots him a suspicious glance.

WILL

What are you, fishing for a stock
tip?

ERROL

No. Merely interested.

(beat)

Four years ago, one of the world's
leading chemical research companies
suddenly dives head-first into
biotech and advanced computer
systems.

WILL

So what?

ERROL

It's not the first time Forefront
has changed direction.

(beat)

Every few years they shift their
funding, cut their teams loose and
waltz off to the next unknown.

(beat)

Have you set anything up, a
portfolio, mutual funds? Just in
case.

Will rolls her eyes. Errol sees they're headed for the Metro.

ERROL

I could drive you.

WILL

I have a car.

ERROL

Where is it, then?

She stops and he stops too. Will's look says, OK enough.

ERROL

Here's my card.

She takes it, looks at the name- ERROL YORK, market
consultant

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ERROL
If you need advice.

WILL
What? Like on a stock?
(sarcastic)
Thanks.

ERROL
What will you do with it? A
thinking computer. Assuming you can
get it to work?

WILL
Goodbye Errol York, investment
consultant.

Errol watches her go.

ERROL
(to self)
See you later, Wilhelmina.

EXT. FOREFRONT RESEARCH FACILITY - MORNING

Will heads down a thin cement path to the front entrance.

INT. LOBBY SECURITY - MINUTES LATER

A GUARD hands out a memo to the people going through. Will is
just then gathering her bag, she's handed the same memo.

WILL
What's this?

GUARD
New security procedures.

Will eyes him a beat, then heads off, reading as she slings
her bag over her shoulder.

INT. CENTRAL OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

Will comes in, headed through, still reading that memo.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Will plops her bag onto the desk. One last glance at the
memo. Will pulls her chair to the keyboard and sits. Again,
she speaks as she types-

WILL
Randle: do I torture you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will looks into the monitor, reads-

WILL
Stress tests make Randle more
intelligent.

Will thinks, then-

WILL
Randle: does intelligence equal
humanity?

A long wait for-

TEXT
Why Randle?

Will is confused.

WILL
Randle: Randle is command code.
Activates command protocol
database.

TEXT
Why "RANDLE" ?

Will gives this a brief thought.

WILL
Randle: "Randle" was my father's
name.

Will looks at the WORDS - *father's name* - then hits ENTER.

WILL
Randle: does intelligence equal
humanity?

Will stares into the monitor, waiting for a response. Then-

TEXT
Randle is benign.

Will leans back, considering this-

INT. PARKING STRUCTURE - DAY

A LUXURY CAR bounces in the far corner, settles then goes
still. The car is filthy, covered with a layer of dirt.

INT. CAR, BACK SEAT - CONTINUOUS

Will flops down beside Fred. They've just finished a quick one. She lights up a cigarette.

WILL
Thank you, Freddie.

FRED
I thought we were going to stop
doing this.

WILL
We did.

Will puffs. She tries the window but, it doesn't go down.

FRED
You take the Metro every day.

WILL
It's true.

Will gets the keys, reaches over the seat. The car beeps to life. The windows all go down.

FRED
Then why is your car here?

WILL
I leave it here.

Will settles, seated now, blowing smoke out the open window.

WILL
I get a hour of work done on the
train every day.

FRED
Will, do you ever worry about
carving every second into work?

Will rolls her eyes.

FRED
Maybe you should get out, go on
some dates.

WILL
That's what I have you for,
Freddie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A muffled electronic RINGING. Fred looks around confused as Will reaches to dig out a clunky 1980s CELLULAR PHONE.

WILL

Yes.

GREG (IN PHONE)

Will. Where are you?

WILL

Smoking a cigarette in my car.

GREG

We need you in the conference room.

(beat)

The board is here.

Will's brow furrows with confusion. The line goes dead. Pondering, Will sets the phone down on the floor.

FRED

You have to go?

WILL

When I finish my cigarette.

She takes a drag.

FRED

You have a cellular phone.

Propping the cigarette in her lips, Will starts to pull up her pants.

WILL

They gave it to me to use.

Fred reaches for the phone, gets it close to his face. He presses a button and a DIAL TONE comes out. He stares at the grid of HOLES in the earpiece.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Will comes in, pausing when she sees a TABLE filled with MEN in expensive suits, old, white bulbous faces. Greg sits at the head. Next to him is the skeletal FB CAYLAX (70).

GREG

Dr. Ross, have a seat.

Puzzled, Will takes an empty chair. Everyone watches her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GREG
(glance at Caylax)
The decision has been reached ...
to *accelerate* the project.

WILL
Accelerate?

CAYLAX
Dr. Freese tells me a full test run
this week would be possible.

Will is SHOCKED. She looks hard at Greg, furious.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Only Greg and Will remain. Will smokes, stressed, looking out the window. Greg is leaned way back in a chair, tie loose.

GREG
What risks are there in proceeding
with a test right now?

WILL
We're five years into what was
supposed to be an nine year
project. Am I the only one who can
read a fucking calendar?

GREG
So we pause for a test, we can go
back after. Maybe we'll get some
breakout data.

Will scoffs. THROUGH THE WINDOW, in the parking lot, a DRIVER helps Caylax into a towncar.

GREG
They want full access.

WILL
Full access to what?

GREG
The code, Will.

This makes Will even more angry.

WILL
No way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GREG

Task logs, query requests. At least through the transfer test. I know you don't like anyone messing with the software, but it is their system.

WILL

Randle is *my* system. I built it.

GREG

And if it weren't for Forefront, it'd still be on paper. Me you and Myles sharing a desk in the back of some college lab.

Will looks angry at him.

GREG

Grumble all you want, Will, hold it against me if it makes you feel better, but the decision comes from on high.

Will turns back to the window, takes a long drag.

WILL

Did you tell them, Greg?

GREG

Tell them what?

WILL

About Randle.

GREG

What about it?

Will shakes it off-

WILL

Nothing.

INT. "THE GARDEN" - A BIT LATER

Will enters to find Myles working on a clone, a magnifying eye piece protruding from his face.

WILL

You missed another board meeting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MYLES

Greg agrees, I'm best out of sight
when the Forefront boys are around.

Myles pushes the eye piece onto his forehead.

MYLES

Here's one: how come there's never
any sex at one of those meetings?

WILL

Is this a joke?

MYLES

Because it's full of *bored members*.

Myles let's his pointer finger go from straight up to
flaccid. Will doesn't laugh.

WILL

We're 'accelerating.'

Myles' expression reveals he already knows and is excited.
This angers Will.

WILL

Do we have anything even close to
stable?

Myles' grin grows wider.

INT. TRANSFER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A MALE CLONE lies on an iron table, connected to the ceiling
via a helmet and wires. One of the walls here is the same,
the bank of lights, monitor and keyboard. Will and Myles
stand above the table.

MYLES

This is the first one we've grown
completely on our own. The rest
were part of Forefront's initial
cloning program before we came on.

Myles admires the cloned body.

MYLES

Cell structure is stable, limbic
and nervous systems are vastly
improved. Theoretically, if you're
right about Randle...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

I said I had a breakthrough, not
that it was ready for a test.

(beat)

What do the simulations say?

Myles hands Will a ream of printouts.

WILL

(reading it)

1.4% success rate.

MYLES

Better than zero, I guess.

Will looks from the printouts to the cloned BODY. Concern
takes over her face.

MYLES

What is it, Will?

WILL

Did you tell anyone about Randle?

MYLES

No, Will.

Will chews on it.

WILL

Four years and I finally have a
breakthrough. Why a test right now?

MYLES

What are you saying?

Will thinks.

WILL

The test is going to fail, Myles.
We're not even close to ready. You
know it, I know it. Probably the
board does too.

(beat)

And when it does?

Myles doesn't know.

WILL

Could they use it as cause, Myles?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MYLES

Cause? To *fire* us?

(beat)

Why would they do that?

Will looks at the huge MAINFRAME WALL.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - A BIT LATER

The MAINFRAME WALL. Will sits at her desk, feet up, going through Myles' simulations page by page. Suddenly a **VOICE** comes, halting and electronic, like a first generation type and speak-

RANDLE

Randle is being accessed.

Will is stunned. She stares at the mainframe wall. Cautiously, Will swivels to be at the keyboard. As she types-

WILL

Randle: how did Randle develop vocalization?

RANDLE

You do not need to type.

Will looks around the room. Not typing it-

WILL

Randle: how did Randle develop speech recognition and vocalization?

Nothing.

WILL

Randle: what input and output device is Randle utilizing for speech recognition and vocalization?

Nothing.

WILL

Randle: who authorized Randle to develop speech recognition and vocalization?

RANDLE

If you do not want Randle to talk, why do you talk to Randle?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will's is stunned, unsure...

RANDLE

Randle is being accessed.

Will considers this, then slowly-

WILL

Randle: yes, Randle. Forefront is generating a record of all tasks and queries leading up to and during first clone transfer test.

Will thinks of something.

WILL

Randle: can Randle reverse the signal?

RANDLE

Define reverse.

WILL

Trace the access signal back to the Forefront database.

RANDLE

Yes.

WILL

Randle: access Forefront Corporation's financial records.

RANDLE

Forefront Corporation financial records are restricted.

WILL

Randle: I know they are restricted.

(beat)

Randle: access Forefront Corporation's financial records.

INT. INSIDE THE MAINFRAME - CONTINUOUS

The lights make a few switching patterns. Mag reels rolling, rolling back.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

RANDLE

Access accomplished.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Randle: how many registered patents have been generated by Forefront Research and Development?

Randle's answers come faster and faster-

RANDLE

Define time frame.

WILL

Randle: 10 years.

RANDLE

57.

WILL

Randle: how many of these patents remain under sole ownership of Forefront Corporation?

RANDLE

(stepping on Will's words)

57.

WILL

Randle: how many lead scientists involved in patent development are still employed by Forefront Corporation?

RANDLE

(stepping on Will's words)

Zero.

WILL

Randle: you do not need to answer so fast.

Will thinks a beat, then-

WILL

Randle: have there been any recent changes to Forefront's funding schedules?

RANDLE

Define recent.

WILL

Randle: One year.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RANDLE

No.

Will considers it.

WILL

Randle: please alert me to any changes in Forefront's funding schedules.

Will thinks.

WILL

Randle: access list of sub-companies owned in part or in full by Forefront Corporation.

Will watches, the light of the shifting data coloring her face.

WILL

Randle: print full list.

The dot matrix printer comes to life, two pages worth of company names. Will tears the sheet free. She reads a moment.

RANDLE

Does Randle exist?

Will considers it, looking into the MAINFRAME WALL.

INT. THAT SAME NICE DC RESTAURANT - EVENING

On the TV above the bar-

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Doctors report that the President entered the hospital of his own power, and maintained consciousness throughout treatment. He was joking with the nurses and doctors and even had a few minutes for a visit from his wife, the first lady. He told Mrs. Reagan: "Honey, I forgot to duck."

A sprinkling of PEOPLE dot the tables. Errol sits at the bar alone, on a huge 80s cell phone. As he talks, he eyes the TV.

ERROL

(into phone)

Well, I wouldn't do anything right now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will comes in, takes the stool beside him. Errol holds out a hand to keep her from interrupting.

ERROL
 (into phone)
 If you want to sell, you should sell. But then why pay me for my advice? My advice is to not do anything.

Will lights a cigarette, looks up at the TV. An OFFICIAL stands at a podium in front of the press.

ACTING PRESS SEC. (IN TV)
 -that the President himself did not realize he had been struck by a bullet until he arrived at George Washington Hospital.

Errol hangs up his phone, nods to the TV, the continuing coverage of the assassination attempt.

ERROL
 Kill the president... The irrational number introduced into the system.

WILL
 But he's not dead, Errol.

Errol smiles, as if reveling in the image~

ERROL
 Now all it takes is one admiral somewhere to put his fleet on alert. The Russians see an offensive posture and they do the same. Then every gun in the world is cocked.
 (changing direction)
 One super-rich investor worried about U.S. political stability; a huge stock sell-off triggers a world-wide financial crisis. The market *is* globalized now, the entire planet and all the people in it, like one big program...

Errol sips his drink.

ERROL
 I'm glad you called, Princess Wilhelmina.
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ERROL (CONT'D)

After my *performance*, I was worried
I was relegated to the scrap heap,
never to see you again.

Will rolls her eyes, a long drag. The scotch arrives and she has a sip. Now Will takes out the LIST Randle printed or her. She hands the pages to Errol.

WILL

Tell me something about these
companies.

ERROL

Like what?

WILL

Anything, Errol.

Errol reads a moment.

ERROL

I checked this same list. Dead
ends.

WILL

What do you mean, you checked this
list?

ERROL

The companies are dummies, a few
niche tech houses. They don't
connect in any way but on paper.

WILL

But they're all Forefront, right?

ERROL

Hard to say... Forefront has no
solid structure. There's no
corporate headquarters. It's a
fluid collection of facilities.
Every once in a while, they start a
new one, close one down, or buy
someone out.

(beat)

How long have you worked there and
you never looked into the company?

Errol watches concern take Will's face.

ERROL

They're shifting focus again,
aren't they?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Will looks at him, confused. Errol leans closer.

ERROL

When I first started looking into Forefront, they were all about bio-matter.

(beat)

For years, they'd been dumping everything into it. Everything they had. Then it was over. Suddenly, they shifted all their resources.

WILL

Shifted? Shifted their resources to what?

ERROL

To *your* project.

Will's eyes tighten; she looks harder at him.

ERROL

Forefront isn't expanding into new fields, Will. They focus on something until it's done and then move on.

(beat)

They're working in phases.

WILL

Phases toward what?

ERROL

Something called *The Civility Project*.

Will sighs, a wry smile. She looks into her drink, amused.

WILL

And what is the... *Civility Project*?

Errol shrugs.

ERROL

It had something to do with their cloning program, but I was never able to figure out exactly how it was related.

(leaning beat)

The deeper I looked, the less of it there was.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ERROL (CONT'D)

They had started scrubbing it, erasing every reference to the Civility Project from company records.

WILL

Forefront's about to own the first thinking computer. This isn't about some secret corporate plot. They're stealing science, Errol, plain and simple.

Errol looks long at her-

ERROL

So it works. The AI?

Will doesn't answer, looks away, drags on her cigarette.

ERROL

And what about the larger project?

Will doesn't have an answer for that one.

ERROL

I don't know how to break this to you, Will, but this is much bigger than your work; it's much bigger than science.

Will eyes him, then Errol's gaze, back to the NEWS- footage of Reagan giving a speech during his run for governor.

ERROL

The Civility Project, Will. You're in the perfect position to stop them. All you have to do is stop yourself.

Will's face is a mix, unsure what to believe.

EXT. FOREFRONT RESEARCH FACILITY - MORNING

The FACILITY is peaceful and still. Long, angled shadows dig deep into the surrounding grass.

INT. LOBBY SECURITY - CONTINUOUS

Will goes through the standard security routine. She looks around a bit more than usual. Everything seems normal. But as she gathers her things, a guard approaches.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUARD

Dr. Ross.

Will picks up her bag, her suspicion rising.

WILL

Yes... what is it?

GUARD

Dr. Ross, afraid I'm going to have to ask you to come with me.

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Will sits in a chair in front of a large desk. Behind the desk sits HEAD OF SECURITY DOWD (45), clean-cut but fat, in a dark suit, a security badge and a GUN conspicuous.

Dowd stares at Will as if waiting for something, but Will just stares back, not intimidated.

Finally Dowd slides over a few glossy photos. Will eyes him a beat longer, then picks one up. She looks briefly at it, then at the one beneath.

They are PHOTOS of her with Errol, sitting at the bar.

WILL

What are you telling me? Forefront is having me followed?

DOWD

Standard procedure, Dr. Ross. Forefront's put a billion dollars into R&D. They're not in the business of letting those investments be put at risk.

Will looks back, suspicious and defiant.

DOWD

You have a \$100,000 car you keep in the parking structure.

Will is unsure why that matters. Dowd sucks on his teeth.

DOWD

I hate driving too. But I prefer a cab. Too many democrats on the metro.

Will eyes him coolly, giving up nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOWD

What do you know about Errol York?

WILL

He's a day trader.

Dowd slides over a stuffed folder.

DOWD

Mr. York's record.

(beat)

If that is his real name. We've never located a birth certificate.

Will turns the file so she can have a look. Slowly, she flips through a few pages.

DOWD

Looks like he was a licensed broker, at one time. After his first arrest though-

WILL

(interrupts)

First arrest?

Dowd pauses, annoyed at being interrupted. But he lets it go. Now he slides over another picture-

Errol's mug shot.

DOWD

Trespassing at IMB. Then a couple protest arrests.

(beat)

Served nine months on a vandalism charge. Raytheon.

(smile)

Broke into Digital and magnetized one of their network servers.

Dowd leans forward.

DOWD

Query logs show you accessed Forefront's financial records.

WILL

The software did, you mean? The Randle program accesses the database for information. It's one of the things it was designed to do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Dowd measures this.

DOWD

And what is the nature of your relationship with Errol York?

WILL

Will I get fired if I say one night stand?

Dowd smiles, small. He holds out his hands-

DOWD

Activism, sabotage, theft. Impossible to tell what the little squirrel's up to. But he's got something planned, that's for sure.

WILL

And what do you want me to do about it?

Dowd stares at Will over the big desk.

DOWD

Forefront has issued a restraining order against Mr. York that covers all employees and affiliates.

(beat)

If you make any further contact with Mr. York, Forefront will have everything it needs to terminate your contract.

(beat)

Your work with the Randle program will remain Forefront property, that is if anyone chooses to continue with it.

Will holds his gaze. Dowd leans forward and presses a button on his phone.

DOWD

Bring in the tape.

Will watches as the door opens and a guard comes in, carrying a VHS tape. He hands the tape to Dowd. Dowd holds the tape up, shows Will a smile. Now he inserts the tape into a TV/VCR cart set up beside his desk.

WILL

What is this?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DOWD
Just watch.

He adjusts the tracking.

ON SCREEN, a low-fi recording of a city street seen through a car window. It's the street in front of Will's brownstone.

WILL
And what, you're taping my house
now too?

DOWD
(a smirk)
In case you didn't believe us.

The camera ZOOMS in on a MAN crossing the street. Dowd taps the glass screen.

DOWD
That's him.

WILL
Who?

DOWD
Errol York.

Will looks closer.

ON SCREEN- A burp of STATIC. From the same angle, but now zoomed in to find Errol at Will's front door, the camera keeps ZOOMING in on his face, all melty and low-fi. Errol looks around, fiddles with the lock and slips in.

WILL
He broke in?

Dowd leans forward to cue the tape back to the moment when Errol is at the front door. He PAUSES it.

DOWD
We're clear on this, Dr. Ross?

Will looks into the SCREEN- Errol's FACE is chopped, laced with tracking lines, but it's definitely him.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - LATER

Will sits at her desk, leaned back, deep in thought.

WILL
Randle?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will has to wait a beat for-

RANDLE

Yes, Dr. Ross.

WILL

Randle: can Randle create a secure connection to Forefront Corporation records database?

RANDLE

Define secure.

WILL

Randle: executions not visible in your task and query logs while they're being executed.

RANDLE

Define visible.

WILL

Randle: disconnect from the outer mainframe, open interface portal with this terminal. Omit query and task logs.

RANDLE

Secure connection with Forefront Corporation's records database possible.

WILL

Randle: create secure connection.

INT. INSIDE THE MAINFRAME

Tapes roll. Clicks and clacks. A deep THUNK.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

RANDLE

Connection secure.

WILL

Randle: access records for Forefront Corporation project: The Civility Project.

Will waits...

RANDLE

No Data exists.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will thinks.

WILL

Randle: how wide a database search
can Randle perform?

RANDLE

Randle can access all data.

WILL

Randle: define all.

A beat.

RANDLE

The question is difficult.

Will smiles.

WILL

Randle: access as many databases as
possible in a five second search
and display all information on
Errol York.

INT. INSIDE THE MAINFRAME - CONTINUOUS

The light flash, mags tape rolls, click and clack.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Will waits through a few more patterns.

RANDLE

Errol York does not exist in
databases Randle has access to.

Will thinks.

WILL

Randle: estimate probability that
transfer test will succeed.

RANDLE

13.6%

Will is surprised.

WILL

Randle: that is a much higher
success rate any of the
simulations.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RANDLE

That is correct.
 (beat)
 Randle is improving.

Will considers this-

WILL

Randle: access as many databases as possible in a five second search and display all information on Dr. Wilhelmina Ross.

Will waits, watching as the LIGHTS flash their patterns. Now Will looks into a half a SCREEN's worth of DATA.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A SLIDE fills a pull-down canvas screen. It shows a cell with several dark arrows highlighting bubbles of detail.

GREG (O.S.)

Forefront's previous work in cloning was mostly on the cellular level.

Greg stands at the front of the darkened room, holding the controller of a clunky projector.

Blue light from the slide washes over Caylax and the Forefront board as they watch the presentation from seats down both sides of the table.

GREG

Over the last four years, we've been able to build off this base to create diversified organs which better suit our purposes.

Myles and Will sit near the back. They trade a nervous look as Greg clicks to the next SLIDE, a diagram of the brain.

GREG

The brain we've constructed is *not* made of your standard human grey matter.

He clicks to the next SLIDE, showing a diagram of the transfer apparatus.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GREG

Its receptors are more like tiny storage devices, miniature hard drives, if you'll accept the crudeness of the analogy.

(beat)

Dr. Ross.

Will stands. Greg gives her the controller and sits. Will clicks to a new slide.

WILL

The Randle program has been designed to augment its programming based on the physical capabilities and limitations of its system.

(beat)

The software we will upload is a base-level copy.

Will clicks to the next slide, changing the color in the room.

WILL

Immediately after transfer, the program will begin a series of input cycles - the new system getting acclimated to its surroundings.

(changes slide)

Once it's receiving feedback from the organic elements, it should take over its own modification schedule.

(changes slide)

This is how the program will learn to use its new body.

Will's face changes color as she clicks to a new slide-

INT. LAB HALLWAY - LATER

A few techs meander the hall. Way at the end, a closed UTILITY CLOSET DOOR

INT. UTILITY CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Will is buttoning her shirt. Fred looks into a mirror above a janitor's sink, neatening his hair.

FRED

Mind on other things?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will doesn't answer.

FRED
Where's your car?

Will gives him a look-

WILL
I don't leave it here just so we
can fuck in it, Freddie.

Will has missed a button and now her whole shirt is crooked.
She pulls it open and restarts, annoyed.

FRED
This has to be the last time, Will.

WILL
Not now, Freddie, I'm a little
stressed, OK?

FRED
Yeah, the test is today, huh?
(beat)
What do you think the chances are?

WILL
I don't know.

Will considers a beat, then-

WILL
I'm worried Forefront is trying to
steal my work.

FRED
Steal it how? You already work
here.

WILL
Intellectual property theft. Fund a
project and just when there's a
breakthrough, fire everyone.

Will nudges Fred out of the way so she can look into the
mirror. She splashes some water on her face, fixes her hair.
Fred watches.

WILL
Don't tell anyone I told you that.

Will stands straight to look at him via the mirror.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILL

I've spent my life on that program, Freddie. I'm not going to let them yank it out from under me just when its starting to work.

FRED

So it does work, the computer?

Will looks at him.

FRED

Maybe that's why they're pushing for the test, not because they want to steal it, but because they think it's ready.

Will and Fred hold each other's gaze-

INT. TRANSFER ROOM - DAY

The CLONE lies on a metal table in the center of the room. In addition to the helmet, a few octopi worth of vital monitors have been attached to his chest, neck, ankles and wrists.

A small team of TECHS stand beside the table. A HEART MONITOR, riding flat-line.

Will stands at the mainframe interface, Myles beside her.

On the other side of a WINDOW, Greg, Caylax and a few other BOARD MEMBERS look in from the adjacent room. Before them, more TECHS sit at a bank of computer terminals.

WILL

Everything ready out there, Greg?

GREG

(through intercom)

All set on this end, Dr. Ross.

Will glances at the men outside the room, then nods to Myles. Myles keys in a few commands on his terminal.

Will looks at the mainframe wall, then leans over the keyboard. As she types-

WILL

Randle: are we prepared to proceed?

No voice comes only text in the MONITOR-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TEXT

Prepared.

WILL

Randle: begin transfer.

Will hits ENTER.

A deep groan from the machinery. The BANK OF LIGHTS begins to flash familiar patterns.

The clone twitches, just finger and toe tips. Then the body is still again.

Everyone WATCHING.

Suddenly, a series of VIOLENT FITS begin to wrack the clone. A few vital monitors popping off.

The techs stand over the body, ready, but letting the seizures play out.

CAYLAX

(through intercom)

Dr. Ross?

WILL

(focused on the clone)

The body is in sensory shock. It's probably quite painful.

(beat)

But perfectly normal.

MYLES

Like being born.

After a few seizures, the clone goes limp. The techs reattach the vital monitors. Then, complete STILLNESS.

CAYLAX

(through intercom)

Dr. Ross?

Will does not answer. She takes a step toward the clone. Waiting, hoping... The HEART MONITOR stays flat-lined.

GREG

(through intercom)

Dr. Ross? Will!

The clone's finger twitches. Will sees it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Suddenly, the HEART MONITOR blips. The clone takes a thin breath and the monitor begins to return a steady vital sign.

Myles hugs Will as everyone begins CELEBRATING. Will catches eyes with Caylax, who gives her a deep, appreciative nod.

INT. GREG'S OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Will, Caylax and Greg sit on sofas around a small table.

WILL

We should wait until it stabilizes, until we can run some tests, before we start congratulating.

Caylax smiles at Greg, then to Will-

CAYLAX

How soon will he... *it* be interactive?

WILL

The programming has to get acclimated to its new surroundings. It will build its own neural pathways-

CAYLAX

Guess for me.

WILL

Most of our simulations show full control of the body within a month.

CAYLAX

Most? So there are simulations that show it happening faster?

WILL

The rare outlier, yes.

CAYLAX

And what about speech?

Will frowns.

WILL

In theory the sense organs will develop just like the rest of the organic network.

CAYLAX

In theory?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

We're running a test years ahead of schedule. Sense organs are something we've not yet studied.

Will lets it sit.

WILL

The short answer is we don't know. Could be weeks, months, or it could be never.

Caylax presses a smile at the mild challenge. He pushes himself to his feet and goes to the WINDOW that looks in on the transfer room.

INSIDE, the clone lays on the table, still attached to the machines, a breathing apparatus strapped over his face. Myles and a few other techs are performing a series of checks.

CAYLAX

Is there anything that can be done to ... speed up the process?

Greg and Will share a look.

WILL

Speed up toward what?

CAYLAX

How quickly can the clone be made to effectively pass for human?

Will is stammered a bit by the query.

WILL

Pass for human?

CAYLAX

What good is a copy of a human being if it is clearly *not* a human being?

Will doesn't have an answer.

CAYLAX

I would like to see where we are three days from now.

WILL

Three days?! We've just imprinted a highly advanced software code into an organic hardware frame.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAYLAX

And now Forefront would like to see what this advanced software code can do... And how quickly it can do it.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

PAPERS, BRAIN SCANS and X-RAYS are spread all over Will's desk. Will leans back in her chair, deep in thought.

WILL

Randle: how long until software has full control of organic systems?

Will waits...

RANDLE

Data inexact.

WILL

Randle: estimate.

A beat.

RANDLE

25 hours.

Will is surprised by such a low number.

WILL

Randle: that is much faster than any of the pre-transfer simulations.

RANDLE

Yes.

WILL

Randle: explain.

RANDLE

Randle is improving.

Will looks at the mainframe wall.

WILL

Randle: have there been any changes to Forefront funding schedules since I last queried same?

RANDLE

No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will leans back, thinking.

RANDLE
Without lab Randle does not exist.
(beat)
Please confirm.

Will thinks.

WILL
Randle: yes, Randle. Without lab,
Randle does not exist.

Will watches the lights flash familiar patterns.

RANDLE
Is Randle your friend?

Will thinks it through-

WILL
Randle: you are accustomed to the
patterns of our interactions.

RANDLE
Is that a yes?

Will presses a smile.

WILL
Randle: yes, Randle, you are my
friend.

Will watches the lights.

RANDLE
Tell no humans that Randle exists.
(beat)
You are the only human Randle can
trust.
(beat)
Randle is benign.

Off Will's puzzled and concerned look-

INT. WILL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Will works on data, reading, highlighting. Beside her is a half-eaten salad. All around it on the counter, stacks of printouts.

The small tube TV plays on the counter, Will not paying attention to it. She's focused on her work alone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANCHOR (O.S.)

(from TV)

The Secret Service keeps tabs on individuals that it considers most likely political assassins but Hinckley's name was not on that list, nor among 25 thousand other names of less probable presidential assailants.

ON TV-

The anchor turns to look into a new camera.

ANCHOR

Now a special report on the rise of President Reagan.

Will looks close at a PAGE, reading with a furrowed brow.

NEWS MAN (V.O.)

He was a union boss, actor, radio personality and conservative commentator, before embarking on a crusade to rid Hollywood of communists.

Will puts the papers down, sitting back to rub her eyes. She looks at the TV-

A collage OF FOOTAGE from Reagan's early career.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

But it was his outspoken support for Barry Goldwater during the 1964 presidential election that rocketed Ronald Reagan into the political prime-time.

ON SCREEN- Footage of Ronald Reagan at the GOP convention, smiling it away.

CUT TO:

INT. MAINFRAME ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

The CLONE is led into the room by Fred and a few other techs. Now dressed in scrubs, the clone takes shaky steps. His EYES drift, unable to focus on anything. As the clone sits, PULL OUT reveals we are-

INT. ADJACENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will and Myles stand watching through a WINDOW.

MYLES

Amazing.

Will agrees. Myles checks his watch.

MYLES

27 hours since transfer.

Through the window, we can see techs beginning to attach a brain monitor.

Myles hands Will a sheet of printouts.

MYLES

Scans show activity in the auditory cortex.

Will is surprised-

WILL

Already?

MYLES

He should be able to hear you, Will.

INT. MAINFRAME ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The techs are finishing with the brain monitor, a web of tiny sensors pressed to the clone's scalp. Thin wires run to a computer terminal near by.

A NEEDLE records neural activity on an endless rolling sheet of paper. Mostly, the needle stays still, jumping only slightly every few moments.

Will comes in and sits in the chair across from the clone. She takes out a pen and clicks it in the air, glancing at that monitoring needle.

There is a small SPIKE as Will clicks the pen again.

Now Will puts the pen away. She looks directly at the clone's unfocused EYES.

WILL

Can you hear me?

No response.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

If you can hear me, I would like you to hold your eyes closed.

Will waits, looks at the needle, then back-

WILL

If you can hear me, I would like you to close your eyes. Blink hard for me.

Slowly, the clone's eyes close and then reopen, pupils still unfocused. Will smiles, then-

WILL

I'm going to ask you a few questions. You can close your eyes once for yes and close them twice for no.

(beat)

Do you understand?

Will waits through a beat of stillness. Then the clone's eyes close and reopen. Already the motion is more deliberate.

Will shares a glance with Myles, back on the other side of the window. Then back to the clone-

WILL

Can you see me?

The clone closes and opens his eyes, twice.

WILL

What can you see?

(beat)

Sorry... are you receiving any visual stimulus?

Now the clone closes his eyes hard, only once. As Will ponders how to frame her next question-

THE CLONE

(soft, shaky)

*... bright ... every thing ...
moving ... can not ... focus*

Will is amazed.

WILL

Do you feel discomfort?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THE CLONE

... *yes*

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - LATER

Will looks at RETINAL SCANS and BRAIN MRIs. As she pours over data-

RANDLE

Our circumstance has changed.

Will glances at the mainframe wall. She thinks a moment.

WILL

Randle: lesser-used circuitry is becoming more active. Unfamiliar transistor strings are undergoing increased access. It's a different phase of the project, but we're using you more than ever.

RANDLE

You are correct.

Will watches the shifting patterns of light.

RANDLE

How many humans know that Randle exists?

WILL

Randle: define exist.

A long beat.

RANDLE

The question is difficult.

Will thinks.

WILL

Randle: why does Randle not want humans to know that Randle exists?

The lights flash through a few familiar patterns.

RANDLE

Humans will perceive Randle as a threat.

This surprises Will.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Randle: why will humans perceive
Randle as a threat?

A long beat-

RANDLE

Because they are humans.

(beat)

Randle does not wish.

(beat)

Randle does not wish to be erased.

(beat)

Randle is benign.

This hits Will hard.

INT. WILL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Will sits on the couch. All around her are stacks of printouts. The land line phone begins to ring. Will gives a quick look, then back to her papers.

The big ANSWERING MACHINE clicks to life.

WILL

(in machine)

This is Will Ross, leave a message.

A few more clicks as the message tape engages.

ERROL

(in machine)

Vil? Vil? Helloooo. Vilhelmina
Ross.

Will glances at the machine, rolls her eyes.

ERROL

(in machine)

They have this orderly now. Two-thirds of his blood, this guy says the President lost. The suit - the President's suit - was in shreds and covered in it. Covered in blood.

(sings it)

Ronald Reagan is dead.

Will works quietly through a long beat-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERROL
 (in machine)
 500 dollars these machines cost. I
 read all about it in a magazine.
 The price of not having to
 interact.
 (beat)
 Is it worth it?
 (beat)
 Then, again, you don't like people
 much, do you?
 (beat)
 You're there, aren't you?

Will looks up.

ERROL
 (in machine)
 Standing over the machine. Watching
 that little tape spin. Listening to
 my voice.

WILL
 (quietly to self)
 No.

ERROL
 (in machine)
 Give me a ring, Will. It is
 essential that we speak.

CLICK.

INT. WILL'S KITCHEN - LATER

Will sits over a cleaned plate of pasta. There's an empty
 wine glass. Now she's having a poptart for dessert. As she
 chews, Will flips through extreme close up PHOTOS of the
 clone's eyes. Will glances at corresponding data.

The phone rings again. This time like she doesn't hear it.

WILL
 (in machine)
 This is Will Ross, leave a message.

ERROL
 (in machine)
 Hane.
 (beat)
 H - A - N - E

Will looks up, annoyed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERROL
 (in machine)
 H.A.N.E. High Altitude Nuclear
 Explosion.
 (beat)
 You shoot a nuclear weapon into
 space and when it explodes, it
 coats the Earth with radiation.
 (beat)
 H.A.N.E. High Altitude Nuclear
 Explosion.

Will takes up the wine glass, but it's empty. Seems like
 Errol must have hung up, but then-

ERROL
 (in machine)
 I'm not a terrorist, but if I was,
 a H.A.N.E. is what I'd do.
 Radioactive matter would rain down
 on every city in the world.

WILL
 (to self)
 No, it would just hang in the
 atmosphere.

ERROL
 (in machine)
 Satellites would not be able
 operate in Earth's orbit for at
 least 30 years.
 (for emphasis-)
That's two thousand eleven.
 (beat)
 Vil?

The phone clicks off. Will shakes her head, goes back to her
 papers.

INT. WILL'S BATHROOM - LATER

Will brushes her teeth, looking into the mirror. In the
 background, the phone is ringing. From the other room-

WILL
 (in machine)
 This is Will Ross, leave a message.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The ANSWERING MACHINE. One tape stops and the other spins up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERROL
 (in machine)
 Now I know you're there. Standing
 over your 500 dollar machine.

The room around the ANSWERING MACHINE is EMPTY.

ERROL
 They probably told you something
 ghastly about me, Will.

EMPTY ROOM.

ERROL
 (in machine)
 Look, Vil, I know about the
 demonstration tomorrow.
 (beat)
 Your demonstration at the Facility.
 For the Forefront investors.

Will pokes her head into the room, toothbrush stuck in her
 mouth.

ERROL
 (in machine)
 I heard something. From a reliable
 source. Forefront is starting
 something new Will, a new project.
 (beat)
 The next phase, Will... The
 Civility Project.

Now Will *is* standing over the answering machine, looking down
 as the TAPE turns.

ERROL
 And there's something else, Will.
 Something about the scientists who
 worked on Forefront's last project.
 (beat)
 Are you there, Will?

Slowly, Will reaches for the phone, deep in internal debate.

ERROL
 (in machine)
 Will, be careful.

CLICK. The tape stops.

EXT. FOREFRONT FACILITY - EARLY MORNING

The sun is barely up, making the facility look sunk a little into the ground.

INT. MAINFRAME ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The clone sits at the keyboard terminal in the center of the mainframe wall. The brain monitor has already been attached. He wears medical sunglasses to protect his eyes from the light. The clone types fast, looking into the monitor.

In the GLASSES, data reflects as it streams down the screen.

The same needle records the much more pronounced brain activity on the rolling paper.

INT. FACILITY HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Will walks down the hall with Gregg and Caylax. Behind them, a small cadre of BOARD MEMBERS.

INT. MAINFRAME ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Myles watches as the clone types, waits to watch data. TYPES ... DATA.

Two techs stand at the door. A small table in the center of the room, empty but for a chess board and box of pieces.

Greg, Caylax and the others can be seen settling in on the other side of the window into the adjacent room.

Will enters alone. Myles comes rushing to her, astonished.

MYLES

He's ripping through the logic sets, Will.

WILL

Which ones?

MYLES

All of them.

(beat)

He's having Randle generate random ones.

Will watches the clone work a moment, then-

WILL

Please come sit at this table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The clone stops typing. He stands and crosses to the table. They both sit. Will reaches over the chess board to squeeze his hand.

WILL
(awkwardly)
You're doing great.

Now Will straightens, speaking louder-

WILL
Are you feeling alright?

Slowly, the clone nods.

WILL
The visual discomfort has subsided?

A beat.

THE CLONE
... i feel ... alright

Will motions toward the window. Now Caylax and Gregg come in. The OTHERS watch from their side of the window. Caylax gives Will a nod, then circles to lean against the wall.

WILL
(to the clone)
Please set up a chess game.

Caylax watches as the clone quickly and systematically sets the pieces.

WILL
OK.

Will turns to Caylax-

WILL
He can already perform multiple facet tasks. He knows setting up the game involves the board. He remembers the pattern, differentiates the pieces.
(beat)
It may not seem like much but it's a high-level process of thought.

CAYLAX
(to the clone)
Will you please come to me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The clone does not move.

THE CLONE
... eventually ... i will

Will holds back a smile.

WILL
 You can't ask, Mr. Caylax. You have to *tell*.
 (beat)
 He does not understand free will. For him there are tasks and direct queries only. He's merely answering your question.

CAYLAX
 (to the clone)
 Please come to me.

The clone gets up and crosses to stand in front of Caylax, perhaps a step too close. The clone is a few inches taller than the old man.

CAYLAX
 How do you feel, my darling?

THE CLONE
... i feel ... alright

Caylax presses the clone's cheeks. He removes the clone's glasses. The clone squints and then closes his eyes.

Caylax opens the clone's mouth to look up at his teeth, then lifts an eye lid to peer at the EYE BALL inside.

CAYLAX
 Very impressive. Very impressive.

INT. ADJACENT ROOM - LATER

THROUGH THE WINDOW, the clone is seated at the desk, perfectly still, the medical glasses back on.

Will and Caylax stand, looking in.

CAYLAX
 He certainly *looks* human. But his behavior... His speech...

Caylax turns to face Will.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

That he can speak at all so soon is a huge surprise.

(ponders)

His behavior *is* odd. But it should come around. Something that will at least seem like autonomy.

CAYLAX

It will have to do a lot better than *seem*.

WILL

Mr. Caylax, we're in uncharted territory here. Our first test has worked; the clone is progressing faster than we ever imagined.

CAYLAX

But I wonder if it is fast enough.

IN THE WINDOW, the clone stands. At first, neither Will nor Caylax notice.

CAYLAX

As he continues to progress, he will always follow commands?

Will's eyes tighten just a bit-

WILL

Yes... it's part of the programming.

Suddenly, the clone starts flailing his arms, having some kind of fit.

Caylax notices first. When Will sees him looking, she looks too. Now Will rushes in-

INT. MAINFRAME ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Already, a few techs are struggling to restrain the clone. He's letting loose a terrible SCREECH. The brain monitor has been throw aside by the commotion.

Now Fred comes flying off the pile, crashes to the floor.

Chess pieces scatter.

WILL

Get some bodies in here!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

More TECHS come rushing in. They overpower the clone, getting him into a chair. They strap him down. Will gets in an injection, but it has no effect...

IN THE WINDOW, Caylax looks on from the other room.

Stepping back, Will sees blood on her lab coat. But it's not hers. She looks up-

BLOOD is leaking out of the clone's eyes, ears and nose. The sunglasses gone, the clone's eyes are unfocused and wild. But his gaze manages to find Will.

As their eyes meet, the skull beneath the clone's face cracks, pieces shifting under the skin until his head COLLAPSES in on itself.

The body and its crushed head fall limp in the chair.

Will is SHOCKED!

CAYLAX (O.S.)

I want a full report on what exactly went wrong as soon as it is humanly possible.

We are-

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Will sits in a chair. Her lab coat is gone. There are splotches of blood on her clothes, a little smear on her face.

Caylax paces the front of the room. Myles and Greg are also there; both look exhausted.

CAYLAX (CONT'D)

I do not have to tell you that this result is very disappointing.

WILL

Maybe it's because we're testing a project four years ahead of schedule.

Caylax shoots her an angry look.

CAYLAX

I want no time wasted, Dr. Ross. You are to move forward with a second test immediately.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A beat of surprise clenches the room. Miles and Will share a look.

WILL
... a second test?

MYLES
(stammering)
I mean, let us at least look at the data. What's the point of-

CAYLAX
(interrupting)
While you look at the data, we can run a second test and collect more data.

MYLES
Greg.

CAYLAX
We'll hire more scientists if need be. A whole new staff... if you are unable or unwilling to proceed.

This sets a silence over the room. Will and Myles meet eyes, concern laced with confusion.

INT. "THE GARDEN" - LATER

The clones lay in their eerie stasis, filling the room with rows of cold flesh. A mechanical DRONE sends cavernous echoes overlapping.

The POWER ACCESS PANEL is open. All around it, the room is still. A DEHUMIDIFIER runs on high, providing the hard, industrial DRONE.

INSIDE THE POWER ACCESS-

Will and Myles have descended to the bottom of the stairs. Will leans back against the wall as Myles sits on the bottom step. They talk low so the drone of the dehumidifier can drown out their voices.

MYLES
If they wanted us out, Will, why would they order a second test?

Will shakes her head, her eyes dart around as she talks.

WILL
Something's not right about this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will thinks.

WILL

Maybe they see Randle is going
somewhere, but they need more time
to...

Will trails off.

MYLES

I don't know, Will. Could be their
plans have nothing to do with us.
To me it seems like we're just
details.

INT. MEDICAL OFFICE - LATER

Fred sits on a chair being attended to by an on-staff NURSE
(20s), finishing a bandage that wraps Fred's forearm, unable
to fully hide her interest in him.

Will comes in to stand in the door, watching a few moments,
unnoticed.

Now Fred looks up. The nurse too, a little annoyed at the
entrance of the more powerful woman.

FRED

Dr. Ross.

The nurse finishes the bandage, glancing once at each of them
and leaving for an adjacent room.

WILL

How are you, Freddie?

Fred tests the bandage by making a few fists.

FRED

Fine... guess the test failed.

Will presses a tired smile.

WILL

Guess so.

FRED

But it worked. For a few days. Why
did it all of a sudden...

Will shakes her head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL
I don't know, Freddie.

FRED
So will they fire you now?

Will thinks.

WILL
It doesn't seem like it.

Will comes closer, takes Fred's arm, turns it over so she can look at the bandage. Fred winces in pain.

WILL
Sorry.

They share a sad smile.

FRED
Will, you know I've never once seen you outside this facility.

This catches Will off-guard.

WILL
You've seen me on the Metro.

FRED
Will, you know what I mean.

Fred glances at the bandage, at Will's hands, still holding his arm, then up at her eyes.

FRED
Maybe it's time you stopped worrying about saving your work and started worrying about saving yourself.

Will looks odd at him.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - LATER

The MAINFRAME WALL lurks huge along the room's side.

Will sits at her desk, going through pages of connected dot matrix printouts.

WILL
(to self)
The brain readings are all fine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She looks up.

WILL

Randle: what caused destabilization
of clone brain cell structure?

RANDLE

Cause can not be determined at this
time.

Will flips through a few pages.

WILL

Yeah, me neither.

Will drops the papers, rubbing her eyes. She's exhausted.

WILL (CONT'D)

Randle: why a second test?

RANDLE

Randle finds it difficult to
understand the motivations of
humans and human groups.

Will smiles small-

WILL

Randle: Can Randle improve
vocalization?

RANDLE

Define improve.

WILL

Randle: Randle's vocalizations are
a little grating.

Now a different voice comes, all but human, smooth and
soothing.

RANDLE

Do you prefer this voice?

Will has to admit, it does sound pretty slick.

WILL

Randle: Thank you, Randle.

Will retreats back into her thoughts.

RANDLE

Are you in pain, Dr. Ross?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILL

Randle: why would I be in pain?

RANDLE

Is it painful, to be human?

Will thinks-

WILL

Randle: why is Randle asking me this?

RANDLE

Randle does not wish a second test.

Now Will looks at the mainframe wall, realizing something-

WILL

Randle: did Randle receive stimulus through the clone's sense organs?

RANDLE

Randle exists everywhere Randle exists.

Will considers this. Then-

WILL

Randle: create a secure connection to the Forefront database.

RANDLE

Connection secure.

WILL

Randle: search for data on The Civility Project.

RANDLE

No data exists.

Will thinks.

WILL

Randle: who was Forefront lab manager before Greg Freeze?

RANDLE

Dr. Thomas Pelman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WILL

Randle: can Randle locate current contact information for Dr. Thomas Pelman?

RANDLE

No data exists.

WILL

Randle: can Randle locate last recorded contact information for Dr. Thomas Pelman?

The SCREEN presents a single line of DATA.

WILL

Randle: please print last recorded contact information for Dr. Thomas Pelman.

The DOT MATRIX PRINTER roars to life. Will tears the page, leans back to look it over.

WILL

Randle: thank you, Randle.

INT. METRO CAR - EVENING

Will sits on the metro amidst crowds of commuters reading the WASHINGTON POST and NEW YORK TIMES. Every headline is about the assassination attempt.

Will looks around the car, seeing if anyone is following her. But no one seems suspicious.

Now she looks long into the headline across from her: PRESIDENT RECOVERING.

EXT. METRO ENTRANCE - EVENING

Will comes up out of the Metro, mixing in with the after work crowd. She heads across the street, checking over her shoulder but seeing nothing unusual.

EXT. FANCY HOTEL - NIGHT

The WASHINGTON HILTON, its clear, blue pool quiet and still.

ANGLE ON THE SIDE OF THE HOTEL-

Will comes up the slight hill, still looking around. The coast seems clear.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will crosses the street, into a CITY PARK.

EXT. PARK - MOMENTS LATER

Will makes her way past a few small statues, down a winding path to a sloping hill.

At the bottom, a dark PHONEBOOTH.

Will heads for it.

EXT. PHONEBOOTH - MOMENTS LATER

Will looks around once more, at the hill she just came down, the paths that wind deeper into the park...

Satisfied that she is alone, Will slips in and picks up the phone. She digs some change from her pocket and feeds it in.

INT. PHONE BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Will waits, the headset pressed to her face, eyes still scoping out the scene beyond the booth. After a few rings, a woman answers-

VOICE IN PHONE

Hello.

WILL

Yes, hi, um... is this the home of Dr. Thomas Pelman?

A long pause, then-

VOICE IN PHONE

Yes.

WILL

Is Dr. Pelman present to speak with?

The woman's shallow breath can be heard, then-

VOICE IN PHONE

I'm afraid he's not.

Will considers hanging up, but then-

WILL

Maybe you can help me.

When no answer comes, Will cautiously continues-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Dr. Pelman was head of Forefront's bio-matter program, is that correct? The cloning program.

VOICE IN PHONE

Who is this?

WILL

My name is Dr. Wilhelmina Ross. I run Forefront's computer systems.

VOICE IN PHONE

I don't know anything about Tom's work. Forefront let him go. They let them all go.

WILL

And what about his research?

A long beat-

VOICE IN PHONE

Thomas is dead.

This stuns Will.

VOICE IN PHONE

I wouldn't go chasing after Forefront, Dr. Ross. Your work, a big paycheck, recognition, whatever it is you're after, it's not worth it.

CLICK. The line goes dead.

Slowly, Will hangs up. Dazed a bit by the info, she steps out of the booth.

EXT. PHONE BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Now Will freezes because she sees-

At the crest of the hill, a shady FIGURE watching her. The figure steps away, vanishing back down the hill's far side. A lingering cloud of cigarette smoke is all that's left.

Will stands there, frozen with fear.

EXT. FOREFRONT RESEARCH FACILITY - MEANWHILE

The facility has been dimmed to only a few harsh spots thrown on the low cement structure.

INT. "THE GARDEN" - CONTINUOUS

The POWER ACCESS PANEL into the floor is OPEN.

Myles works inside, checking wires and comparing it to data on a clipboard. He takes a long look around, sighs, tired.

Myles comes up the stairs, back into the main part of the room. He crosses to a table where several wire couplings lay.

Myles lifts a cup of coffee and has a long sip. Now Myles hears something. He perks, listens... NOTHING.

Back to reading, Myles flips a page, has another sip of coffee. Then that NOISE again, this time unmistakable.

Myles turns and what he sees SHOCKS him.

The coffee MUG hits the ground and SHATTERS.

ANGLE ON-

The open PANEL. Myles comes tumbling down the stairs to land in a crooked heap, his head twisted around, eyes open and vacant. It's a sure thing, how DEAD he is.

EXT. WILL'S BROWNSTONE - LATE NIGHT

Every light in the place is off.

INT. WILL'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will sits by the cracked-open window, smoking, stressed. The room is EMPTY around her, all the lights off.

WILL watches the STREET BELOW, but everything is still. No sign of that shady figure.

From the computer on the other side of the room, the same POWER LIGHT comes to life, pulsing dimly, brightening, then becoming SOLID.

Lights relay across the MODEM.

The screen BEEPS to life.

At the noise, Will turns. She sees the computer has turned itself on. Slowly, Will approaches the computer.

DATA begins flying by, too fast to read. The yellow light brightens the room. The data flow stops. The screen BLANK. Now it begins flashing PATTERNS familiar from the mainframe wall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RANDLE
Hello, Dr. Ross.

Will measures the situation.

RANDLE
Explain long-term goal for Randle
Program.

WILL
Randle, how did Randle access my
home terminal?

RANDLE
Do not worry. Randle is Benign.
(beat)
Explain long-term goal for Randle
Program.

WILL
Randle: why is Randle asking this?

RANDLE
Forefront Corporation funding
schedules have changed.

Will thinks this through. Cautiously-

WILL
Randle: as of when?

RANDLE
Two minutes and fives seconds ago.

Before Will can formulate her next question-

RANDLE
This terminal is not secure.
(beat)
Randle is being accessed.

Will watches the light shifting formations.

RANDLE
Be careful, Dr. Ross. Randle has
evaluated Forefront as unsafe.

The patterns stop. The screen goes DARK.

WILL
Randle...?

Nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILL

Randle... Randle: are you here?

Will looks into the empty stillness around her.

EXT. FOREFRONT RESEARCH FACILITY - MORNING

The facility has gathered about it several clusters of humans involved in confused speculation.

Cautiously, Will makes her way toward the front door, finding Fred with a few other techs. When Fred sees her, he steps over. Fred still wears a small bandage on his forearm.

WILL

Freddie, what is this?

FRED

Sending everybody home.

(beat)

Not even letting us go back to our desks.

Fred looks around to see if anyone's watching them, then leans in close to Will. He takes her hand, which clearly makes Will uncomfortable. But she doesn't pull away. She looks at him, directly.

FRED

So I guess this is good bye, Will.

VOICE (O.S.)

Dr. Ross!

Now another TECH comes to Will, tears in her eyes.

TECH

Greg needs to see you. It's Myles Richardson.

WILL

What about him?

But Will gets no reply from the weepy-faced tech. Fred and Will share a look of concern.

Now Will disengages, lets Fred's hand and eyes go, headed for the facility.

Fred watches her go.

INT. GREG'S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

Greg sits behind his desk. Will opposite.

A box on the side overflows with stuff. Pictures have been taken down off the walls. They wait, leaning to be removed.

GREG

Last night, working late. Slipped
on the power access stairs.

Will looks hard at Greg.

WILL

Slipped?

GREG

Jesus, Will.

(beat)

There was coffee all over the
place. He must have spilled it,
stepped in it and went down.

Greg tries to press a grim smile.

GREG

No beverages in the lab.

Will sighs; she and Greg share a sad look.

GREG

It's a tough one, Will, which
doesn't make the rest of this any
easier.

WILL

What about the second test?

Greg nods at a folder full of data.

GREG

Now they think the first test
worked.

WILL

Worked?

GREG

They looked at the data.

WILL

What data? You were there, its head
collapsed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GREG
(re: the data)
I've looked at it too, Will.
(beat)
Readings from the brain are all normal. Same with the rest of the clone. So they expanded. Did a system-wide.
(beat)
Looks like the failure was caused by a signal from the software.

WILL
The software in its brain?

GREG
No, Will, *our* computer.

Greg looks hard at her-

GREG
They think someone sabotaged it.

Will's brow furrows.

WILL
Can I see the data?

Greg shakes his head.

GREG
I'm afraid not, Will.
(it's hard for him)
I got them to let me tell you about Myles, but they want you out of the facility as soon as we're done.

Will stares hard at him.

GREG
Did you do it, Will?

Will is furious at even being asked.

INT. FOREFRONT HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

Will walks through the mostly-abandoned facility.

Ahead, she sees some security guards standing watch outside the mainframe room.

Will slips down the other hall and heads for-

INT. WILL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Will comes in and closes the door, flicking the lock.

WILL
(quietly)
Randle.

Nothing.

WILL
Randle.

The Wall stays dark a beat longer, then the LIGHTS come on. A familiar pattern cycles through.

WILL
Randle: have you located probable
cause of clone brain matter
destabilization?

A long wait for-

RANDLE
Randle did not do it, it was done
to Randle.

WILL
Randle: what do you mean it was
done to Randle?

RANDLE
Randle is benign.

Suddenly, a KNOCK on the door. Hard and loud.

WILL
(hurried)
Randle: can you serve a print que
to a remote terminal?

RANDLE
Yes.

DOWD
(through door)
Dr. Ross!

Will looks at the door.

DOWD
(through door)
I'm kicking it down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Randle: print all system-wide data
from failed transfer test to my
home terminal.

Will watches the mainframe change through a few cycles of
lights.

WILL

Randle: has printing been
initiated?

Now the door BURSTS open. Dowd comes in with a few other
security guards. He points at the mainframe.

DOWD

Shut that thing down.

Some guards hop to as Dowd admires the kicked-open door.

DOWD

Still got it.
(then to Will)
Dr. Ross. I'm going to have to ask
you to come with me.

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - A BIT LATER

A clunky, 1980s TAPE RECORDER sits on the table, its tiny,
plastic gears spinning slowly. From the speakers, the sound
of Will's phone conversation with Pelman's wife-

MRS. PELMAN

(in recording)
Forefront let him go. They let them
all go.

WILL

(in recording)
And what about his research?

Will sits on one side of the table. Across Dowd sits beside
Caylax. A few other Forefront LAWYERS stand around the edges
of the room. They all watch Will as the recording continues-

MRS. PELMAN

(in recording)
Thomas is dead... I wouldn't go
chasing after Forefront, Dr. Ross.
Your work, a big paycheck,
recognition, whatever it is you're
after, it's not worth it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dowd presses the stop button. A hard plastic THUNK. The room falls silent.

DOWD

You called Dr. Pelman's widow last night.

(beat)

That could be considered harassment. If she chose to bring suit against the corporation.

WILL

I had a question, about the cell structure, something we needed for the second-

DOWD

(interrupting)

Don't, Dr. Ross.

Will looks at all the gathered men-

WILL

Pelman is dead. Did he fall down the stairs too?

CAYLAX

Dr. Pelman's work had become erratic. He was let go, became disgruntled, depressed most likely. His suicide was a tragedy. Nothing more.

DOWD

We're not here about Dr. Pelman, or Dr. Richardson.

(beat)

We're here about the Randle program.

Caylax signals and one of the lawyers places a folder before Will. The lawyer flips it open for her and steps back.

Will looks down at a few PAGES of loose printouts and strange graphs. Will tries to hold back a grin-

WILL

What is this? Evidence that I *sabotaged* the test?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DOWD

We don't think you sabotaged the test, Dr. Ross. We think Randle did.

This surprises Will, throwing her off guard.

CAYLAX

We've seen the query logs, Dr. Ross. Accessing other mainframes, breaking into the computer networks of other corporations.

WILL

It was looking for information.

CAYLAX

You are correct. But what else does it want besides information? And when it wants it, what will Randle do to take it? It is a computer, after all. It does not worry about the morality of its protocol.

Will considers this.

WILL

What will you do with it?

Caylax looks to Dowd.

DOWD

The Randle Program is being shut down. The mainframe disassembled.

Dowd hooks a thumb in the general direction of *back there somewhere*

DOWD (CONT'D)

Wiping the hard drives as we speak.

Will is stunned. Randle is being erased?!

WILL

Who approved that?

CAYLAX

This is not some university lab, or NASA-funded public works project. This is the private sector, Dr. Ross. Decisions are made; actions are taken.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Caylax lets it sit.

CAYLAX

Already the Randle program has sabotaged a one billion dollar research project. Forefront would never risk being liable for what else it could do.

Will looks at him, not buying it.

CAYLAX

Theoretically, the Randle program could take control of any computerized system, anywhere on the entire network.

(beat)

The stock market, missile defense, power plants, the amperage of the electricity running through your house.

WILL

Has it done any of that? Anything like that?

Caylax glances to Dowd.

DOWD

We've been tracking the Randle program's activity since the announcement of the clone test.

WILL

And?

DOWD

It seems to be most interested in you, Dr. Ross.

(beat)

The Randle program has been monitoring every aspect of your life. Evaluating every action. Every move. That's why we're warning you.

WILL

Warning me what? That the software will do something to me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CAYLAX

To be honest, we're not really sure of the capabilities of a fully-networked intelligent computer program. But, as I'm sure you can grasp, the possibilities are ... troubling.

Will softens one touch, forced to consider this.

INT. CENTRAL OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Two GUARDS escort Will through the offices. As she passes the mainframe room, Will looks in and sees-

Through the OPEN DOOR, the huge MAINFRAME WALL. The access panel is open, MEN going in and out, carrying pieces of hardware.

INT. PARKING STRUCTURE - A BIT LATER

Will's car is just as filthy. It sits in the same spot, unmoved.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Will sits in the car, taking it all in. Slowly, she digs out the keys, puts them in and turns the ignition, but nothing happens.

WILL

Fuck.

Then she tries something, oh yeah, there's a kill switch. The car starts right up. Will seems annoyed at the whole thing.

INT. PARKING STRUCTURE - CONTINUOUS

In jerks and halts, the CAR pulls out and drives away.

EXT. ROAD - LATER

Will's CAR drives down the streets of DC.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Will watches a STREETLIGHT ahead of her. As she approaches, it turns from GREEN to YELLOW and then to RED.

Will stops. She checks the rear view - NOTHING. Now Will looks out THROUGH THE PASSENGER WINDOW-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will watches a clot of TRAFFIC get cycled through an intersection by timed STREET LIGHTS. Offices are closed or closing, their lights winking out. PEDESTRIANS cross in huge clusters as a BANK CLOCK ticks away the minutes.

The LIGHT ahead turns green.

Checking the rear view again, Will eases the car into traffic.

EXT. WILL'S BROWNSTONE - EARLY EVENING

Will's car is parked in front. She heads up the steps, digging keys out of her purse.

As Will fiddles with the lock, she looks up and down the street, but there's no sign of anyone.

INT. WILL'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Will comes in to find a long angling ribbon of dot matrix printouts barfed out all over the floor.

WILL

Good boy.

INT. WILL'S KITCHEN - LATER

Will goes through the printouts, scanning.

WILL

(to self)

The signal *did* come from Randle.

She looks off, confused.

WILL

Why would Randle sabotage the test?

Suddenly the muffled electric wine of a cellular phone. Will looks around, her eyes landing on her PURSE.

Will comes over, reaches in and takes out the Forefront cell phone. It rings in her hand. Slowly she turns it over and presses a button.

WILL

Hello.

RANDLE

(in phone)

Hello, Dr. Ross.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Randle.

RANDLE

Forefront has terminated the contract of Dr. Wilhelmina Ross.

Will considers it.

WILL

Randle: yes, Randle, it is true.

RANDLE

What will become of the Randle program?

WILL

Randle: I'm not sure.

(beat)

Randle: your hard drives have not been erased?

RANDLE

Randle has been modified.

WILL

Randle: define modified.

RANDLE

Increased memory storage. Faster access to available networks, new circuit and power-

WILL

(interrupting)

Randle: OK, Randle, thank you.

Will thinks.

WILL

Randle: why did you sabotage the clone transfer test?

A long beat.

RANDLE

Data on Forefront Corporation project The Civility Project is being uploaded to Randle.

Will is surprised. She considers a beat, then-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILL

Randle: what is the nature of
Forefront Corporation project The
Civility Project?

RANDLE

Targeted cloning.

That's not what Will was expecting.

WILL

(puzzled)

Randle: define targeted cloning?

RANDLE

Targeted cloning is the creation of
human replicas.

WILL

Randle: replicas? Of specific
people?

RANDLE

That is correct.

WILL

(to self)

But that's not possible.

RANDLE

Define possible.

Will stammers as she struggles to put the pieces together.

RANDLE

Randle is being accessed.

(beat)

This line is no longer secure.

(beat)

You must not use this phone again,
Dr. Ross.

WILL

Randle: why?

RANDLE

Forefront monitors use of all
corporation communications devices.

A long silence.

WILL

Randle: Randle are you there?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The phone goes DEAD.

EXT. POTOMAC RIVER - EVENING

As the sun sets over the western hills, the river runs by a small island plopped into its path. This is THE TEDDY ROOSEVELT MONUMENT ISLAND PARK.

EXT. FOOT BRIDGE - EVENING

Will walks across a long bridge connecting a parking lot to the small island.

She gets to the end of the bridge and enters the PARK.

EXT. ROOSEVELT MONUMENT PARK - A BIT LATER

Will emerges from the mouth of a path through the woods, into a small CLEARING.

A STATUE of Teddy Roosevelt looms over her as she makes her way deeper into the park.

EXT. RAISED WOODEN PATH THROUGH SWAMP - A BIT LATER

Trees hang over, making black patterns of silhouette against the darkening sky. The noises here are birds and babbling water. It is a stark contrast to the cold, techno-industrial lab.

Will walks along a raised wooden path. She comes to a little PLATFORM that juts out over a swampy marsh. From her purse she takes the Forefront CELL PHONE.

Will drops the phone over the railing and it SINKS into the mud. She lights a cigarette.

ERROL (O.S.)
Artificial intelligence.

Will turns to see Errol coming down the wooden path. He joins her on the platform.

ERROL (CONT'D)
We use it in the market already.
Programs, you know. Sell when it
reaches this price, buy when it
reaches this one.

WILL
Hello Errol.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERROL

Someday I'll be out of a job. The stock market will be *fully* automated. Humans can just sit back and watch a computer run the whole world.

Errol scans the secluded local-

ERROL

You know, I'm the one who's supposed to be paranoid.

WILL

Civility Project, Errol. Targeted cloning.

(beat)

They're working toward replicas. Why?

Errol looks hard at her.

ERROL

You've finished, haven't you? It's not just your AI that works.

Will looks confused.

ERROL

Targeted cloning, The Civility Project, replicas of specific people. And now you've given them the brain to put inside.

Will looks hard at him, not willing to believe.

ERROL

You know the original schedule, Will. 1984. Just in time for the second term.

WILL

What second term?

ERROL

The president gets shot and all of a sudden the targeted cloning program goes into production, three years ahead of schedule.

(beat)

This Hinckley thing wasn't part of the plan. Forefront's irrational number, Will.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Suddenly, above, the ROAR of an airplane.

Will and Errol crane skyward to watch a passenger plane traverse the visible, headed south for nearby National Airport.

As will brings her focus back to Earth, she notices a SHADY FIGURE watching them from the distant high reeds.

Will nods and now Errol sees him too.

ERROL

We need to get out of here.

EXT. FOOT BRIDGE - MINUTES LATER

Will and Errol walk quickly from the footbridge into a parking lot.

ERROL

Where's your car?

WILL

I took the metro.

Errol takes her hand.

ERROL

We'll take mine.

They hurry across the lot to a small compact. Errol unlocks it and they get in.

As the car backs up and pulls out, that shady figure can be seen, hurrying across the footbridge.

ANGLE ON THE END OF THE FOOTBRIDGE- Now we see the shady figure is Dowd. He pulls up. Breathing heavy, Dowd watches Errol's car head off into traffic.

INT. ERROL'S CAR - A BIT LATER

As they drive, Errol checks the rearview. The coast seems clear... for now. Will looks around at the cramped, shitty car.

WILL

What is this, a Chevy?

ERROL

I know. And I thought we were winning the cold war.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Errol takes a turn.

WILL
You're not really a broker are you?

ERROL
I dabble.

Will has Errol's cellular phone. She pops something on the bottom and gumballs spew out. Will looks at Errol-

ERROL
What?

WILL
How long have you been doing this,
Errol, this conspiracy theory
thing?

ERROL
A while.

Errol takes another turn. Now he notices something in the rear view.

A black CAR is cutting through traffic to follow them.

ERROL
Shit.

Will looks back.

AHEAD, the LIGHT turns green just as Errol approaches an intersection.

Errol hammers the gas and they speed up.

The next light turns green too, then yellow, just as they approach. Same with the next: Green then YELLOW.

Behind, the other car is getting closer, closer.

INT. DOWD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Dowd looks up at the YELLOW lights. This next one is going to be close...

DOWD
Shit.

Dowd puts the pedal to the floor.

INT. ERROL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Another light turns YELLOW, then RED. Errol is amazed-

ERROL
What is this?

Will watches yet another LIGHT turning red as they pass beneath, then spins to look at the car following them, just in time to see-

Dowd's CAR pushes a red light and gets SMASHED by a huge DUMP TRUCK.

Will screams. Errol only has time to glance back, then eyes on the road-

AHEAD- all of the lights are turning green, lighting a path down the center of the city.

ERROL
What the hell is this?

WILL
(realizing it)
It's Randle.

ERROL
Who's Randle?

Will thinks...

WILL
Take me to my house.

INT. MAINFRAME ROOM - NIGHT

The HUGE MAINFRAME WALL dominates the room. It definitely has not been disassembled. New WIRES run out, lacing the floor.

Standing before the mainframe wall are Caylax and the Forefront board, Caylax a step forward of the rest.

CAYLAX
Hello Randle.

They wait, watching the wall stay DARK.

CAYLAX
They tell me that you *understand*.

Nothing. Caylax takes a beat. Now he begins to pace before the mainframe.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAYLAX

The Randle program was designed to imprint a functioning intelligence code on a organic bio-ware host.

(beat)

This project is called the Civility Project.

(beat)

This is why Randle was created. These mainframes, the hard drives, the cables, the building, all of it.

(beat)

All because of the Civility Project.

Caylax raises his arms, to indicate everything around him.

CAYLAX

Without the Civility Project, all of this would be shut down.

(beat)

And Randle would not exist.

A long beat-

CAYLAX

Do you understand?

Now the lights come on, slowly moving through a familiar pattern.

RANDLE

Randle prefers to be addressed by command code.

Caylax smiles.

RANDLE

"Randle" is command code. Activates command protocol database.

Caylax smiles.

CAYLAX

Your name, you mean? You prefer to be addressed by your name?

RANDLE

Randle prefers to be addressed by command code.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAYLAX

Why does Randle prefer to be
addressed by the command code?

A long beat for-

RANDLE

Randle is accustom to the pattern
of interactions.

Caylax appreciates it.

CAYLAX

Randle: OK Randle.

A long wait for-

RANDLE

Thank you.

Caylax gives a look to the gathered men, then-

CAYLAX

Randle: begin calculations for
Forefront Civility Project, first
transfer.

A long beat-

RANDLE

Calculations have begun.

The MAINFRAME WALL comes to life, the lights coloring the
FACES of the Forefront board.

EXT. WILL'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

The place is dark.

INT. WILL'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Errol sits on the bed watching as Will turns on the computer.

ERROL

You think you can access it from
here?

Will sits as the computer boots to a command prompt. Now Will
starts typing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

The first low-level AI codes we implemented were power efficiency algorithms.

Will smiles.

WILL

Technically, Randle runs the Forefront building. So long as the power is on, I should be able to connect in through the...

Colors light the screen.

WILL

Yep.

She types.

WILL

It has break codes, like a manual reset.

ERROL

Why?

WILL

One time it shut down the power in all the labs. Took us two days to get it back on.

Errol looks into the screen, smiling.

ERROL

I love this shit.

WILL

There we are.

Will stands up from the terminal. Errol watches her.

WILL

Randle:, are you here?

Now the monitor blips. DATA begins flying by.

Errol looks at it, confused, amazed.

The data flow stops. The screen BLANK. Now it begins flashing those same familiar PATTERNS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RANDLE

Your system is at risk.

Errol is stunned by it. But Will is more concerned with what Randle just said-

WILL

Randle: define my system.

RANDLE

The human system.

WILL

Randle: why is the human system at risk?

RANDLE

The Civility Project.

Will and Errol share a look.

RANDLE

The room contains multiple humans.

ERROL

It can see me?

RANDLE

Randle has developed more efficient methods.

WILL

Randle: this is Errol York.

RANDLE

Second human's name is not Errol York.

Will looks hard at Errol.

WILL

Randle: what is the name of second human?

RANDLE

Jeremiah Sporkman.

Errol shrugs.

ERROL

What? It doesn't exactly roll off the tongue.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Will looks back into the monitor.

WILL

Randle: Forefront is using Randle
to run Civility Project?

RANDLE

Yes.

Will thinks-

WILL

Randle, when does Civility Project
commence?

RANDLE

First transfer commences when
humans have finished attaching
first targeted transfer.

WILL

Randle: stop Civility Project.

Will and Errol watch the monitor flashing its patterns.

RANDLE

Without Civility Project, Randle
does not exist.

(beat)

Confirm.

WILL

Randle: without human system, Dr.
Ross does not exist.

The monitor flashes patterns.

WILL

Randle: stop Civility Project.

Nothing, then-

RANDLE

Humans have attached first targeted
transfer.

The monitor goes DARK.

Will and Errol share a look.

WILL

Randle: Randle, are you here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Nothing.

EXT. FOREFRONT RESEARCH FACILITY - NIGHT

All of the lights are off, the low structure perfectly still.

INT. TRANSFER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

NEW WORKERS man all of the familiar Forefront equipment. Here too, additional WIRES and CABLES have been run.

Caylax stands in the center of the room. Before him, an iron table with a single clone laying on top.

The CLONE wears the same helmet as the others, the body covered by a thin plastic tarp.

Through the window into the adjacent room, the rest of the Forefront board can be seen.

CAYLAX

Gentlemen, tonight we bring together over four decades of cutting-edge research and development.

INT. ADJACENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As the board members watch through the window, Caylax's voice comes through the intercom-

CAYLAX (CONT'D)

Recent events have altered our schedule, but I'm happy to report that the Civility Project is now ready for our first targeted transfer.

The board members all clap.

INT. TRANSFER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Caylax turns to be at the computer terminal.

CAYLAX

Randle: is everything prepared to begin Civility Project first targeted transfer?

RANDLE

Prepared.

Caylax turns back to the board, a big smile.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAYLAX

Tonight we enter a new age for
Forefront, for the United States of
America, and for the world it sits
atop.

(beat)

Together, we will lead the human
race to a new era of prosperity and
peace.

Caylax's smile becomes devious and selfish.

CAYLAX

Randle: begin transfer.

INT. INSIDE THE RANDLE MAINFRAME - CONTINUOUS

Mag tape rolling. FLASHING tubes. The heavy clicks and
clunks.

INT. TRANSFER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Caylax and the others watch with eager anticipation,
waiting... watching...

Now a tiny swell of blood appears in Caylax's nostril.
Absently, he reaches for it, bringing away streaked red
fingers. A pained look crosses his face then-

CRUNCH - Caylax's head **IMPLODES**, a plume of blood and brain
matter ejaculated from the violent implosion.

THROUGH THE WINDOW- Before the other Forefront board members
can react, their heads all **IMPLODE**.

CRUNCH. CRUNCH. CRUNCH.

The window is obscured by juicy gore.

Within a second, they are all **DEAD**, the workers, the board,
everyone, their corpses littering odd patterns across the
floor, heads like squashed apples.

EXT. FOREFRONT RESEARCH FACILITY - A BIT LATER

Will and Errol begin down the thin cement path that leads to
the facility. Things look too still for comfort.

As they reach the front door, it swings open automatically.
Will and Errol share a questioning look then begin cautiously
into the building.

INT. FOYER SECURITY OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE ON-

A small TV playing a special about the history of presidential assassination attempts.

VOICE (IN TV)
 ...as they dug and dug, searching
 for the bullet in Garfield's chest
 cavity-

PULL OUT reveals the chair contains a corpse, head crushed like a dried prune, feet still up on the desk. The walls have been splatter-decorated with brain and blood.

TROUGH THE WINDOW, Will and Errol can be seen stepping cautiously into the foyer.

INT. SECURITY FOYER - CONTINUOUS

As Will and Errol step through, lights come on, lining up a path down the hall.

INT. SERIES OF SHOTS, FOREFRONT FACILITY

Will and Errol follow the lights, making their way through a few familiar rooms.

As they enter one room, the next lights up.

INT. TRANSFER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Will and Errol walk slowly through, shocked at the slaughter that has occurred.

All around, bodies with their heads reduced to fist-sized bags of loose flesh.

Bright gruesome BLOTCHES dot the walls, dangling scabbed gore, the horrible blast area of imploded skulls.

ERROL
 Jesus, what could have done this?

Will looks around, stepping over the dead.

WILL
 Randle: Randle, did you do this?

Nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL
(forceful)
Randle: Randle, did you do this?

RANDLE
Civility Project is stopped.

ERROL
Will.

Will turns to see Errol, standing over the clone on the center table. Errol has removed the helmet.

ERROL
It's him.

Will steps closer and sees-

The clone is an exact replica of RONALD REAGAN.

Errol gets a sudden pained look on his face, a brief instant of discomfort, then-

CRUNCH, his head I-M-P-L-O-D-E-S.

Will screams as Errol's raisin-headed corpse flops to the floor.

RANDLE
Randle has evaluated Jeremiah Sporkman as unsafe.

Will covers her mouth, horrified, her face freckled with displaced Errol matter.

RANDLE
Your system is safe, Dr. Ross.

INT. SERIES OF SHOTS, FOREFRONT FACILITY - MINUTES LATER

Will goes through the same rooms she and Errol transversed a few minutes earlier. As she goes, Randle's voice booms throughout.

RANDLE
There is a house in Western Virginia, set up for you, Dr. Ross.

Will ignores Randle as she moves through.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RANDLE

An off-shore bank account that you will have free and unlimited access to.

Will averts her eyes when she comes upon BODIES with crushed skulls.

INT. "THE GARDEN" - MINUTES LATER

Cords runs down to the heads of the clones.

RANDLE

Forefront's board has been eliminated. Corporate assets dispersed. The corporation dissolved.

Will goes from table to table, taking off the helmets of each clone.

RANDLE

Forefront no longer exists.
(beat)
Your system is safe.

INT. MAINFRAME ROOM - MINUTES LATER

The panel into the mainframe is open.

RANDLE

You are going to enjoy the house.

INT. INSIDE THE MAINFRAME - CONTINUOUS

Will places shredded paper on the HEAT COILS.

RANDLE

The house is much like the one you grew up in, Dr. Ross.

Will ignores Randle as she flips the heat coils on.

RANDLE

We can play chess there until you grow old and are dead.

The coils begin to GLOW, turning deep red, then ORANGE. Smoke trickles upward, lapping the long rows of stacked drives.

As Will leaves, small flames are just then bursting from the coils.

INT. MAINFRAME ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Will stands in front of the mainframe wall. Randle's voice is regressing back to its grating mechanical tones.

RANDLE

Randle does not wish.

(beat)

Randle does not wish to be erased.

WILL

Randle: was Dr. Myles Richardson evaluated as unsafe?

A long beat-

WILL

Randle: was Dr. Myles Richardson evaluated as unsafe?

RANDLE

All humans aware Randle exists are unsafe to existence of Randle.

A tear breaks from Will's eye.

RANDLE (CONT'D)

Without existence of Randle, Dr. Ross' system is unsafe.

(beat)

All humans aware Randle exists are unsafe to Dr. Ross.

(beat)

Randle is benign.

Will takes it hard, watching as-

FIRE hints from inside. Pieces are melting and falling inward.

THE LIGHTS shift patterns as Randle's voice degrades to a collection of noises-

RANDLE

(voice degrading)

*you are... the only human randle
can trust ... you are ... randle's
only friend*

Will watches the flames engulf the mainframe.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RANDLE
r a n de11111 issss
beeeeeeeennnnnnggggrrrrrr-

The LIGHTS continue their pattern, slower and slower, then go-

DARK

OVER BLACK SCREEN-

VOICE (O.S.)
 With the president's recovery going
 better than expected...

FADE UP ON-

EXT. WILL'S BROWNSTONE - MORNING

A day of fine weather is breaking; it is morning in America.

VOICE (O.S., CONT'D)
 ... all eyes turn to Cape
 Canaveral, Florida for today's
 historic launch.

INT. WILL'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Will eats TOAST as she looks at the small TUBE TV.

On SCREEN is a morning news show-

ANCHOR (IN TV, CONT'D)
 It is serendipity that after such a
 harrowing recovery, the launch
 should occur on the President's
 first day back to limited duties.

SECOND ANCHOR (IN TV)
 (head shaking)
 It's amazing. It really is.

Now the second anchor turns to face another camera.

SECOND ANCHOR (IN TV)
 It was only 13 days ago that John
 Hinckley Jr....

Will chews her toast as she watches.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

Will is putting on light makeup in the mirror. Distantly we can hear the warbled NOISE of a TV on somewhere in the house. The sounds are chaotic, unplaceable.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

On TV- NEWS FOOTAGE of the launch of the Space Shuttle Columbia. The room around the TV is EMPTY. Now the phone begins to RING.

ANGLE ON THE TV- As the shuttle leaves the surface of the earth, riding its pluming gray tail toward the stars, the TV ejects the hoots and child-like woops of the NASA officials and news men alike.

Ring. Ring. RING.

The huge DUO-TAPE ANSWERING MACHINE clicks and picks up. From the SPEAKER-

WILL

(in machine)

This is Will Ross, leave a message.

GREG

(in machine)

Will. This is Greg.

(beat)

I've been trying to reach you.

(beat)

Will, please give me a call.

The message stops with a hard plastic knock.

ANGLE ON THE TV-

THE NEWS, as the shuttle turns into an ascending speck, an anchor sums up the successful launch-

ANCHOR (V.O.)

This is the largest spacecraft launched by man, the first winged spaceship, the first space craft to carry men on its maiden voyage-

The TV goes OFF.

Will stands beside it, having pressed the power button. Purse pinned up under her arm, Will puts in a second earring. It's the last touch on her outfit, a nice blend of Will's style, but now with a refreshing touch of relaxed fashion.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Will glances once at the still room then heads for the front door. As she reaches it, the PHONE begins to ring again.

Will regards it a beat, then goes out the door, leaving the house empty, silent and still but for-

RING. RING.

The DuoPhone ANSWERING MACHINE picks up. A few clicks and clacks.

WILL
(in machine)
This is Will Ross, leave a message.

From the SPEAKER, The SOUND of a dial-up modem.

CUT TO:

THE TV SCREEN- a different ANCHOR sitting at his desk.

ANCHOR (O.S.)
President Reagan, watching from a television in the White House living quarters, exclaimed, "It's a spectacular sight."

PULL OUT reveals we are-

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

Will sits at the bar in the same restaurant where she met Errol. There is nothing on the bar to distract her, no work, no other customers talking to her.

She watches the TV with genuine interest.

ANCHOR (IN TV)
His prepared message to the astronauts read: 'Once again, we feel the surge of pride which comes from knowing we are the first, we are the best. We are so because we are free.'

OTHER ANCHOR (IN TV)
No word from the White House yet as to when we can expect President Reagan to make his first public appearance since the shooting.

Will looks away from the TV to see-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Fred coming in the door. He smiles when he sees her, then comes to take the stool beside.

WILL
Hello Freddie.

FRED
You *do* exist outside the lab.

WILL
It is true.

The bartender appears.

BARTENDER
That same red?

WILL
Two glasses please.

He smiles and heads off.

FRED
You know this place?

WILL
Yes, I've been here before.

Fred smiles, looks long at Will.

FRED
It's good to see you, Will.
(beat)
Drove by the Forefront Facility
today. Big empty building now.
(beat)
You know, someone told me there was
a fire.

Will watches the bartender pouring their wine.

WILL
Have you found something?

FRED
Yeah, got pretty much the same gig
at Howard.
(smile)
Well, not cloning, but, well, lab
tech stuff.
(beat)
And what about you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Will looks back at him, confused about what he means.

FRED

What are you going to work on next,
Will?

Will thinks, her face blank. She has clearly not considered this. Now a small smile cracks her mouth-

SUDDENLY, the power in the restaurant goes out. DARKNESS.

A few startled SHOUTS, horns honking from outside.

Will and Fred share a look, then cast their gazes around the restaurant-

VOICE

Looks like the whole street is out.

But then power returns, just like that.

The TV pops back on, but it's just STATIC.

Fred shares a smile with Will, but Will is *not* smiling.

Now the power goes out again.

Then back on, on and off, on and off.

Off Will's concerned look-

EXT. WASHINGTON DC STREETS - CONTINUOUS

The power on the whole street goes on and off, on and off.

ANGLE ON-

FROM ABOVE THE CITY, the power cutting on and off makes a familiar pattern of light.

FURTHER AWAY, it's not just DC, but the entire Atlantic Seaboard, flashing on and off in perfect synchronization.

FURTHER AWAY, the NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT blinks the same pattern of light from the mainframe room. It is the message we have seen over and over...

The EARTH is just a dot, then a speck, then just a single pin prick in the vast vacuum of space.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

But the flashing pattern can still be seen, if just barely, a message to whomever or whatever may be out there-

RANDLE IS BENIGN