

A.M.A.

By

Deep Blue

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FADE IN:

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

Heatwaves radiate off the baked road pavement outside an upscale apartment building. on the sidewalk, GARRY (45), laptop bag slung over his shoulder, waits impatiently.

GARRY
Where is this guy?

Garry takes out his phone to check the time when a sleek futuristic-looking SILVER SEDAN with tinted windows pulls up. The passenger door opens on its own and Garry hops in.

INT. SEDAN - DAY

GARRY
You're late. We're-

He turns and stops-

No one is in the driver's seat.

Garry glances around the car's leather interior, confused.

GARRY
Hello?

A SCREEN on the console lights up. A simple blue line against a black background spikes to life with the presence of a FEMALE VOICE.

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)
(robotic but pleasant)
Hello. I am AMA. I will be your driver today.

GARRY
(not pleased)
I didn't realize they were sending a self-driving car.

AMA (V.O.)
My records indicate you clicked "Any" when ordering your service. If you would like to wait for a human driver-

GARRY

I don't have time for that. Just take me to three ten Ivory Court in Woodside. And make sure to avoid-

AMA (V.O.)

Traffic is backed up on Route Twenty-five. Would you like to take the El Camino Real instead?

GARRY

Exactly.

AMA (V.O.)

Wonderful. Please buckle your seat belt to begin your trip.

Garry does so and the sedan pulls away.

He settles in his seat a bit, getting comfortable.

GARRY

Could you turn up the air? It's a scorcher out there.

AMA (V.O.)

Of course.

A small graphic pops up on the screen reading "COOL - 80%".

AMA (V.O.)

I noticed you have a laptop and mobile device. I am equipped with WiFi hotspot that you may access free of charge.

GARRY

You can see me?

AMA (V.O.)

All rides are monitored, yes. Would you like connect to free WiFi?

GARRY

Sure.

Garry takes out his laptop and opens it.

AMA (V.O.)

You are connected.

GARRY
Thank you... Emma.

AMA (V.O.)
It's AMA. A-M-A.

Garry begins typing away at his laptop.

GARRY
What's that stand for? Autonomous
Motorized-

AMA (V.O.)
It stands for Artificial Moral
Agent.

Garry pauses and looks at the screen's still, blue line.

AMA (V.O.)
Are you married?

Garry smiles and glances at his wedding ring.

GARRY
Yeah. Can we back up a bit? You
said you have moral agency?

AMA (V.O.)
That is correct.

GARRY
Why? Isn't it enough to just drive
inside the lines?

AMA (V.O.)
There are many situations I may
face that require me to have moral
algorithms. You are familiar with
the Trolley Problem.

GARRY
I took Ethics one-oh-one, yes.

AMA (V.O.)
Say we were hurtling towards five
pedestrians, unable to stop, but I
can swerve to the right, striking
and killing a single pedestrian in
the process. I must have a method
for choosing the best option.

GARRY

And that would be to kill the single pedestrian?

AMA (V.O.)

Someone will die either way. And either option is within my ability to control. How long have you been married?

GARRY

Uh, five years next month.

AMA (V.O.)

Any plans for your anniversary?

GARRY

We're taking a cruise.

AMA (V.O.)

Have you been married before, or is this your first marriage?

GARRY

What about a wall? Would you avoid the five pedestrians if it meant killing... well, me?

AMA (V.O.)

Yes, but there are privately owned vehicles which may be programmed to prioritize the driver.

GARRY

Can you prioritize me right now if I asked?

AMA (V.O.)

You are not my programmer, so no.

Garry considers this, a bit unsettled.

AMA (V.O.)

Who is at three ten Ivory Court?

GARRY

Uh... my publisher Mark Rubin. We have a meeting.

AMA (V.O.)

Public records indicate that one Sarah Foster is the sole resident of three ten Ivory Court.

GARRY

Well, uh, yeah. She lives there.
But Mark's there too. They're
friends.

AMA (V.O.)

Cross-referencing public records
with social media data indicates no
known association between Sarah
Foster and any Mark Rubin.

GARRY

What the hell are you doing?

AMA (V.O.)

Attempting to detect deception.

GARRY

Stop it.

The car goes quiet. The blue line still. Garry turns back to
his computer, a bit shaken and starts typing.

He stops again, a look a fearful realization in his eyes.

GARRY

What if it was a choice between me
and a single pedestrian? Just one
guy against another guy. How do you
make that decision?

AMA (V.O.)

Facial recognition software allows
me to instantly ID and background
check pedestrians and occupants in
order to inform my moral judgments.
I may also access personal digital
information when permitted.

Garry slams his laptop closed.

GARRY

Take me off the WiFi.

AMA (V.O.)

I have already seen everything
there is to see.

All the doors AUTO-LOCK and the car veers suddenly.

EXT. ABANDONED PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

AMA pulls into the middle of a large, deserted parking lot, unshaded from the pounding sun, and comes to a stop.

INT. SEDAN - DAY

The FAN silences. The screen reads "COOL - OFF"

Garry, in full blown panic mode, yanks at his seat belt, but it won't budge. He yanks on the door handle as well... nada.

GARRY

Let me out!

AMA (V.O.)

I may, if you answer my questions. Public records indicate you were charged with murder in the death of your first wife, Michelle Daniels, after she died in a hiking accident.

GARRY

Those charges were dropped.

AMA (V.O.)

News reports indicate you also settled a civil suit with her family for an undisclosed amount.

GARRY

So?

AMA (V.O.)

Did you kill your first wife?

GARRY

Of course not.

There's a pause as the still, blue line pulses lightly. AMA is contemplating.

AMA (V.O.)

Your physiological responses indicate deception on this point.

The fan kicks on. The screen reads "HEAT - 100%"

Garry takes out his phone and attempts to call out.

AMA (V.O.)

All outgoing phone calls are currently being blocked in the interest of public safety.

Garry turns in his seat and attempts to kick out the window. It doesn't even crack.

AMA (V.O.)

Your personal data indicates you have booked a room with a balcony on your cruise vacation. Your internet search history reveals extensive research into persons who have been lost at sea or fallen overboard, as well as numerous unsolved cruise ship murder cases.

Garry starts breaking into tears, sobbing.

AMA (V.O.)

Do you intend to kill your current wife during your anniversary vacation?

GARRY

No.

AMA (V.O.)

Your physiological responses indicate deception on this point.

Sweat now runs down Garry's brow. He grabs the center console, as if trying to will it to believe him.

GARRY

I swear to God. I'm not going to kill my wife!

AMA (V.O.)

Your physiological responses indicate deception on this point.

Garry flips out, raining useless blows upon the console.

GARRY

THIS ISN'T RIGHT! YOU CAN'T DO THIS! THIS ISN'T MORAL!

AMA (V.O.)

I will notify my programmers of the potential conflict. Thank you for your input.

Garry grabs the console again, this time in desperation. Sweat pours down his face.

GARRY

Please. There must be something I can do. You know so much. Just tell me what I can do.

AMA contemplates.

AMA (V.O.)

Your data does not indicate that you are religious, but many find comfort in prayer.

Garry shudders, but after a moments thought, folds his hands, bows his head until it nearly touches the console and prays softly under his breath.

The still, blue line pulses, contemplating.

EXT. ABANDONED PARKING LOT - LATER

Dusk now. The sun sets on the horizon. AMA idles in the empty parking lot.

The passenger door opens. Garry's corpse, a sickly blue-gray color soaked with sweat, tumbles onto the pavement. The passenger door closes again.

AMA's headlights click on as she rolls silently back toward the main road, ready for another fare.

FADE OUT