

Into That Goodnight

By

Jaron Lanier

(c) 2017

**FADE IN**

**INT. ANNIE'S ROOM - MORNING**

Sunshine peeks through the curtains of a brightly colored room and finds ANNIE (23), sleeping in bed.

From seemingly nowhere, EMMA (6), wide-awake and full of energy, jumps on the bed.

EMMA  
Mommy. Wake up.

Annie opens her eyes and looks around, groggy.

EMMA  
What were you dreaming about?

A smile leaks through Annie's tired expression.

ANNIE  
You.

She kisses and hugs her daughter, then sits up as Emma jumps down and runs out of the room.

Annie looks to her end table, where a hologram clock display reads: "7:28am". She bolts out of bed.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Annie rushes into the room. It's sparse and decorated in an ultra-modern style, with little technological flourishes (like a paper-thin TV) scattered about.

ANNIE  
Your bus is gonna be here any minute.

Emma passes her, carrying a finished bowl of cereal.

EMMA  
It's okay. I made breakfast.

ANNIE  
That's not okay at all. I should be making your breakfast.

EMMA  
It's okay. I know you been sleepy. I'm responsible.

Emma continues into the...

**KITCHEN**

...followed by Annie.

ANNIE

Speaking of responsible. There's something we didn't get to finish talking about last night. You remember what it was?

Emma shakes her head...

EMMA

Uh uh.

...then sets her bowl on the counter and tries to walk quickly out of the room.

Annie stops her.

ANNIE

Your teacher called and said you hit another girl at school, remember?

EMMA

She started it.

ANNIE

So you were defending yourself?

EMMA

(thinks about it)

Yeah.

Annie pulls out a very thin, smartphone-like device and holds it up.

ANNIE

Honey, I'm going to be able to see exactly what happened. You've got one chance to tell me the truth.

Emma looks at the device.

EMMA

She started it.

ANNIE

Alright.

Annie holds the device up to Emma's left temple. The device glows, and so does a small SUBDERMAL IMPLANT underneath Emma's skin.

The device BEEPS. The screen lights up... "Data transmitted"

The device BEEPS again and the screen reads: "BUS HERE: PRESENT or ABSENT?"

Annie taps "PRESENT". She and Emma move back into the...

### LIVING ROOM

Annie grabs a bright pink backpack off the couch and puts it on her daughter, then grabs a small stuffed bunny and hands it to Emma.

ANNIE

You better be telling me the truth,  
or Mister Wiggles is spending the  
weekend in the closet.

EMMA

Don't take it out on him.

Annie walks Emma to the front door, opens it, and stoops down to hug her daughter.

ANNIE

Be good. I love you.

EMMA

Love you too.

Emma trots out and Annie closes the door behind her. She turns away then stops, like she's having second thoughts.

Annie tries to open the door again, but it won't budge. She looks at the knob, perplexed, then notices...

...a SCAR on the palm of her left hand. She blinks and the scar is gone.

Dizziness overcomes her and she leans against the wall to keep stable.

ANNIE

Hestia, call Doctor Duncan.

The TV in the living room comes on and an ANIMATED FIGURE appears on it. Annie walks toward it.

ANIMATED FIGURE

Hello, Annie. Doctor Duncan is busy  
with a patient. I'm his digital  
representor. How may I assist you?

ANNIE

The sleeping pills Henry gave me  
work *too* well. I'm oversleeping and  
I still feel tired all day.

The Animated Figure freezes in place for one creepy second  
while it processes.

ANIMATED FIGURE

Please indicate all side effects  
that you have experienced that may  
be due to your medication.  
Grogginess, dizziness, depression,  
headaches, hallucinations, memory  
loss, rashes, internal bleeding-

ANNIE

Just grogginess, thank you.

The Figure processes.

ANIMATED FIGURE

I can authorize you to cut your  
pill in half and will recommend a  
smaller dose for your next  
prescription. Would you still like  
Dr. Duncan to call you when he  
becomes available?

ANNIE

Yes.

ANIMATED FIGURE

Thank you, and have a healthy day.

The TV turns off and Annie sits on the couch. She reaches  
forward to the glass coffee table before her and grabs a  
SMALL METALLIC HEADBAND.

She puts the headband on so that its two ends meet the  
temples of her head.

She taps at her hand-held device.

ONSCREEN: "Transmitting memory data"

Annie closes her eyes. The tips of the headband glow. Two  
subdermal implants in Annie's temple glow in response.

The SOUNDS of children playing fill the air...

**EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY**

ALL FROM POV:

A little more than three feet above the ground, we move across a bustling schoolyard, approaching a LITTLE GIRL playing with some dolls.

Our hand holds Mr. Wiggles out before us...

EMMA (OS)  
Can Mr. Wiggles play?

LITTLE GIRL  
They don't want to play with Mr. Wiggles.

EMMA (OS)  
Please?

LITTLE GIRL  
No.

EMMA (OS)  
I asked nicely. You have to say, "yes" if I ask nicely.

LITTLE GIRL  
No one wants to play with your stupid rabbit.

END POV

**INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING**

On the couch, Annie flinches at the sound of a LOUD SMACK, followed by the Little Girl BAWLING.

Annie takes off the memory band and tosses it on the table.

ANNIE  
God damn it.

She gets up and heads into the...

**KITCHEN**

She takes the cereal bowl, drops it into a cluttered sink, then goes to work washing dishes.

She uses her nails to get a particularly stubborn piece of crud off a steak knife when-

RING, RING!

She jolts, accidentally slashing open her left palm.

She looks at the cut, a sense of unease overcoming her when-

**INT. ANNIE'S ROOM - MORNING**

Sunshine peeks through the curtains of a brightly colored room and finds Annie sleeping. From seemingly nowhere, Emma jumps on the bed.

EMMA

Mommy. Wake up.

Annie opens her eyes, groggy.

EMMA

What were you dreaming about?

Annie looks around, then down at her palm. There isn't a single mark or drop of blood on it.

ANNIE

You.

Emma jumps down and runs out of the room. Annie looks to her end table, where a hologram clock display reads: "7:28am". She bolts out of bed.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Annie rushes into the room.

ANNIE

Your bus is gonna be here any minute.

Emma passes her carrying a finished bowl of cereal.

EMMA

It's okay. I made breakfast.

Annie looks disturbed, confused.

ANNIE

I should be making your breakfast.

EMMA

It's okay. I know you been sleepy. I'm responsible.

Emma continues into the kitchen. Annie lingers, trying to figure things out when-

ANNIE II (OS)  
 Speaking of responsible. There's  
 something we didn't get to finish  
 talking about last night. You  
 remember what it was?

Annie goes into the...

**KITCHEN**

...and is horrified to see ANNIE II, another version of  
 herself, speaking with her daughter.

EMMA  
 Uh uh.

ANNIE II  
 Your teacher called and said you  
 hit another girl at school,  
 remember?

EMMA  
 She started it.

ANNIE  
 (panicked)  
 Emma, get away from her. Come here  
 right now.

But Emma ignores her, and the scene continues unabated.  
 Annie II pulls out the thin device.

ANNIE II  
 Honey, I'm going to be able to see  
 exactly what happened. You've got  
 one chance to tell me the truth.

EMMA  
 She started it.

ANNIE II  
 Alright.

Annie II holds the device up to Emma's left temple.

Annie lunges for her doppelganger, but an invisible force  
 prevents them from touching.

ANNIE  
 Get away from my daughter!

No one hears her or reacts in the slightest. They move past  
 her, back into the living room.



Annie leans on the counter, trying to collect herself.

ANNIE  
I must still be sleeping.

She closes her eyes and pinches herself hard.

ANNIE  
Wake up.

She opens her eyes. Nothing's changed.

From the other room comes the sound of the DOOR OPENING.

### **LIVING ROOM**

Annie rushes back just in time to see Emma walk out the front door and Annie II close the door behind her.

Annie runs to it and tugs at the knob... it won't budge.

Annie II walks toward the TV.

ANNIE II  
Hestia, call Doctor Duncan.

Annie continues to tug and pound at the door as the Animated Figure appears on the TV and converses with her twin.

ANNIE  
EMMA!

She goes to a window and tries to open it... no luck.

ANIMATED FIGURE  
Please indicate all side effects  
that you have experienced that may  
be due to your medication.  
Grogginess, dizziness, depression,  
headaches, hallucinations...

Annie freezes and turns to the TV.

ANNIE II  
Just grogginess, thank you.

ANNIE  
And hallucinations.

She drops to the ground and takes a few deep breaths, trying to calm herself.

ANNIE

Alright, don't move. This isn't real. You could be anywhere doing anything. Where are you? Come on. Remember where you are. Remember...

She looks up and sees Annie II sit on the couch and put the memory band on.

ANNIE

...where you are.

Annie reaches up, grasps the air around her head...

**INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

...and pulls the memory band off. She looks around.

She's on the couch. The living room surrounding her is dark, drab and messy with beer cans and takeout bags. No one's cleaned in weeks, maybe months.

She takes everything in, disoriented. Looks at her hand where there's a long, healed scar... then something clicks.

ANNIE

EMMA!

She bolts out of the room. The sound of DOORS OPENING and CLOSING is heard.

ANNIE (OS)

EMMA! Emma, come out now.

Annie rushes back into the living room.

ANNIE

Emma, seriously. Mommy's not playing...

She sees Emma's bright pink backpack sitting next to the couch and picks it up.

The side with the straps has a DARK RED stain on it.

**BEGIN FLASHBACK:**

**INT. KITCHEN - DAY**

Annie's cleaning the steak knife when-  
RING, RING!

She jolts, accidentally slashing open her left palm.

ANNIE

Fuck. Hestia, answer the call.

She wraps her hand in a dish towel.

FEMALE VOICE (VO)

Hello, Ms Harris.

ANNIE

Is this Doctor Duncan's office?

FEMALE VOICE (VO)

No, this is the principle of  
Andrew's Elementary. Miss Harris  
you need to listen closely.

The seriousness and barely restrained panic in the voice's  
tone is unmistakable.

FEMALE VOICE (VO)

You need to go to Saint John's  
Medical Center right away. Emma is  
on her way there now.

ANNIE

What do you mean? What happened?

FEMALE VOICE (VO)

(cracks with distress)

There was an accident. She dropped  
her stuffed animal under the bus  
and, I guess the sensors didn't  
pick her up...

The voice fades off as Annie freezes in shock.

**END FLASHBACK****INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Memories flooding back, Annie collapses next to the couch  
hugging the blood stained backpack to her chest. She lets  
out a deep tortured sob.

On the coffee table, she notices Mr. Wiggles. She picks him  
up, revealing a prescription pill bottle hidden behind him.

She gazes through tears at the bottle, considering.

She grabs it, pops a random amount of pills in her hand and downs them with a swig from a nearby beer can.

Annie picks up the memory band and puts it on. The band's tips GLOW, as do her subdermal implants.

She lays her head back, closes her eyes and clutches the stuffed rabbit closer.

**INT. ANNIE'S ROOM - MORNING**

Sunshine peeks through the curtains of a brightly colored room and finds ANNIE sleeping.

From seemingly nowhere, EMMA, wide-awake and full of energy, jumps on the bed.

EMMA

Mommy. Wake up.

Annie opens her eyes and looks up to see her daughter's adoring face.

EMMA

What were you dreaming about?

Annie smiles and pulls Emma into a tight hug.

ANNIE

You.

FADE OUT