

CTRL/SHIFT

by

R5e

FADE IN:

**EXT. PARK - BENCH - DAY**

Two baggy-denim youths approach, KIP (16) and WHIP (17). Both carry a small department store bag.

They take a seat and dig out two newly boxed smart-phones.

An unkempt old man, ZERO (80), approaches and sits awry, clutching a cane. He wears a black rusty trench coat and a bowler hat.

He raises his fist and coughs wet into his fingerless glove.

SUPERIMPOSE OVER ENTIRE SCREEN: "BLACK FRIDAY"

The youths notice the bench dweller, but ignore him.

KIP  
(re: new phone)  
Sweet!

Another cough from Zero draws their attention.

KIP  
Let's go.

WHIP  
(at Zero)  
Did I say you could join us?

ZERO  
I'm tired, I wanna sit a moment.

Zero raises his head to show a pair of milky glazed eyes. Kip is taken back by the creepy appearance.

KIP  
Your eyes, man?!

ZERO  
What about 'em? Never seen a blind man before...? I have!

He laughs uncontrollable at that, all the while coughing like he's having a seizure.

ZERO  
Besides, you don't own the bench, I do!

He points at a small brass placard mounted to the bench seat.

INSERT PLACARD: "Donated by the Kneally family 1904"

KIP

This dude's delusional.

Zero mumbles.

ZERO

Donated this here bench after pop died. I was, umm...twenty-three? Yeah, don't really miss him, the bastard. Glad he died to tell truth, to tell... to tell.

The youths laugh.

KIP

Twenty-three, in 1904? That would make you like, older than dirt and embalmed. I think your confused, pops, like... really confused.

He turns away, mumbles on.

ZERO

I don't get confused. That's a thing of the past... and future.

Kip shoves his smart-phone into Zero's face.

KIP

Ever seen tech like that, old man?

He swats it away like a fly.

ZERO

Pfft, abacus.

WHIP

He's blind, Kip. You're wasting your time.

ZERO

Legally, yes... but I see shapes and colors, and I see that for what it is.

KIP

A what?

ZERO

Two kids who got ripped off. I could do better communicating with cave art.

WHIP

These are fresh off the assembly line eleven hundred dollar smart-phones, grandpa!

Kip elbows Whip.

KIP

You know it, man. Sweet deal!

WHIP

The computing power in here is like a thousand -- no, ten thousand times more powerful than the computers on the Apollo mission.

Kip gets in on it.

KIP

Yeah, you're just jealous you don't know how to use awesome tech, old man. Our shit is way ahead of your time, all those crappy radios and dial telephones you had to use.

WHIP

Yeah, and those big-ass heavy glass televisions the size of Mack trucks n' shit that you had to get off the couch to change the channel --

Kip and Whip howl.

ZERO

Shut up, you dumb-ass goobers!

KIP

The hell you just call me?!

ZERO

How do you think all that technology came about, huh? The tech-fairy?

WHIP

Man, you haven't got a clue.

ZERO

Me, that's who! Me and my peers designed it all.

WHIP

The hell you going on about?

ZERO

Funny thing is, we sold you the garbage, and kept the good stuff for ourselves.

He laughs heartily.

WHIP

What a bunch of bullshit. Look at the size of this phone, it's a super computer in the palm of my hand. This *is* the latest technology.

Zero twiddles his cane unamused, spits.

ZERO

Curious thing isn't it? The more powerful it gets the smaller it becomes, the smaller it becomes, the more expensive it has to be. Soon you'll be paying a fortune for something so small you won't even know it's there. We'll sell you a grain of cyber-rice as the greatest thing since sliced bread, and you'll re-mortgage your house for it cause you're all dipshits!

WHIP

That's the stupidest thing I ever heard.

KIP

How you gonna' talk into a grain of rice?

With great effort, Zero gets to his feet.

ZERO

Alright, you two have irritated me long enough.

He stands front and center and holds out his palm. Suddenly a holographic module of a futuristic phone glows into view.

Using his thumb, he manipulates a few buttons and keys, then... a burst of light and he disappears into the ether.

The CAMERA slowly dolly's up and away as the youths stare motionless and slack-jawed, trying to decipher what just happened.

FADE TO BLACK.