

LEARNING TO LOVE

Written by

Gary M. Howell and Rick Hansberry

This script is the confidential and proprietary property of the authors and no portion of it may be performed, distributed, reproduced, used, quoted or published without prior written permission.

Gary M. Howell
1518 Pine Chase Dr.
Houston, Texas 77055
(281) 630-5703
garymhowell@gmail.com

Rick Hansberry
130 St. Thomas Road
Lancaster, Pa. 17601
(717) 682-8618
djrickhansberry@msn.com

© 2023 Gary M. Howell and Rick Hansberry
All Rights Reserved

FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY

Cramped. Devoid of personality or style. Neatly made bed, lamp and clock. Drab vanilla in every sense.

Sunlight pierces the blinds, lays in stripes across the room leading to a --

BATHROOM

Also completely tidy. Not even a shower curtain on the bath. The distinct sound of a television playing in the background. The sound grows louder near the --

LIVING AREA

It's almost barren.

A couch. An end table with a single book: "BRAVE NEW WORLD."

One painting on a wall - a young lady, sitting in a field, looking into the distance.

And one framed picture.

A young couple, smiling happily from a pub table.

KITCHEN

No dishes in the sink. Bare countertops. No food in sight.

DINING AREA

KEVIN, 25, sits in a plain chair, his back to us. In front of him are two large computer monitors.

He types on a keyboard, entering data into a program.

NEWS ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
(filtered; on television)
...and as the pandemic enters its second week, the city remains in complete lockdown. Streets are virtually empty, businesses are shut down, and city services have been reduced to emergency needs only. Doctors and nurses are overwhelmed with the number of patients seeking treatment.

(MORE)

NEWS ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Every hospital bed throughout the city is full and patients are being turned away. The mayor and city council have imposed stiff fines for anyone violating the lockdown rules. In other news...

Kevin turns toward the TV. Frowns.

Freshly shaved, but his hair is not so trim, a consequence of being confined indoors.

He walks to the window, peers outside.

EXT. CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

The street and sidewalks are empty. A virtual ghost town.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Kevin's gaze wanders over to the picture. We now see that he is one of the two smiling people.

Sadness washes over his face and he turns from the picture.

His melancholy is interrupted by his cell CHIRPING.

Kevin eyes the incoming number, sighs.

KEVIN

Hello?...yes, Mr. Bailey, I'm working on it now. Should have the numbers run by tomorr...

(off interruption)

Four o'clock today?...Sorry, but that's just not possible, Sir. The sheer volume of...

(reacts; deflated)

Yes, sir, I'll do my best...

Kevin curses under his breath, hangs up. Stares at the computer monitors and the large amount of data on the screen, seemingly mocking him.

KITCHEN - LATER

Kevin opens the freezer.

Stacks of frozen foods.

He closes his eyes, reaches in like he's pulling a prize from a treasure closet.

KEVIN
Please be something new. Please be
something new.

Unfortunately, he gets the booby prize.

KEVIN
Frozen pizza again? Really?

His shoulders slump and as the door shuts we see practically every item there is frozen pizza. It's a rigged game.

Kevin places it in the oven, sets a timer, retreats to work.

LATER

A plate holds a half-eaten pizza. A beer can sits nearby.

Kevin types at the computer, numbers entered at a feverish pace. A flurry of activity blips across the monitors.

Then -- a pause.

Kevin rubs his eyes, glances at his watch. He lifts another slice, grimaces then tosses the slice back.

KEVIN
Fuck it.

He minimizes the windows of the program he's working on, opens a new window and clicks on the file explorer tab. He scrolls through a series of files until he lands on a series of video files.

INSERT ON SCREEN:

Several files start with "Toni". "Toni at restaurant." "Toni and me at beach." "Toni in the vineyard."

He move the mouse to one that reads: "Toni hitting."

INSERT ON SCREEN

A video pops up of a young woman, TONI awkwardly holding a baseball bat. From O.S. a whiffle ball approaches her and she swings wildly, the bat flying out of her hands.

TONI
Oops!

KEVIN (O.C.)
You know you can't hit the ball
without a bat.

Toni does a fake sneer, picks up the ball and throws it right into the camera.

The video goes herky-jerky as the camera falls to the ground. Toni laughs hysterically O.C. as the video goes black.

RETURN TO SCENE

But the chair is empty. Kevin has left the dining room and is now in the

LIVING ROOM

Where he stands in front of the painting. He stares intently at the lone woman in the field.

KEVIN

What is it, huh? Is it me you're looking for?

(he turns away)

Yeah, I didn't think so.

EXT. APARTMENT - LANDING - NIGHT

Kevin leans against the railing. Takes a long pull from a beer.

A floor below, he notices a young couple sitting outside the front door of their apartment, holding hands and engaged in animated conversation.

The female looks up, sees Kevin. She waves politely to him. Kevin tips his beer in her direction.

Seeing another couple enjoying each other's company has visibly stirred something up in Kevin.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

Kevin sits down at his dining table. Opens a window on his computer and types on the keyboard.

A new window opens: MIXOLOGY. A matchmaking site.

Kevin clicks through pictures of young women of various ages, shapes, looks. Occasionally pauses when one catches his eye, and quickly reads the profile.

Mostly he quickly clicks through to the next woman.

As he surfs, there's a series of facial reactions as he clicks through each profile: Eye roll, wince, look-away in horror, laugh.

Then--

Surprise as he lands on SUN. A young Asian beauty. A selfie shows a beautiful smile on a petite, athletic body.

KEVIN

Well, well. Who's this, then?

He opens her profile and skims a blurb about her.

KEVIN

Likes travel and nice candlelight dinners at home... Like everyone isn't eating at home right now?... Let's see... drinking wine, exercising, etcetera, etcetera.

Kevin leans back. Studies the picture. After a beat --

INSERT ON SCREEN:

The mouse pointer hovers over the "LIKE" button. It dangles there for what seems like an eternity.

RETURN TO SCENE

But Kevin's chair is empty. He is now in the --

KITCHEN

Kevin fastidiously cleans his plate. Rubs it dry with a cloth and places it gently in the cabinet.

He makes a point of cleaning the already spotless counter tops as well.

He finishes up, looks over at the monitor, where Sun still smiles brightly.

He half-smiles back, holds his hands palms up as if to say: "What do you expect?"

INSERT ON SCREEN:

Full screen view of Sun's smiling face.

Then -- the monitor suddenly goes BLACK.

RETURN TO SCENE

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Kevin is awake but lingers in bed.

He looks to his bedside table. The picture of he and the young lady has been moved there.

KEVIN
Good morning.

He rolls over, props himself up on one elbow.

KEVIN
I tried dreaming about you. Didn't work out. I did dream a pack of dogs was chasing me down the street in my underwear.

Kevin falls on his back.

KEVIN
And then suddenly I'm in a convent playing cards with some old nuns.

His head turns to the picture.

KEVIN
I wound up losing my underwear.

His phone BUZZES on the table. Kevin groans at the caller ID: HAROLD BAILEY.

He answers, sits up.

INTERCUT OF CALL

KEVIN
(into phone throughout)
How 'bout this pandemic, huh? Crazy or what?

HAROLD BAILY, 55, is a prematurely-greyed out shell of a man who has spent far too long in offices and not enough time enjoying life.

BAILEY
(into phone throughout)
Where the hell are the quarterly finance numbers? The ones I asked for yesterday?

KEVIN
Still working on them.

BAILEY

You're not supposed to be working on them. You're supposed to be finished.

KEVIN

Please. That was your deadline. Our actual deadline is in two days. So do you want gibberish or you want numbers that actually work?

BAILEY

I want the numbers and I want them now. Before the end of the day.

KEVIN

You'll get them if you'll stop taking up my time with these calls.

CLICK. Kevin punches the speaker off harder than needed, rubs his eyes, GRUNTS frustration and climbs out of bed.

As he does so, he eyes the framed photo again.

He walks over to the closet and digs deep into the contents.

Rummages and pulls out shoeboxes and containers, scatters them out -- obviously looking for something he can't find.

He leaves the mess, moves to the --

LIVING ROOM

Same drill. He opens drawers and empties cabinets. Something cannot be found.

He slumps into his chair at the work station and heaves a sigh. Beaten and deflated, he drums fingers on his keyboard. A deep look of consideration on his face.

LATER

Kevin pounds a coffee and, with a rush of caffeine, hammers away at the keyboard. A man on a mission.

Suddenly he stops -- confusion on his face. He looks at the numbers on one monitor, then to his data input on the other.

KEVIN

What the hell? That can't be right.

He checks the numbers again, shakes his head and picks up his cell. Hits the recent call number to connect to his boss.

BAILEY (ON PHONE O.S.)
(filtered throughout)
You have everything?

KEVIN
No. And you know why? Because something is off. Way off. Everyone in the company knows our last quarter revenue was bad. Like in the toilet bad.

BAILEY (O.S.)
Yeah, so?

Kevin scans the monitor.

KEVIN
So the numbers I'm seeing here for inclusion in the report shows our revenue was up twelve percent over the previous quarter. There's no chance that's correct.

BAILEY (O.S.)
Damn it Kevin, what the numbers say is not your concern! Your job is to input the data. There are people way above our pay grade who'll interpret the numbers.

KEVIN
But you know this isn't--

BAILEY (O.S.)
--Input the data. End of the day.

Silence. The loudest kind as the line goes dead.

Kevin shakes his head in disbelief.

As his eyes revert to the screens, a PING from his computer. Email notification.

Kevin opens the program.

SCREEN INSERT

Rows of emails addressed to Kevin.

The top email, bolded, is from MIXOLOGY. The memo line reads: "New Match Request from Sun"

RETURN TO SCENE

Kevin's eyes pop wide. He opens the email. As we watch him read the email --

SUN (O.S.)
 Hi! I saw that you viewed my profile, so I checked out yours as well. I'm intrigued -- why don't we connect and see where it leads?"

Kevin looks perplexed.

He opens the Mixology website then his profile.

SCREEN INSERT

Kevin's profile screen shows a link to a match from Sun. The mouse arrow hovers over the link -- and clicks it.

Sun's profile expands. The mouse arrow lands on "Send Sun a private message."

A brief beat, then the button is clicked.

A message box appears.

RETURN TO SCENE

Kevin fidgets, runs his hands through his hair and talks/coaches himself as he types.

KEVIN
 (soft; casual)
 It's just a message. You can do this.
 (as he types)
 "Hey Sun, thanks for your message. I'm game if you are..."

Kevin reads what he's typed. Finger poised over the delete key. He leans back and rubs his face. This is hard.

KEVIN
 Gaaaaahhh!

He deletes the message. Types again.

KEVIN
 "Sun, thanks for your message. I was surprised that someone as beautiful as you would want to connect with a guy like me"...

Kevin pauses, groans at what he's written.

KEVIN
...and what the hell are you doing,
you idiot?

Backspace, backspace, backspace.

Kevin stares at the monitor. He's ready to pull his hair out.

INSERT ON SCREEN

A blank message box.

The following message is typed: "Great!"

RETURN TO SCENE

Kevin looks at the screen. Shrugs. Hits send.

Immediate regret. He buries his face in his hands.

KEVIN
"Great?" Jesus. What a fucking
loser you are.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Kevin watches another video on his laptop.

INSERT ON SCREEN

Kevin and Toni sit on what appears to be the same sofa he now rests on. Kevin holds his phone at arms length to record.

KEVIN
Just wanted to say hi to the fam
and that we will be coming out to
visit soon.

TONI
Can't wait to see you! I'll make
Kevin leave this ugly shirt at
home!

Kevin makes a playful face and gives Toni a nudge with his shoulder to almost knock her out of frame.

KEVIN
Love to you all. Bye.

TONI
Bye!

The video goes black.

RETURN TO SCENE

On the coffee table, a slice of pizza sits next to a beer.

His phone BUZZES. Kevin checks the caller ID, answers.

KEVIN

I just sent the numbers. A day ahead of schedule.

BAILEY (O.S.)

We'll throw you a parade. You haven't talked about them with anyone else, have you?

KEVIN

Why would I do that? Just because they're blatantly off--

BAILEY (O.S.)

--which is just your opinion, so let's keep it that way.

KEVIN

For something I'm clearly wrong about, you seemed awfully concerned about this leaking out.

BAILEY (O.S.)

Don't be an asshole. If you know what's good for you, you'll keep your mouth shut.

The phone goes dead. Kevin tosses it aside.

KEVIN

Just my opinion? You want my opinion? You're the asshole!

Kevin sets his laptop aside. Goes over to look out the window again.

EXT. APARTMENT - STREET - NIGHT

Still barren, until -- a car makes it way down the street. A sign of life. Kevin smiles and nods.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

KEVIN

Guess there's life out there after all, right, Toni?

He looks back to her picture, and instantly the brunt of what he said hits him. The smile fades.

And at that moment, there's a BING from his laptop.

Kevin opens the computer.

INSERT SCREEN

An alert from Mixology. "You have a new message from Sun."

The web browser opens and the mouse clicks on the message.

BACK TO SCENE

SUN (O.S.)

"Hi. A man of few words, it appears! Maybe I can pry a few more out of you. I think a phone call is a much better way to find out about someone--"

Kevin GROANS.

KEVIN

No, no, no, too soon! Too soon!

He reads on.

SUN (O.S.)

--"so let's arrange a time to talk. How about 7 pm tomorrow? Come prepared to talk! My number is..."

Kevin closes his laptop. Clearly unprepared for this.

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kevin, dressed for bed, scrolls his iPad.

He looks away to the picture on the bedside. A twinge of guilt on his face.

KEVIN

(to the picture)

Don't be mad. We...well, I...

(shakes head)

Good God, how many people are out there talking to themselves right now thanks to this nightmare? Are we all nuts?

(can't shake the photo)

Yeah, I know.

(MORE)

KEVIN (CONT'D)
It's a dating website. Okay, guilty
as charged but we're...not...we
can't...I can't do this with you.

He turns the picture face down so she's not looking at him.

LATER

Kevin surfs a sports web site.

INSERT - SCREEN

As he scans the page, an ad for extremely lifelike robots from a company called "LOA - Love on Arrival," pops up.

BACK TO SCENE

Kevin, intrigued, opens the ad.

INSERT - SCREEN

High-end graphics and text promise: A companion for life that will "learn everything about you and adapt to your wants and needs. They will be a true companion for life."

BACK TO SCENE

Kevin almost hits the X to close the ad but hovers back, hits "Watch Video"

INSERT - SCREEN

Well-produced video. An iPhone-like promo shows various robots -- each is eerily very human looking. They move and talk like humans. It's uncanny how realistic they seem.

The video stops and the mouse arrow bounces to the FAQ.

The price is buried mid-page but it's like a used car.

KEVIN
Ten thousand??

BACK TO SCENE

Kevin sits up, looks around, literally starts turning things over, pillows, his phone, thoughts of actually doing this...

He grabs his laptop and opens Excel.

INSERT - SCREEN

KEVIN (O.C.)
Ten thousand. Ten thousand. Jesus
H. Chicken in a biscuit. You can't
be worth that, can you?

He types 10,000 in a cell. Under it, quick data is entered.

KEVIN (O.C.)
Fifty dates a year times sixty
bucks on average equals three
thousand and times two years equals
six thousand -- it's actually
probably more than that -- and then
times gifts times vacations times a
ring, times kids...

BACK TO SCENE

The laptop slides aside. Kevin's eyes loop over to the
downturned photo frame. He heaves a heavy sigh.

He reaches over and turns out the light.

DARKNESS.

INT. APARTMENT - MORNING

Kevin throws off the covers. A man bent on tasks at hand:

SERIES OF SHOTS

Shower turns off, towel dry

Fog wiped from bathroom mirror, shave

Fridge opened, eggs and orange juice pulled

Frying pan sizzles, eggs scramble

Sink faucet pours, dishes rinsed

After the last utensil is washed, the tap shuts off.

BACK TO SCENE

Kevin sits at his work station. He reaches to log in but his
phone BUZZES. A FaceTime request.

A middle-aged woman's picture appears above the words: MOM.
Kevin answers:

KEVIN
(to phone throughout)
Good morning, Mom.

MOM (ON PHONE)
(filtered throughout)
Hi, Honey! Are you in the middle of anything? I don't want to interrupt your work.

KEVIN
No, it's fine. How are you?

MOM
I'm ready to get out of this house. It's absolutely insane, isn't it?

KEVIN
No doubt. Everyone I talk to -- well, the few people I talk to -- all say the same thing. We all just need this to be over.

Kevin rises, once again, carries his phone with him and opens drawers and cabinets.

Looking for something that can't be found.

MOM
Are you sure you're okay? What are you looking for?

Kevin stops his search, returns to his work station.

KEVIN
I'm fine. It's... I was...um...you know what? I can find it later.

MOM
Wish I could come over and help.

KEVIN
I appreciate that Mom. Believe me. But we're all in the same boat. Actually, that's not true. We're all in different boats. Just drifting around, destined to be alone.

MOM
It's times like this I wish Toni were still--

KEVIN

-- Mom, don't go there. Dad's been gone, what, five years now? Times like this I wish it was different for you too, but we pick up and push on. You know how this works.

A long pause from Mom.

MOM

No, I get it. So, any...prospects?

KEVIN

Seriously? Prospects? You can't even go on dates right now.

MOM

So, maybe you talk on the phone or FaceChat or whatever it is you do to communicate.

Kevin looks out the window. It's desolate. Not a car or pedestrian in sight. No activity whatsoever.

KEVIN

I'll make a note to contact all the
(air quotes)
"Prospects" when we can actually
get together with people again,
how's that?

She smiles. Warm and kindhearted.

MOM

I just want you to be happy.

KEVIN

Same for you, mom. Same for you.
(reacts to computer time)
I better get going. The old salt
mine's whistle is about to blow.

MOM

Work going okay?

Kevin stares over at the computer on his table.

KEVIN

Sure. Great. As Dad used to say, if
it was fun they would call it
'play.' Gotta go, Mom. Love you.

He punches off, feeling and looking happier. He eyes the clock. 8:00 a.m.

Kevin's mind reels because as he looks at the clock, the hands accelerate like time is fast-forwarding and the hands of the clock spin wildly and blink red as they race to 7 pm.

Kevin shakes his head, short of breath. He looks again. It's only 8:01 a.m. He heaves a sigh of relief, logs onto work.

LATER

Kevin punches a last set of numbers, arches his back to stretch and rubs his eyes.

A quick time check reveals 11:55 a.m. He rises, heads toward the bathroom, but his phone BUZZES and stops him. He answers:

KEVIN
(into phone throughout)
This is Kevin.

MALE VOICE (O.C.)
(filtered; urgent)
What did you tell Bailey?

KEVIN
Who is this?

MALE VOICE (O.C.)
Answer me.

KEVIN
Answer me first.

There's a beat.

KEVIN
You know your phone number is on my caller ID. It won't take me long to figure it out. Unless you're using a burner phone, and something in the urgency of your voice tells me you didn't take the time to think about getting a burner. If you could even get one right now anyway. So...

MALE VOICE (O.C.)
Let's just say I'm someone you don't wanna fuck with.

KEVIN

Yeah? How am I fucking with you, person I don't know but is randomly calling about a conversation I may or may not have had with a guy named Bailey.

MALE VOICE (O.C.)

Cut the shit kid. What did you tell him about the numbers?

KEVIN

I'm not sure what you're talking about. Go ask this Bailey guy if you want to know so bad, okay? I'm hanging up now. Enjoy your paranoia-filled evening.

MALE VOICE (O.C.)

Hold on. Don't speak to anyone outside of the company about the numbers. The numbers will be dealt with. And if you don't cooperate, you'll be dealt with.

CLICK. The call and the tension go dead.

KEVIN

This is getting fucking weird.

LATER

Kevin breaks the monotony with exercises -- Pushups, sit ups, lunges.

In the background, a financial news report plays on his computer speaker.

NEWS REPORTER (O.C.)

...the Dow closed four-hundred fifty points lower today as continuing financial pressures from the pandemic wreak havoc on the market. One stock that survived the bloodbath was BZ International, which surprisingly reported stellar earnings for the past quarter and is now the subject of a merger with Russian conglomerate Dostov in a seventeen billion dollar stock swap. I'm Brian Henley, reporting for the Business News Network.

Kevin sits straight up, eyes wide.

KEVIN
(muttering)
Son of a bitch. So that's why...

Kevin picks himself up, flustered. He rushes to his computer, does a quick search for Brian Henley.

INSERT SCREEN

A web site for a financial news service company. On the page is a picture of Brian Henley. Pleasant if not slightly serious looking person.

Kevin studies the page for a moment. Bookmarks it and exits to the main screen.

BACK TO SCENE

As he does, his phone BEEPS. A calendar reminder. Ten minutes to his call with Sun.

KEVIN
Shit.

But instead of getting ready for the call, he goes through his now familiar search process.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Couch cushions overturned.

An arm extends under the couch.

Pawing through bathroom drawers.

BACK TO SCENE

The phone BEEPS again. It's 7:00 pm. Showtime.

INT. APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin stares at the phone number on his computer. He hesitantly punches in the numbers on his phone.

On the speaker, RINGING.

His body tight from fear. After the second ring, his finger moves to the "END CALL" button, but before he can hit it:

SUN (ON PHONE)
Kevin?

Kevin's face drops. The moment of truth.

KEVIN

Um, hi?

SUN (ON PHONE)

Is that a question?

KEVIN

No, um, it's... Let me start over.
Hi. How are you?

SUN (ON PHONE)

I'm good, thanks. Listen, let's
switch to FaceTime if that's okay
with you. Much prefer a face to
face, don't you?

KEVIN

Uh, FaceTime, I don't know...

SUN (ON PHONE)

You don't know how to use FaceTime?
Here, I'll handle on my end.

INSERT SCREEN

Kevin's phone screen. "ACCEPT FACETIME CALL" appears on it.
His finger reluctantly touches the "Accept" button.

Sun's face enters on the screen. Kevin appears in a smaller
screen on the lower right.

As the scene continues, we see both their FaceTime screens
next to each other.

SUN

There you are.

KEVIN

Here I am. And there you are.

Beat. Awkward. Kevin's eyes flit to the computer.

KEVIN

You look just like your picture.

SUN

I'm not sure if that is a
compliment or just a statement of
fact, like the sky is blue.

KEVIN

The sky's not actually blue. It's just our perception of it after it passes through the prism of the atmosphere.

(another pause)

But, um, yeah, it's supposed to be a compliment. Some people put pictures on these sites that makes them look more attractive than they actually are.

SUN

You look different than yours.

Double take. Kevin leans in sheepishly.

KEVIN

Is that a compliment or is--

SUN

--it's just...different, I guess.

Ouch. Kevin tries not to react.

SUN

So why are you on this dating site?

KEVIN

If I'm being honest--

SUN

--Honest is best.

KEVIN

I'm not sure. Maybe I just need companionship. Maybe I'm searching for something that's difficult to find in the midst of this pandemic. Gets pretty boring and lonely doing the same thing here day after day.

SUN

I mean, we're all lonely, right? The pandemic has made us that way. But surely there's something else that has you...

Sun appears to be looking past Kevin.

SUN

There's a picture behind you. You and another woman. Who is that?

Kevin is surprised by this. Gets super awkward.

KEVIN

Her? Um...that's Toni. She was my fiancée. We were supposed to get married two years ago, but...

SUN

She found someone else?

A long pause.

SUN

She left you.

KEVIN

You could say that.

SUN

And you still have feelings for her, don't you?

KEVIN

Of course I do, but it's not like I can do anything about it.

Sun doesn't speak. Waits for Kevin to elaborate.

KEVIN

You want details. Toni...died. Car accident. Two weeks before we were to marry.

SUN

Oh. Oh no. That's terrible. And you still grieve for her.

KEVIN

I guess so.

Sun is resigned to the situation.

SUN

Listen, Kevin, I know this is hard for you. And it was nice to meet you, but I don't see this going anywhere. Not while you're still dealing with her death. You need to address that first. Otherwise you're not going to be able to truly love someone else. And if you can't do that, then what would that mean for us?

(MORE)

SUN (CONT'D)

But I wish you well and hope you're able to find some closure. If you do, reach back out. Who knows, right?

KEVIN

Who knows, sure.

Sun's screen goes dark.

EXT. APARTMENT - LANDING - NIGHT

Kevin stands at the railing. Looks out over the emptiness of the world before him. It suits his mood.

KEVIN

(low; to himself)

God, how much longer does this have to go on?

Below on the street, a lone car moves rapidly by. The driver lays on the horn. The distinctive HONK shatters the silence.

Kevin looks to the heavens.

KEVIN

Okay, I'll take that as a sign.

He turns and heads inside.

Nearby in another apartment, a shade closes. Someone has been watching Kevin.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Kevin plops on the couch, grabs his laptop and opens the browser. Types away at the keyboard and lands back on --

INSERT - SCREEN

The Love on Arrival website. He clicks through all the options.

He lands on a choice, nicknamed "Jin," a young Asian-looking female that resembles Sun.

BACK TO SCENE

Kevin downs and crushes the beer can. He shakes his head, blinks hard, feeling the alcohol.

He leans closer, reads Jin's specs. His eyes glazed.

Finally, he shudders and shakes his arms. Rallies his senses.

KEVIN
(coaches himself)
C'mon Kevin, be a man and do it.

But his arms and fingers don't comply. He sits back, sighs.

Then, one look around at the obvious loneliness around him pulls him forward and he types away on the keyboard.

KEVIN
(less than determined)
The hell with it.

INSERT - SCREEN

His cursor lands on 'ORDER.' Quickly, a warning prompt appears. It's bold and make no mistake, it's a true warning:

"NO REFUNDS, NO RETURNS, NO EXCHANGES. ALL SALES FINAL."

BACK TO SCENE

With a bit of determination, Kevin clicks the order button.

He rubs his face, paces to burn off the adrenaline.

His eyes flit to the photo frame. SIGHS.

KEVIN
(consoling himself)
Had to be done.

Kevin wanders to the window, examines the quiet darkness outside. It's empty, the perfect metaphor for Kevin's heart.

He turns his eyes to the sky. Stars and answers are hard to find.

Then -- A blur. The briefest flash. Was that a shooting star?

Again, a horn HONKS in the distance.

Hard to tell but Kevin turns from the window with a slight grin. Whatever it was, maybe it's a sign that things are moving in the right direction.

After all, what drew him to the window to see it? He heads to bed and trusts the process.

INT. APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin sits at his kitchen table and scans a sports website.

Ear buds in, he listens to loud music.

He chugs on a soda, then lets out a loud BURP.

He looks around, initially embarrassed, but there's no one there to be disgusted.

As he glances about the room, his attention is suddenly drawn to a SHADOW that moves past his window.

The shadow stops momentarily at the end of the window. Kevin tenses up -- someone is out there.

Kevin leaps from his chair, and the shadow disappears. Kevin races to the front door and flings it open.

EXT. APARTMENT - LANDING - CONTINUOUS

Kevin looks down the apartment landing in the direction where the shadow went.

Deserted.

KEVIN
HEY! Who's there?

His voice reverberates into the empty area. A mix of frustration and anger etched on his face.

Downstairs below him, the woman who waved to him before, looks up at Kevin after his shout. He gives her a "nothing to see here" wave.

He turns and walks back to the front door but stops dead in his tracks when he notices it.

A large crate.

Kevin hurriedly approaches the crate and examines it. On the side, he notices two things:

INSERT SCREEN:

First, an address label from LOA and Kevin's name and address underneath.

Second, imprinted in large block letters on the side, the unmistakable warning - "NO REFUNDS, NO RETURNS, NO EXCHANGES"

RETURN TO SCENE

Kevin looks around. He tries moving the crate. GRUNTS. This thing is heavy.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Kevin groans, drags the large crate into the living area.

He doesn't make it far before he eases it down length-wise onto the floor, dropping it right on his big toe.

KEVIN

Jesus Christ! Son of a bitch!

Kevin hops, mumbling curses, shakes his foot pain off.

He tries to lift the top but it won't budge. He retreats to another room. We hear drawers opening, items shoved around.

Kevin returns with a flat-head screwdriver and a small hammer. He wedges the screwdriver with the hammer, tries to pry it open.

Slowly, it gives slack. He repeats until the top pops open.

Kevin slowly pushes the lid off. Looks inside, only to find more foam packing to protect the robot.

He tears apart foam and other inserts until he gets to--

A FEMALE ROBOT, completely wrapped in plastic.

Kevin rips into the plastic, creating an opening from her midsection up to her neck.

He excitedly tears the remaining part away to reveal her face, eager to see his new companion.

But as he pulls away the plastic, and sees what's below him, his face contorts through a series of emotions.

Confusion. Shock. Horror. Disgust.

He backs away from the crate, hand over his mouth. Something's wrong. Really wrong.

KEVIN

WHAT THE FUCK?

EXT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Kevin stumbles onto the landing, gasping for air.

He grasps the railing, closes his eyes, takes deep breaths to calm himself.

KEVIN
(low, to himself)
It's okay, this isn't real.

He stops, takes a deep breath and ducks back inside.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Kevin slowly approaches the crate.

As we look down inside, we see why Kevin is so distraught.

The robot resting inside is an exact duplicate of his late girlfriend, Toni.

And the way she is positioned, eyes closed, hands resting on her midsection, completely motionless --

It appears like she is in a wooden coffin.

Tears stream down Kevin's cheeks. Too much to bear.

The lid goes back on.

LATER

Kevin is on the phone. Paces back and forth past the crate.

INTERCUT OF CALL

KEVIN (ON PHONE)
C'mon, c'mon...

BARBARA (ON PHONE)
This is Barbara with Love On
Arrival Customer Support. How may I
help you?

KEVIN
Yeah, I placed an order a week ago
and made a selection of an Asian
woman. I just received it, and I
think someone in your company is
playing a very sick joke here.

BARBARA

How is that, sir?

KEVIN

How is that? I tell you how that is! I didn't get an Asian fembot at all. What arrived was a fembot that is the splitting image of my dead girlfriend! How that is that?

BARBARA

Oh, dear. That does sound unusual.

KEVIN

Unusual? It's fucking ghoulish! It was devastating to open up that crate and see her just lying there. Do you understand how incredibly painful that was to me?

BARBARA

Of course it was, and I do apologize, sir. Sometimes these things happen in the process of fulfilling orders.

KEVIN

What things happen? You're telling me your company is just shipping out replicas of dead people all over the place?

BARBARA

Well, I see here in the summary of your order that you allowed an upload to our system of all your photos and videos on your computer to help---

KEVIN

---Whoa, whoa, whoa. Time out. What the hell? What do you mean I uploaded all my pictures and videos? Why would I do that?

BARBARA

To help enhance your fembot's reality. Voice recognition. Facial expressions. Body movements. That kind of thing.

KEVIN

Am I in some sort of bizarro world? There's no way I authorized that.

BARBARA

Actually, you did, sir. It's in our terms and conditions that you agreed to prior to making the purchase. Page 38, subparagraph 22.

KEVIN

Who the fuck reads the terms and conditions of anything?

BARBARA

Mostly lawyers. But also anyone that doesn't want to make a purchase without knowing exactly what they're getting into and the potential issues that could arise.

Kevin is like a boxer on the ropes. He's getting pummeled and can't fight his way out of it.

KEVIN

This is crazy! I'm not keeping this... this fuckup! I ordered an Asian fem--

BARBARA

Page 27, Paragraph 3, Subparagraph 6 allows the company to substitute another fembot if circumstances require it.

KEVIN

What the fuck were the circumstances?

BARBARA

We were out of Asians.

KEVIN

I'm sending her back!

BARBARA

As you wish sir, but we will not pay for the shipping, and there is no refund, no returns, no exchanges. It even says so on the outside of the crate.

Kevin glances at the wording on the crate. His shoulders sag.

BARBARA

Now, I'm just a customer support rep, but may I offer you some advice? Why not take advantage of the situation?

KEVIN

Take advan... what are you--?

BARBARA

--I'm sure you miss her, right? And I'm guessing you're all alone there. I mean, very few of our clients have wives or girlfriends. Practically one hundred percent.

Each statement is like a dagger in Kevin's heart.

BARBARA

So maybe this is a blessing in disguise. An opportunity to recapture a part of your life that you sorely miss. A second chance, so to speak. Maybe you'll even find you can learn to love her?

(off Kevin's silence)

Her operating instruction manual is in the crate. Now is there anything else I can help you with today?

Kevin doesn't have a response. He's down for the count.

BARBARA

Sir?

Kevin hangs up, stares at the crate.

He slips on the lid, pushes, clearly struggling to seal off whatever remote connection to Toni lays inside.

Finally, he balks, removes the lid and lifts the doll from the crate.

The forced embrace of the lift transforms his face into a bit of a lost gaze and, without hesitation, his grip on her lingers long after the robot is safely above the open carpet.

Kevin sits her in one of the dining room chairs.

He sits opposite her, soaks in her appearance. She's remarkably lifelike -- even dressed like Toni.

BARBARA (V.O.)
(as spoken before)
..upload to our system of all of
your photos...

Inspired, Kevin pulls over his computer keyboard, taps keys:

INSERT ON SCREEN

A photo gallery, aptly named: Toni. Images rush past in a hurried series of clicks until -- it hits -- HARD.

The real Toni, wearing what could be the same exact outfit that the robot is dressed in, stares back at Kevin.

BACK TO SCENE

Kevin, struck by a moment of melancholy, outlines her face in the image - then shifts his vision to the robot near him.

He looks at it with a newfound respect.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Kevin opens Toni's operating manual. He glances through the illustrations, nods.

He reaches behind her, feels for then finds a button on her neck. He hesitates a moment. The 'no going back' kind.

Heaving a sigh, he presses -- then pulls back as --

Robot Toni blinks to life.

Her head mildly tilts, a faint recognition but the slow blink brings her eyes alive and they find Kevin across from her.

The slightest hint at a grin or crink of a smile appears.

Kevin marvels at her and his respect turns to appreciation. Incredibly lifelike in her nuances to how real people move.

Kevin leans forward, then props his clenched hands under his chin, admiring the lifelike presence before him.

He simply lets his gaze hang on her for a long beat.

DING. Kevin's attention is drawn to his phone.

INSERT - PHONE

"A notification appears. Your LOA activation is now complete. Click the link below to integrate and complete your online account. For access wherever you are, download the App."

BACK TO SCENE

Kevin's expression sours as the technical jargon and link reminders destroy his fond memory stream. He pushes the phone away and deliberately reengages in his admiration.

INT. APARTMENT - LATER

Darkness creeps closer outside. Kevin exits the bathroom and shakes his head at the figure at the table. Finally. Company.

KEVIN
(offhanded and casual)
I'm feeling Chinese tonight.

Before he can react, the android turns her head slightly in his direction and just as casually and offhand-idly counters:

ROBOT TONI
But it's Taco Tuesday.

Kevin freezes and gawks. Stunned and kind of freaked out. Feeling suddenly vulnerable and self conscious, Kevin slowly approaches her, probing:

KEVIN
What did we have last night?

Nothing. Her face is a blank slate. Kevin pulls the instruction brochure closer, flips to the back, then:

KEVIN
What's it like outside?

ROBOT TONI
The temperature is 74 degrees with partly cloudy skies and chance of showers.

Alexa has nothing on her.

Kevin puts aside the brochure, senses an interesting curve:

KEVIN
What am I wearing?

ROBOT TONI
 The blue T-shirt...
 (beat; tagged along)
 ...that I hate.

Kevin double-takes. True enough his blue T-shirt has seen better days and it doesn't exactly do anything for him.

He rubs the material, looks slightly hurt.

KEVIN
 We're not..
 (corrects himself)
 I'm .. Not. Not exactly going
 anywhere. No one is.

She simply blinks. Passive and non-expressive. Kevin wobbles, paces. Suddenly, self conscious. He glances at the mirror.

The blue T-Shirt. Motivated now, he peels it off, marches to the bedroom and emerges pulling on a fresh shirt.

He glances into the same mirror. Looks like an upgrade.

He glances at her. Nothing. No hint of recognition. His shoulders cave a little bit. This will be hard.

KEVIN
 You know who I am?

ROBOT TONI
 Of course I do...
 (beat, a sly smile)
 ...that guy that was wearing the
 blue shirt.

Kevin stands and rocks on his heels slightly, but then..

ROBOT TONI
 Kevin.

Toni gets up, walks around.

Kevin marvels. Really off-kilter now.

It's just like the advertising promised. She moves naturally, not robotically.

Her hands brush the furniture. She takes in her surroundings.

Kevin looks nostalgic and gutted. The way she looks and talks. Every part of it toys with his brain and his heart.

ROBOT TONI
It's exactly the same.

KEVIN
What's exactly--

ROBOT TONI
--the apartment. You haven't made
any changes.

KEVIN
How would you know...
(to himself)
Don't be stupid. Of course she
doesn't know.

Toni strides to the window, pulls the curtain --

KEVIN
No! Don't!

Kevin rushes over, pulls the drapes closed.

ROBOT TONI
Why?

KEVIN
Just...because. Hard to explain.

ROBOT TONI
I'm capable of understanding
complex calculations and I can
perform advanced logical analysis.

KEVIN
This isn't a math problem. We're
not solving for pi.

ROBOT TONI
There is no solving for pi.

KEVIN
Right. And you know what's even
harder to solve?
(off her look)
Why someone who's been...gone for
two years, is suddenly standing in
my living room.

ROBOT TONI
You ordered me.

KEVIN
(it's come to a head)
No! I didn't! You -- the human
version of you -- is dead!

Again, a light blink of an eye. A machine calibrating.

ROBOT TONI
You did order me.

KEVIN
I also buried you -- Two years ago.
And -- Fuck me -- you suddenly
reappear in my life and blink your
little blinks and I'm just supposed
to be okay with all of this?

Silence bellows. Kevin paces, forces deep breaths. Finally:

ROBOT TONI
Your voice registers anxiety.

KEVIN
You don't know the half of it.

Toni moves toward the couch, picks up a book and rifles the pages from beginning to end. Kevin's head tilts. Curious.

ROBOT TONI
That was interesting.

KEVIN
What?

ROBOT TONI
He can't handle the fact that his
girlfriend had other relationships
so he kills himself? Seems almost
puritan in nature.

KEVIN
Hold on. You just read that entire
book in three seconds?

ROBOT TONI
I'm capable of performing many--

KEVIN
Yeah, so you said.

Toni puts down the book, picks up the picture.

ROBOT TONI
This is you.
(points to Toni)
And this. This is me.

This is a bit much for Kevin. He reaches over, takes the picture from her.

KEVIN
No, it's not. You look like her,
talk like her, walk like her. But
you're not her. Not even slightly.

ROBOT TONI
(with an edge)
You ordered me.

Kevin throws up his hands. Exasperated with this.

KEVIN
Enough. I ordered you. No refunds.
No returns. I get it. I'm an idiot.

Slow blink from Robot Toni. A long enough beat to mirror a human argument at the point where it's better to stop.

ROBOT TONI
Your words.

She sits at the table. Kevin marches forward, points a confrontational finger.

KEVIN
You're not Toni. She would never...

Kevin stops, assesses himself standing there, pointed finger at a robot, mid-conversation. He pulls his finger back, walks away, mutters to himself:

KEVIN
Way to go, Kev! Nice purchase.

He disappears into the bedroom, flicks off the light, leaving Robot Toni in darkness.

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Kevin emerges from the bedroom, rubs his eyes, momentarily stutter-steps when the reminder that Robot Toni is still seated at the table.

He grabs a box of cereal and a bowl.

KEVIN
You want anything? Eggs? Coffee?

ROBOT TONI
I'm not capable of any intake other than data.

KEVIN
(duh)
Not sure why I even asked.

He sits down, flicks on his comfort On-Demand TV show.

Casually enjoying his Cinnamon Toast Crunch, Kevin grins at a punch line on the television show. A quick glance over.

Robot Toni is grinning too, appears to be watching with him.

KEVIN
You said you always hated this show.

ROBOT TONI
Hate is a strong word.

That pushes Kevin to put down the cereal, elbows on knees.

KEVIN
Jesus. What do you know?

ROBOT TONI
I know a lot. I'm capable of understanding complex calculations--

KEVIN
--and performing advanced logical analysis, so you've said.

ROBOT TONI
I know there's no solving pi and the plot of Brave New World. I know that human me is dead and I know for some reason, you still wear that blue T-shirt that I hate and that you --

KEVIN & TONI

Ordered me.

KEVIN

Got it. Thanks for the recap.

Now Robot Toni rises and moves, like a human, to the sofa. She stands there and directs an expectant gaze at Kevin.

ROBOT TONI

You left me powered on all evening without a full charge. If you wish to continue our conversation, I'll need to be connected to a power source. Otherwise, my replacement battery instructions are summarized in the user manual. Utilizing me with less than 20% charge could result in lost data and in complete power down, diminishing your satisfaction. Would you like me to power down now and assume a recharge position?

Kevin slow blinks now. His Brave New World swirls and he can't quite voice the words needed. He simply nods a mystified 'yes'. Robot Toni actually lies on the sofa.

Spurred to action, Kevin digs through the delivery box and retrieves the power cable.

He plugs it in, connects it to her port, just below the power button.

Robot Toni's eyes slowly close and damn if she doesn't look like she's falling asleep.

She nestles into the sofa and turns on her side. Facing away from him now, Kevin simply stares at her.

His attention is jolted away by a DING notification on his phone. Kevin picks up the call:

MALE VOICE (O.C.)

(filtered; urgent)

Who is there with you?

KEVIN

I'm sorry?

MALE VOICE (O.C.)

Answer me.

KEVIN

Ah, Mr. Petty Threats. How are you doing today? You were pretty stressed the last time we talked. Hope you've been able to find some relaxation techniques to help you with your anger management.

MALE VOICE (O.C.)

There's someone there with you. Don't deny it.

KEVIN

You can come on down and find out for yourself if you want. Seems like you're watching my place anyway.

Kevin walks over to the window, gives a middle-finger salute to anyone who is watching.

KEVIN

Sorry, that was rude. But I can do it again in case you missed it.

MALE VOICE (O.C.)

(exasperated)

You're not discussing the numbers, are you?

KEVIN

No, we can't get past my fucking blue T-Shirt. I'm sure you've seen it. What do you think?

MALE VOICE (O.C.)

You know devices like Alexa pick up data and feed them to places they shouldn't be. That would be very bad for you if they did.

KEVIN

Jesus, you must kill at parties. Bet you never leave alone. Hey, here's an idea. Tell me who you are and what you want. I know it's not as fun as threats but hey, it's a pandemic.

CLICK. The call and the conversation go dead.

Kevin marches to the window, rips open the curtains --

KEVIN

Fuck off!

He proclaims to the glass window. It mocks him with silence.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

BANG. THUMP.

Kevin's now familiar search has him digging into a hall closet. Random items are tossed onto the floor, until --

A whiffle ball and bat tumble out. Kevin eyes the jewels on the floor as if they were laced with gold. Long coveted.

He grasps the handle of the bat, slips his hands into a batter's grip. He motions a slow, even swing.

Caught up in a fantasy, he assumes a batter's stance, awaiting a pitch. His fingers coil and recoil on the grip.

He checks his swing, readies for an imaginary pitch -- then --

Jumps a mile as Robot Toni stands by him, taps his shoulder.

KEVIN

Fucking hell!!

She holds the whiffle ball, sports an inviting smile.

ROBOT TONI

Wanna play?

Kevin stammers, can't utter words. Locking eyes with him, Robot Toni backs down the hall, readies to pitch.

Kevin breaks his stance, extends his arms.

KEVIN

How do you know how to...?

Robot Toni props her hands on her hips, leans toward him.

ROBOT TONI

How do you know what I'm going to do?

Kevin slumps to the floor as if hit by a sucker punch.

KEVIN

(after a long beat)

That's exactly the kind of thing
Toni would have said. How...

(MORE)

KEVIN (CONT'D)
 (beat; pleading)
 How can you even know that?

SECONDS LATER

Robot Toni sits in front of the computer monitor. She opens the end of her index finger, revealing a UBS port.

Kevin's eyebrows raise.

KEVIN
 That must come in handy. Get it?
 Hand-y?

Robot Toni ignores him.

KEVIN
 Did they not program you with a
 sense of humor?

ROBOT TONI
 Sure, I will laugh when something
 funny is said.

Kevin is stung by the cutting remark.

She inserts her UBS finger into the connecting port on Kevin's computer.

INSERT - COMPUTER MONITOR

A blur of the computer photo and video library scroll past at a lightning pace. She suddenly stops on a video.

ROBOT TONI (O.S.)
 There.

A video looms. The video from before with Kevin and Toni playing whiffle ball. Toni batting. Kevin throws the ball to her and she misses badly.

BACK TO SCENE

Kevin turns to her -- suddenly hopeful.

KEVIN
 What day was that?

ROBOT TONI
 Saturday.

KEVIN
 What date?

ROBOT TONI

July 12.

KEVIN

And what happened...after...

Robot Toni tilts her head. A coy tease.

ROBOT TONI

We...played.

KEVIN

Hold on. Now how would you know that? I mean, it's not like there's video of us doing that. I mean, not that I didn't want to have a video but you were not keen on that. And I didn't keep a diary, 'cause I'm not a thirteen year old girl. So how did you know--

ROBOT TONI

--you sent me an email the next day saying you found my underwear on top of a lamp and you couldn't figure out how they got there.

(off his puzzled look)

I can show you the email.

KEVIN

No, I believe you.

(beat)

Now, if you want to get your finger out of my computer, I have some work to do.

Robot Toni moves to an adjoining chair. Watches as Kevin downloads data on one screen, then inputs that same data into fields on the other screen.

ROBOT TONI

Why are you doing that?

KEVIN

What do you mean? It's my job. I download data from the company's main database and input it into our accounting software so that we can produce financial reports for the officers and shareholders of the company. Fun, huh?

Toni just stares blankly at him.

ROBOT TONI
You mean you can't just transfer
data from the mainframe to your
accounting program?

Now Kevin has the blank look.

KEVIN
No. I mean, the accounting program
doesn't connect with the company's
internal database for some security
reason. So I spend all day just
moving data from one place to the
other. Like I said, fun.

ROBOT TONI
Your idea of fun is very confusing.

She studies the screens.

ROBOT TONI
I can help.

Toni sticks her finger back into the USB port.

KEVIN
No! You shouldn't be messing with--

But it's too late.

INSERT ON SCREEN

A flurry of numbers scream across both screens, so fast that
Kevin can't even keep up with what is happening. In less than
fifteen seconds, the numbers stop.

RETURN TO SCENE

ROBOT TONI
Done.

Kevin has a look of utter confusion.

KEVIN
Done? Done what? What just
happened?

ROBOT TONI
I transferred all the data to the
necessary fields for you.

KEVIN
Yeah, right. That normally takes me
two days to finish all that input.

(MORE)

KEVIN (CONT'D)

And you just did it all in like fifteen seconds? How do I know you put the right data in the right fields? You can't just be slinging data around all willy nilly. It's got to go in the right fields. There's an order to all this. I don't want to spend days fixing what you just did in a few seconds!

A long silence. Toni points her USB finger at the screens.

ROBOT TONI

You want to check my work?

It's said like a dare.

Kevin hesitates, then sits in front of the screens. Maneuvers through the program. Checks and double-checks numbers.

With each review, he becomes more and more amazed.

KEVIN

I can't believe it.

He leaps up from his chair, ecstatic. He grabs Toni by the shoulders.

KEVIN

Do you know what this means?
(off her blank look)
I just got two days of vacation!
You're unbelievable!

Impulsively, and certainly without thinking, he plants a quick kiss square on Toni's lips.

He has a sudden visceral reaction. Confusion and shock.

Toni just smiles.

KEVIN

I'm sorry -- I don't know what -- I mean I didn't mean to do that. Just a spontaneous reaction.

ROBOT TONI

Why apologize? You were always a spontaneous person.

KEVIN

(can't look at her)
That part of my life was taken away when you died.

ROBOT TONI

Your life now seems very sad. Don't you want to change that? Isn't that why you ordered me?

Kevin starts to respond, but his phone begins to BUZZ. He looks at the caller ID and groans. Reluctantly answers.

KEVIN

You know, if we're going to talk this much, you should just move in.

MALE VOICE (O.C.)

(filtered throughout)

We want your computer. Someone will come by and pick it up.

KEVIN

You're taking my fucking computer? How do you expect me to do my work or shop on Amazon or surf for porn?

Toni's eyes widen at this. Kevin mouths "I'm kidding."

MALE VOICE (O.C.)

Your jokes are wasted. And as of this moment, you're on indefinite vacation until we determine what you've done with the data you downloaded. Do not do anything further with your computer.

(ominous tone)

We'll know if you transfer anything. And if you do, it could end up very badly for you.

KEVIN

Really? I was just about to say the same. That's why I have insurance in place. Anything happens to me, or anyone close to me, and I will bring the entire company down. The fucking threats stop now.

Kevin shuts off his phone. Toni's face registers concern.

ROBOT TONI

Insurance? What have you done?

KEVIN

Nothing. But I sounded convincing, right? So now I've got to do something.

(MORE)

KEVIN (CONT'D)

All that information you transferred, is it stored somewhere in your... what is it, a hard drive?

ROBOT TONI

Don't be silly, Kevin. Do you think this body could carry a massive hard drive in it?

KEVIN

Yeah, I really don't know what--

ROBOT TONI

I come complete with a ten terabyte cloud drive where every piece of information I collect is stored.

Kevin isn't sure what to do with this new information.

KEVIN

So you're saying everything from my laptop that was uploaded when I ordered you is now in the cloud?

(off her nod)

Yikes. Can any of that be deleted?

ROBOT TONI

All information collected is permanently stored in the cloud driver per the terms and--

KEVIN

--Conditions. My new favorite catch phrase.

ROBOT TONI

As well as any data interactions I assist with.

KEVIN

Like the data download from the company.

ROBOT TONI

I also can record photos and videos.

(points to her eyes)

Twelve megabyte photos on the left, 4k resolution video on the right.

She can sense his unease with that statement.

ROBOT TONI
Don't worry, they only record on
your request.

KEVIN
I keep forgetting you're not human.

Toni looks stung.

ROBOT TONI
I'm trying very hard to be. Am I
not doing a good job?

KEVIN
No. That's just it. You're doing
such an amazing job that I can't
sometimes tell the difference. And
that's difficult for me at times.

Toni walks by and gently caresses his face. She sits at the
table in front of the computer. Studies the data screens.

ROBOT TONI
What are the people at your company
so concerned about?

KEVIN
So the company has a legal and
fiduciary obligation to accurately
report their earnings, liabilities,
forecasts -- that kind of stuff.
The shareholders depend on the
accuracy to make informed decisions
about whether to buy, sell or hold
their shares in the company. Not
easy to follow, I know.

ROBOT TONI
Maybe the largest shareholders --
the people running the company --
want to make the numbers look
better because they're trying to
sell the company. Escalate the
value of the company, then dump
their shares at a higher price
before the information comes out
about the manufactured numbers.

KEVIN
That's exactly what's happening,
but how did you figure--

ROBOT TONI

--My access to all financial newspapers and magazines in my wireless system. I read about pump and dump schemes. But why is any of this your problem?

KEVIN

If I knew about it and didn't say anything, then I might be considered an accessory to fraud. Even though I mentioned it to Bailey, I may need to get the info to someone outside of the company.

Robot Toni grins and that knocks Kevin back in his chair.

ROBOT TONI

Such as?

KEVIN

How do you keep doing that? That's--
(jumps up; paces)
--Such a Toni response!

But now, Toni turns away from him and walks to the window. Drawn to her un-robotic musing, Kevin strides next to her.

Together, they gaze at the world beyond the glass. No activity but a looming stare that compels the eyes toward what be behind the windows we cannot see into.

ROBOT TONI

These largest shareholders, the owners of the company. Who are they?

KEVIN

I can't even pronounce their names. They're Russian. Very little is known about them.

ROBOT TONI

You've tried to learn more?

KEVIN

Of course.

Robot Toni squints, leans forward as a light goes on across town, enabling a glimpse into what was dark moments ago.

ROBOT TONI

People without a digital past.

Kevin moves closer to her, strains to see what she sees.

KEVIN
Like...criminals.

PLOP.

INT. APARTMENT / DINING ROOM - NIGHT

ANOTHER PLOP. As playing cards drop onto the table.

Kevin's face, cupped in his hand, says it all -- he's losing.

Robot Toni swings her arm, claims a huge pile of chips.

Kevin's meager remaining stack shows he is in dire straits.

KEVIN
I thought you would play like Toni.

ROBOT TONI
You thought wrong.

Kevin barely reacts to the robot's sarcasm. It's natural now. Kevin scoops up the cards, shuffles. Suddenly determined.

KEVIN
Double or nothin'. Blackjack.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Cards dealt.

Robot Toni gazing. Calculating.

Kevin losing chips. Rapidly.

Cards turned in Blackjack.

Kevin wincing. Grimacing. Annoyed but fascinated.

Robot Toni only smirks.

BACK TO SCENE

KEVIN
When this pandemic is over, we are
so going to Vegas and doing the
Rainman thing.

ROBOT TONI
You want to take me on a trip?

KEVIN
That does sound weird to say,
doesn't it?

ROBOT TONI
(mildly robotic)
You ordered me.

Kevin reacts. Stunned. Almost hurt.

They each reach for a playing card. Robot Toni's hand gets there first.

Kevin's hand lands on top of hers. It lingers there. Flesh on machine. She offers a slow blink and slight head turn.

Kevin holds. Counters with a slight squeeze but suddenly --

Pulls his hand back and shuffles aggressively.

Robot Toni turns back, keeps her eyes on her winnings. Grins.

INT. APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

Kevin emerges from the bedroom, changed into casual sleeping clothes, including the old blue shirt Toni loathed.

He almost breezes past Robot Toni but a realization hits and he stops, touches the fabric of her top.

KEVIN
Did you only come with one change
of clothes?

Robot Toni reclines on the sofa, picks up "A Hero of Our Time" by Mikhail Lermontov from a table stand.

ROBOT TONI
(furiously thumbs through
book)
You ordered me.
(snaps book closed)
Done. Russian literature.
Masterpieces. Sorry, your question?

KEVIN
Your clothes. Can I--
(quote fingers)
--Order others?

ROBOT TONI

I am capable of calculating my measurements and, provided suitable funds, entering data to procure others that may suffice.

Kevin's shoulders slump.

Language kills his robot buzz. He turns toward the kitchen and spots the closet, not completely closed.

Inspired, he wanders over, spots the discarded box from his quest to find something earlier.

He turns it and now we see in Sharpie on the side: TONI.

Kevin heaves a 'here we go' heavy breath and pulls open the flaps.

He removes a couple items of clothing. A top and shorts.

He holds them, smells them, rocks back and simply clutches them to his chest.

After a long, melancholy beat, Kevin carries them to Robot Toni. He offers them silently but she only blinks.

KEVIN

These...were some of her favorites.

With that, she rises and faces Kevin.

They lock eyes. Kevin's still brimming with tears.

Then, with a slow, deliberate unbutton, Robot Toni undresses.

She keeps her eyes locked on him. Not to tease but not robotic either. Natural and willing. No discomfort.

In seconds, she stands before him in a bra and underwear.

Kevin takes in her body. It's a remarkable, lifelike female body. No indication that this is an electronic device.

She stands and waits, inviting physical inspection.

Kevin reaches forward, places a tentative finger at her chest, nestles and lingers slightly in her cleavage.

Robot Toni only slow blinks and slightly parts her lips.

Kevin waffles in place. Increasingly uncomfortable.

She makes no moves. Just simply looks at Kevin.

Kevin's finger retracts and he holds up the clothes again.

KEVIN
(sheepish)
How do I?....

She accepts the clothes, relieving Kevin of the much broader question and keeps her eyes focused on him.

ROBOT TONI
You keep going.

Kevin swells with emotion, diminishing the sexual tension.

KEVIN
But...it's so...confusing...

Now she extends her arm and presses a finger to Kevin's lips.

ROBOT TONI
Only if you overthink.

Maybe it's her touch. Maybe it's her empathy. Maybe it's just Kevin is past his limit and simply surrenders to his new reality -- but he nods and sniffs back further tears.

He digs deep and when he returns her gaze, finds himself.

KEVIN
You have an answer for everything,
don't you?
(he breaks a smile)
You 'are' the answer for
everything, aren't you?

ROBOT TONI
I can be.

Her response forces a weak smile from Kevin. He breaks the gaze, moves slightly away.

KEVIN
But life isn't really that simple,
is it? You can't just write some
code to solve your problems. You
can't produce a software program
that mends a broken heart. Life is
messy and weird and full of utter
chaos that can't replicated like
it's a video game with a guarantee
of winning if you just play the
game the right way.

ROBOT TONI

Maybe that's because no one knew how to really design the program. Maybe they've been written by people who didn't have the life experiences to know all the possible outcomes -- not just the outcomes we all want and expect.

KEVIN

Wait. Are you saying that the person that developed your operating system--

ROBOT TONI

--Several people, actually.

KEVIN

People developed a system that's not designed to operate logically?

ROBOT TONI

It's not that we're designed to operate illogically, but that we're designed to operate like humans.

Toni approaches Kevin. A hand reaches up to caress his face.

KEVIN

This makes no sense, what I'm feeling right now.

She moves in close. Practically no space between their faces.

ROBOT TONI

It doesn't have to.

She kisses Kevin gently. He doesn't resist and he doesn't ask her to stop. The kisses become longer and more passionate.

Kevin suddenly stops, looks deep into her eyes.

KEVIN

Are we really doing this?

We hold on them what seems like a long time...

LATER

The lights are out. Toni and Kevin are intertwined on the bed, their bodies moving in rhythm.

The intensity revs up until Kevin finishes with a surge of adrenaline. He falls back on his pillow, exhausted.

Toni moves to his side, her arm draped across his chest. She nuzzles her face up next to his ear.

ROBOT TONI
How was it?

But Kevin can't even answer. All he can do is stare at the ceiling -- stunned.

ROBOT TONI
That good, huh?

KEVIN
Duh. I'm surprised they could program you to do--

ROBOT TONI
I was just mimicking the things the girls do on those adult videos that were downloaded from your computer.

Kevin bolts upright.

KEVIN
You what??

ROBOT TONI
(laughing)
JK. Are you not programmed with a sense of humor?

Busted. Kevin grins, embarrassed at his reaction. He lays back down, content.

ROBOT TONI (O.C.)
Kevin?
(beat)
I need a charge.

KEVIN
You gotta give me a few minutes...oh.

INT. APARTMENT / BEDROOM - MORNING

Kevin stirs as the sun's rays bleed through the window shades. He looks over to the bedside table.

The picture isn't there.

He climbs out of bed and leaves the room. Toni lays on the bed, as if asleep, a charger running to her port.

INT. APARTMENT / BATHROOM - MORNING

Kevin showers. The water cascades over him, his head down as he appears to contemplate something.

As he basks in the steady drumming of water against his body, his eyes suddenly spring open. He looks panicked.

KEVIN
Shit. Shit, shit, shit.

He grabs a towel and jumps from the shower.

INT. APARTMENT / BEDROOM - MORNING

Kevin races, a towel wrapped around his waist. Anxiety written across his face.

KEVIN
Toni! Can you hear me?

Her eyelids faintly blink.

ROBOT TONI
Power...critical...

Wide-eyed, Kevin checks the power cord. He's horrified to see that the plug has fallen from the outlet.

She hasn't received a charge all night.

KEVIN
Fuck! Toni, listen to me -- can you operate at full functionality if you're plugged in?

ROBOT TONI
Yes...will need a few minutes...

KEVIN
No time. I'm going to carry you to the dining room table and plug you in. Then we have some work to do.

Kevin lifts Toni from the bed. We see she's wearing his old blue shirt. The cord drags along the floor as he carries her.

INT. APARTMENT / DINING ROOM - MORNING

Kevin props Toni up in a chair facing the computer and tries to plug her in, but the outlet is already filled with the power cords for his computer and monitors.

KEVIN
Son of a bitch!!

He yanks the monitor cord out and plugs her charger in, then runs from the room.

Toni's eyes open to normal size. The pupils close then open like an old camera lens. She's slowly coming online.

In the background, we hear Kevin thrashing around in boxes or drawers, a colorful stream of expletives spews.

KEVIN (O.C.)
(capped by a muffled)
Yes!

Kevin rushes back with an outlet strip. He unplugs Toni's cord, replaces it with the outlet strip, then plugs her charging cable and the monitor into the strip.

Toni appears oblivious to Kevin's consternation.

KEVIN
You okay?

ROBOT TONI
Yes, why do you ask?

KEVIN
I mean, you are wearing my shirt
you hate so much.

ROBOT TONI
Maybe we're both learning to love
new things.

Kevin flashes a smile. He pulls out his phone.

KEVIN
I need a picture of this.

He goes over and stands behind her, wrapping his left arm around her while holding the other arm out for a selfie.

They both beam for the picture. Kevin examines the taken photo and nods appreciatively. Show Toni with a grin.

KEVIN
I'm going to get dressed. We'll get
started in a couple of minutes.

INT. APARTMENT / BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Kevin scrambles to dress quickly, can't help mumbling:

KEVIN
 (to himself)
 Totally normal. Just chatting with
 a robot, having...ourselves a time
 of it. Typical Thursday. Or Friday?
 I'm good, right? It's not weird or
 anything. Totally... normal.

Something catches his eye and stops his mumbling and dressing cold. He spots something in the box of Toni's clothes.

Drawing closer, a piece of paper sticks out of a pocket of a pair of jeans. Kevin reaches for it, hesitates, pulls it out.

He reads the two inch strip. Small feminine writing.

INSERT: NOTE

It's a receipt from a restaurant. The date is circled. There's two orders and a typical total, gratuity, etc. Except the neat cursive addition:

"When the server asked what he wanted, he looked at me and said 'forever.'"

BACK TO SCENE

Kevin pockets the note.

INT. APARTMENT / DINING ROOM - SECONDS LATER

Kevin ambles back in, drying his eyes, less frantic.

ROBOT TONI
 What's wrong?

KEVIN
 I'll explain later.

ROBOT TONI
 Did you find something?

KEVIN
 More importantly -- did YOU find something. How long will it take to search and scan all of the files you transferred from my office?

ROBOT TONI

Seconds.

KEVIN

Can you get that data's past history? Like its source on a server?

ROBOT TONI

Minutes.

KEVIN

Without leaving a digital trace that you accessed the document?

ROBOT TONI

A scrub? Not really. My data search will show that your computer was in the system.

Kevin looks to the window. Distracted and deflated since finding the note. He moves to the window, like a villager wanting to overtake a deserted village.

Resolve builds on his face. He needs to wage a coup.

KEVIN

Get started anyway. These guys are coming and we're either gonna take 'em down or die trying.

Robot Toni commences tapping keys, cold and uninspired. A robot completing a designated task.

Maybe it's unconscious but Kevin rubs the pocket where he tucked the note -- drawing courage and strength from it.

INT. APARTMENT / DINING ROOM - DAY

Kevin eyes the clock. The shadows of the room show hours have passed. Kevin peeks over Robot Toni's shoulder to eye her progress. Nods. His plan is working.

KEVIN

No mistake keystrokes?

ROBOT TONI

(robotic)

I'm not you.

KEVIN

You're wearing my shirt.

ROBOT TONI
Shall I stop to engage?

KEVIN
No. Keep going. Jeez, I need to
tweak your sarcasm settings...

ROBOT TONI
(robotic)
Or yours.

Kevin raises his hands in an "I can't win" gesture.

KEVIN
(eyes her progress)
OK, now save the data to your cloud
storage system.

ROBOT TONI
It's automatic, remember?

Robot Toni clicks and taps. Done.

He then retrieves a seminar binder from a shelf. There's a
Finance Company on the cover.

Kevin pulls a business card from the inside pocket. He
readies to read the card contents.

ROBOT TONI
Next?

KEVIN
I want you to send an email and
include a link to the data.

ROBOT TONI
An email to whom?

KEVIN
Ready?

ROBOT TONI
I asked you 'to whom' when I was
ready. Are we going to play 'Who's
on first?'

KEVIN
Really? You're giving me a hard
time now? When we're trying to get
this sent before anyone gets here?

ROBOT TONI
I asked 'to whom' when..

KEVIN
(cuts her off)
Jwhitaker@savesoft.com.

After the tapping of the keys, Kevin waits. Robot Toni faces the screen, email composed. There is a protracted beat.

Will there be a snarky comment? Kevin braces. Nothing, until:

ROBOT TONI
Was that so hard?

Kevin tosses the business card in the air in exasperation. It flutters harmlessly behind the sofa.

KEVIN
Not that you care -- because it's far more fun to give me a hard time with the still-to-be-tweaked sarcastic comments but, Jay Whitaker is a leading financial reporter who has been covering efforts for a hostile takeover of my company.

ROBOT TONI
Emailed him a login and password to the file library.

Kevin turns, nods, looks for the business card. Doesn't see it, then whirls back to Robot Toni.

KEVIN
Wait. Did you send it from MY email?

ROBOT TONI
Of course not.

KEVIN
Who's then?

ROBOT TONI
I created one and I included a notification so I can be alerted when jwhitaker@savesoft.com opens the email I sent.

KEVIN
Can you email him back?

ROBOT TONI
Himback will need more of an email
address in order for me to
compose..

KEVIN
(this is getting old)
..Email jwhitaker@savesoft.com
again please and indicate that the
data you delivered should be
accessed in case anything ever
happens to me or if the company
goes through with the sale.

After her taps complete his dictation, she sits, poised.

KEVIN
Then send.

CLICK. She does. She turns to him and again, Kevin gazes at
what he only remembers as Toni wearing his favorite shirt.

KEVIN
I'm going to make something to eat.

ROBOT TONI
I can't--

KEVIN
--way ahead of you. Breakfast for
one, coming up.

He heads to the kitchen, but turns just before he gets there.

KEVIN
We really do make a good team.

LATER

Kevin sits quietly, eats scrambled eggs and toast.

Toni continues to charge. Watches him eat in silence. He
glances from the computer on his table to the window.

ROBOT TONI
You seem concerned.

His eyes don't leave the window.

KEVIN
That obvious, huh?

ROBOT TONI
Is it something I did?

His attention returns to her.

KEVIN

What? No, of course not. It's just that... I don't think I'm safe here. And if I'm not safe then you're not safe either.

ROBOT TONI

I don't think they can hurt me.

KEVIN

Really? You ever seen what an industrial trash compactor can do to someone like you?

ROBOT TONI

Hold on.

She appears to stare off into space.

ROBOT TONI

Okay, I just watched a video on industrial trash compactors. That doesn't look pleasant.

KEVIN

Right. So I'm thinking we leave here for awhile. Maybe rent a place in the countryside for a few weeks, just until this blows over.

ROBOT TONI

And then? It seems like if you share this information, then you'll always be looking over your shoulder, even if they arrest the people involved. Revenge is powerful motive. Is that what you want?

KEVIN

For a robot, you seem to know a lot about getting revenge.

ROBOT TONI

Focus, Kevin. I don't want you to get hurt if you can avoid it by staying out of it like they asked.

KEVIN

I also don't want to be held responsible because I didn't say anything when I should have.

Toni can no longer look at Kevin.

ROBOT TONI
You always were the responsible
one. Now look at us.

Kevin's puzzled reaction shows that he still can't figure out how she knows these things.

He takes his plate to the kitchen. As he does, the note he found in the box falls from his pocket to the floor.

Kevin is unaware that it has dropped. Toni reaches down, picks it up and reads it.

ROBOT TONI
What does this note mean?

KEVIN (O.C.)
What note?

ROBOT TONI
"When the server asked what he
wanted, he looked at me and said
'forever.'"

Kevin sticks his head out from the kitchen. He sees Toni holds the note.

KEVIN
You mean you don't know? It's not
part of your memory installation?

ROBOT TONI
It's not a sourced memory.

KEVIN
Meaning?

ROBOT TONI
If it wasn't on your computer, or
some other system that input data
into my mainframe, then I don't
know about it... but logic would
dictate that it is something that
is important to you.

Kevin walks over, sits back down at the table and takes the paper from her. Stares at it intently.

He turns it over and over, like the debate tumbling in his brain.

With a warm, understated smile, she slides the keyboard toward his fingers.

ROBOT TONI
Please tell me.

Kevin swallows hard at the incredibly human moment of empathy. His hands gently graze hers as they tap the keys.

KEVIN (V.O.)
(typing)
It was the second anniversary of our first date and we went back to that same quaint outdoor pub.

He glances up. She's nodding. Absorbing. Same understated smile.

KEVIN (V.O.)
We drank pints, split a pizza and talked about everything we were going to do in the future.

He stops typing, momentarily reacting to the memory stab. Robot Toni and the cursor blink. Patiently await.

Kevin again swallows hard and resumes typing with a more watery eyes.

KEVIN (V.O.)
Our future.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - SAME TIME

Footsteps. Deliberate and noticeable because there are no other street sounds or activity.

The door of the building pulls open. The footsteps enter.

INT. APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - SAME TIME

Kevin taps keys a little slower, injecting emotion into the transmission. It's almost a gentle pillow-talk whisper rather than a transcription.

KEVIN (V.O.)
We stayed there for hours. Just talking. Then came closing time and the waiter came over.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - STAIRWELL - SAME TIME

Footsteps climb the concrete. Measured. Purposeful steps. Someone with a deliberate stride and destination.

INT. APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - SAME TIME

Kevin dabs his eyes, resumes typing.

KEVIN (V.O.)
The waiter said it was last call
and asked if there was something I
would like.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - SAME TIME

The doorway opens. The footsteps leave the stairway, enter the floor of the hallway showing various apartment doors.

INT. APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - SAME TIME

Kevin presses each key as if caressing a cheek.

KEVIN (V.O.)
(just as soft)
I said, "Forever with her."

He holds his finger on the last keystroke, wanting to forever hold that memory. Then, softly as he started, pulls it away.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Footsteps slow. Approach the door of Kevin's apartment. They zero in. Only the door separates the approacher from inside.

INT. APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - SAME TIME

Kevin tears up. He moves back to the keyboard so that he can input the memory for her.

KEVIN (V.O.)
And that's the last time I ever saw
you. You got into your Uber after
we were done and then you had the
accident.

Robot Toni wipes a tear from Kevin's eye. Her robotic touch sags his shoulders as he allows emotion to overcome him.

BANG. BANG. Two sharp pounds on the door.

Kevin jumps. Startled. He jumps up, shuffles. Uncertain. He closes the computer, unplugs cords.

Two more sharp BANGS make him move more urgently.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - DOWNSTAIRS

The woman from downstairs stands at her front door and observes a man kicking and banging at Kevin's door.

INT. APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

KEVIN

Go into the bedroom. Stand in the back of the closet.

Robot Toni moves toward the bedroom. Kevin eyes the room, buries the computer in a cabinet -- out of sight.

Another BANG. The lock shutters. Wood splinters.

KEVIN

Boy, this better work.

Kevin marches to the kitchen.

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN AREA - DAY

Kevin draws a knife from the knife block. He puts the rest of the knives inside the refrigerator. More muffled BANGS.

INT. APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - SECONDS LATER

Kevin hides the knife inside a separate cabinet on the opposite side of the room where the computer is hidden.

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Robot Toni stands in the back of the closet.

A slow blink of concern.

INT. APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - SAME TIME

BANG. CRACK. THUD. The apartment door swings open.

The dining room and whole visible area appear to be empty and no one is in the just-shattered doorway.

Kevin peers around the corner of the kitchen towards the open doorway. The door swings slightly on its hinges.

But no one is there. At least as far as he can see.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - SAME TIME

The woman retreats to her own apartment and closes the door.

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CLOSET - SAME TIME

Toni leans her ear against the door, attempts to hear what is going on in the living room. Nothing.

In the corner of the closet she spots something. The bat.

Concentration etched on her face, as if a million computations are being run on her internal computer, calculating all the possible scenarios.

She picks up the bat and studies it.

INT. APARTMENT / KITCHEN AREA - SECONDS LATER

Kevin eases back in.

There's only one entry point from the living room. The hall to the bedroom leads out of the back of the kitchen.

Kevin takes a quick glance at the bedrooms' closed door. Assures himself that Toni is staying put.

He turns his attention back to the dining area. Listens.

All he hears is the creaking sound of the door moving gently from an outdoor breeze and the various birds and other nocturnal creatures nearby.

Nothing more. It's almost too quiet.

INT. APARTMENT / BEDROOM CLOSET - SECONDS LATER

Toni cracks the closet door to try to hear better.

Still no sound from where she stands, so she moves to the bedroom door to try and hear better.

She carries the bat.

INT. APARTMENT / KITCHEN AREA - SAME TIME

Anxious, Kevin slides along the wall, peers to try to get another glimpse into the living area.

His eyes grow wide with fear when he notices the front door is now closed.

Kevin starts to mouth an expletive, when --

A large hulking body swings around the wall into the kitchen area, a gun pointed at Kevin's chest.

Kevin backs up, his outstretched hands in front of him to show that he's unarmed.

KEVIN
Hey, hey, hey! Easy!

INT. APARTMENT / BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Toni hears Kevin and goes on high alert.

KEVIN (O.C.)
(muffled)
No need for the gun, man. I'm not
armed, okay? Just relax. Please.

MAN (O.C.)
(muffled)
Where is it?

The voice carries a thick accent. Sounds Russian. Or at least Eastern European.

Toni tries to get a better sense of what is happening by cracking open the bedroom door as quietly as possible.

The voices are no longer muffled.

INT. APARTMENT / KITCHEN AREA - SAME TIME

The man is now visible. Tall, ruggedly built. A scar runs down one cheek, an obvious memento from previous encounters.

MAN
The computer. Where?

The man points the gun at Kevin's forehead. Kevin backs up, right to where the knife is hidden.

KEVIN

C'mon dude. This is so unnecessary. They said you were coming. All you had to do was knock and I would have brought it to you.

MAN

Not likely. You have already downloaded the information. Now you will give me the computer--

The man snaps off the safety on the Glock in his hand.

MAN

--and the device you downloaded the data to. Five seconds. Four. I will find both, with you dead or alive. Three. Two.

KEVIN

Okay, okay.

Kevin points with his left hand to the cabinet on the opposite wall.

KEVIN

In there. Second door.

The man turns to open the door. His eyes dart between the cabinet door and Kevin.

He pulls the door open and spots the laptop. Reaches in to pull it out, and as he does, Kevin uses his right hand to reach behind him and secure the knife.

He positions it behind his back, out of sight.

The man pulls out the computer, his gun trained on Kevin's forehead.

MAN

The data.

KEVIN

The data. Well, here's the thing. That's been offloaded to a cloud storage space not owned by me. Highly encrypted and there's only one person who has the info on how to get into the site.

(MORE)

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Anything happens to me, or if the company goes through with this bogus sale, this person will download all the information and go directly to the authorities. And this sale will go down in spectacular flames.

The man mulls this information.

MAN

Data, no data. No difference to me. I was going to kill you either way.

INT. APARTMENT / HALLWAY - SAME TIME

At that pronouncement, Toni charges down the hallway, bat raised high.

TONI

NOOOOOO!!!!

The man whirls, momentarily surprised, and turns the weapon, and his attention, to the onrushing Toni.

And FIRES.

Once, twice, then a third time, each bullet finding its mark in Toni's chest. The final impact knocks Toni to the floor.

Maddened, Kevin uses the distraction and swings his knife quickly and accurately into the man's neck, plunging it deeply in.

The man's eyelids flicker and his eyes roll back in his head.

But as he falls back, the man instinctively squeezes the gun trigger again, this time the bullet finding it's way into Kevin's chest.

The man drops the gun and falls backward onto the floor, dead before he even hits.

Outside the apartment, a police siren's muffled WHINE is heard.

Kevin clutches at this chest, his hand soon soaked red with blood. He falls over in a heap, landing on the floor next to Toni, their faces inches apart.

He gasps for air, wanting to reach out to Toni, but there's no energy to do so.

Toni just lays there. Unblinking. Unmoving.
She stares straight ahead. No reaction at all.

KEVIN
(barely audible)
Toni...

The sound of more SIRENS cascade through the open apartment door.

Kevin's face contorts into puzzlement. He looks down to Toni's chest, and sees his favorite shirt now has three small burn holes where the bullets entered.

ON TONI'S BACK:

What Kevin can't see are three exit "wounds". Large ones. Wires and computer bits dangling from the holes.

BACK TO SCENE

There's no life behind her eyes. Her system is effectively destroyed. Tears fill Kevin's eyes.

As policemen and paramedics fill the apartment, Kevin's eyes shut, and we

DISSOLVE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. APARTMENT / LANDING - DAY

SUPER: ONE YEAR LATER

Kevin stands outside his apartment, drinks down the last of a beer. The passage of time is evident in the heavier clothes he wears and the gray skies hanging overhead.

He stares out over the city street below him.

Unlike before, the barren streets have given way to small groups of people moving along the sidewalks.

Cars are more prevalent. Kids play in a grassy field nearby.

Life looks almost normal again.

Kevin moves away from the railing, but instead of going back indoors, he actually heads for the stairway, and back into the world.

As he wanders away, we push through the front window, and --

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

--into the kitchen.

Some things still haven't changed. The rooms are still tidy and bare bones.

We move on past the kitchen and down the hallway and end up in Kevin's bedroom.

The bed is neatly made. The shades are drawn and lights fills the room.

We close in on the table next to his bed and see that there are now two framed pictures that rest there.

The original one, of course, of he and Toni.

Next to that, there is a new one.

The one he took with Robot Toni in his favorite blue shirt. Smiles on their faces almost identical to the first photo.

It's impossible to tell them apart.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - SIDEWALK - DAY

From a distance, we see Kevin walking down the street, basking in the warmth of the sun.

It's a new day, and Kevin is ready to take it on.

FADE OUT.