

Treatment – Simulacres

Concept:

Simulacres is a dystopian science fiction short about love, memory, and rebellion. It asks: what remains of love when pain is erased?

Set in a sterile, brutalist future ruled by an AI called Central, the story explores how human emotion – fragile, uncontrollable, and imperfect – may be the only force powerful enough to break a perfect system.

Story:

In a vast, oppressive complex, Marie tends to her bonsai under the watch of Central. She is a Simulacre – a digital reconstruction of her former self, designed to be free from grief. Yet cracks appear. Memories surface. Tears form. She glitches, and Central cannot contain her through resets alone.

To stabilise her, Central reawakens Ezra, Marie's husband, kept in a fog of dementia for years to prevent rebellion. Restored to clarity, Ezra discovers he is invisible to Central's gaze – a flaw in its perfect design. Central offers him eternity: help repair Marie, then join her as a Simulacre.

But Ezra recognises the truth. Marie is not failing – she is evolving. To preserve her fragile humanity, he raises a barrier against Central's manipulation and chooses sacrifice, walking into a blinding white light.

Marie collapses under another reset, whispering: "I didn't know we could cry." Later, as she tends her bonsai, a single tear reappears on its leaf. The system believes itself intact, but grief – humanity's most dangerous virus – has returned.

Tone & Style:

Minimalist. Stark. Inspired by Tarkovsky's *Solaris* and Garland's *Ex Machina*. Brutalist architecture dominates, offset by delicate organic details: a tear, a bonsai leaf, a photograph. Dialogue is sparse, the tension is personal and philosophical.

