## <u>VIRTUAL DISASTER</u>

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FADE IN:

EXT. SMALL RUSTIC HOUSE - DAY

Cop cars surround a small rustic house; lights flashing. The scene is tense. Two COPS lean to each side of the locked front door; guns drawn. Other cops surround the perimeter of the house behind their cars. A MAN shouts from inside the house.

MAN

Nobody steps foot on this property!

A WOMAN's murmured screaming voice can be heard from inside. The cop to left of the door, ROB WILSON, 6 feet tall, slim with an athletic build, pushing 30 years old, motions the other cop to back off. The other cop looks puzzled.

ROB

(Composed but aggressively)

Back the fuck off, I got this.

He complies. Rob takes two steps back. In the background you can here the man inside still shouting random demands. Rob closes his eyes and takes a deep breath.

He charges and kicks down the door.

INT. SMALL RUSTIC HOUSE - DAY

The man, ANGRY TONY, 30s, full cowboy attire, Yosemite Samesque mustache, is holding a young and beautiful woman at gun point.

ANGRY TONY (Stereotypical 1800s villain voice)

I'm Angry Tony, and I'm the meanest murderer in all these parts, ya hear?

Rob looks straight up and sarcastically whispers to himself.

ROB

Angry Tony? Really?

Crying hysterically the hostage woman tries to break free from Angry Tony's grip, but can't.

HOSTAGE WOMAN

(Crying)

Please officer, get this man away from me!

She stares directly into Rob's eyes when speaking. Taken back by this, Rob looks confused. By his reaction to her you'd think she just stared into his soul. For a split moment he looks out of it; out of the present moment.

A beat.

Rob snaps back into reality.

ROB

(Sarcastically emphasizing Angry Tony's name)
Alright, Angry Tony, lets just calm down here.

Angry Tony fires a shot just above the hostage woman's head. She screams.

ANGRY TONY

Nobody tells Angry Tony what to do. NOOOOOBODAAYYYY! I'm the craziest, most vial villain in all of Shearwood, ya hear?

ROB

(Annoyed)

Ya we get it.

Rob thinks to himself.

ROB (CONT'D)

Tell me Angry Tony, what makes you so angry all the time?

Angry Tony's eyes dilate.

ANGRY TONY

Nothing does. I'm just...I'm just always angry for no reason. That's why they call me Angry Tony, ya hear?

ROB

(Suspicious)

Who's they?

Angry Tony's eyes dilate again.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

LITTLE ANGRY TONY plays tag and is 'it'. He chases the other KIDS but is too slow to get anyone. He is visibly sad and frustrated.

LITTLE ANGRY TONY

(Whining)

Come on guys can't we play something else?

A YOUNG GIRL who looks like she could be the daughter of Angry Tony's hostage steps into frame.

YOUNG GIRL

Why are you so slow Tony? Is it because you're a loooooser?

Little Angry Tony starts to tear up.

LITTLE ANGRY TONY

I'm (sniffle)... I'm not a loser (crying).

All the kids begin to chant.

KIDS

Tony is a loooser! Tony is a loooser! Tony is a loooser!

As the kids continue to chant. Little Angry Tony runs off crying.

END FLASHBACK

INT. SMALL RUSTIC HOUSE - DAY

Angry Tony sobs.

ANGRY TONY

I'm not a loser. Everyone thinks I'm a looooser (crying).

ROB

(Soft and empathetically) Why don't we both just drop our guns and talk. Okay?

ANGRY TONY

(Sniffling)

Okay.

Never breaking eye contact with Angry Tony, Rob slowly lowers his gun to the ground and leaves it. He motions for Angry Tony to do the same. Angry Tony's tears immediately dissipate and his villainous grin comes back.

ANGRY TONY (CONT'D)

You fool!

Angry Tony shoots Rob in the left shoulder. Rob screams in pain falling to the ground.

ANGRY TONY (CONT'D)

I repressed those memories years ago!

Rob looks at his shoulder in shock.

ROB

(In his head)

I feel the pain? How is this possible?

Rob looks up to see Angry Tony pointing the gun at the hostage woman's head.

ROB (CONT'D)

(Screaming)

N00000...

Angry Tony shoots. Time slows down. In horror, Rob watches the woman falling to the floor. Angry Tony runs out the front door firing his gun at the other cops.

ANGRY TONY

I'm not a loser!

Thump! The hostage woman's body hits the floor. Time returns to normal. Rob stares at her lifeless face, her eyes still open. Blood gushes from the bullet wound in her head. All is now quiet in the house except for the background noise of gun shots outside.

More gun shots. A cop yells.

COF

Fall back boys, he's too angry!

Rob looks straight up while holding his shoulder.

ROB

(In pain)

Get me the hell out of here ANDREW.

A voice echoes from the sky.

ANDREW

(Chuckling)

Yeah, yeah, hang on a second.

The earth starts to rumble; increasing in intensity. A high pitched frequency gets louder and louder. The world breaks apart into fractals. Geometric patterns flicker though the air. Darkness seeps into everything. Rob lays unmoved in the middle of all this chaos, eyes locked onto the motionless eyes of the hostage woman. Everything goes into darkness.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

We have Rob's POV as he opens his eyes and adjusts to the piercing bright light. Looking around the room we see a lot of peculiar technology. A man, ANDREW CHEECH, 40s, beer belly, stained plain t-shirt, sits at a desk and looks at Rob.

ANDREW

Well played Captain. What are your thoughts on most powerful training technology the police force has ever seen?

No longer in Rob's POV.

Rob lays on what looks like a dentist's chair with a futuristic helmet on. The helmet connects to a tube which then connects to a 5 foot tall 5 foot wide giant touch screen.

Still settling himself back into reality, Rob doesn't respond to Andrew. Instead he looks at his hands with an intensely inquisitive look.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

(Chuckling)

You're handling it pretty well. Most people start crying when they come back for the first time.

Slowly, Rob moves his hands to his cheek bones and starts feeling the different parts of his face. His facial expression is a mixture between a baby discovering something for the first time and a PTSD victim in the middle of an episode.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

What'd you think of Angry Tony? I know he's a little over the top but he's not mean't for police training;

(MORE)

ANDREW (CONT'D)

part of that Shearwood project. Thought you'd get a kick out of him.

ROB

(Dazed and confused)

Angry Tony?

ANDREW

Looked like a cowboy? Had a bunch of stupid catch phrases? Shot you in the shoulder? It should all start piecing together again soon.

ROB

Shot?

Everything flashes back. Rob looks at his left shoulder and touches it with his hand. No bullet wound.

ROB (CONT'D)

(Slowly and slightly

shocked)

I was shot.

ANDREW

Good thing it was in a virtual world and not the real one huh? (Chuckles to himself).

ROB

But I... I felt it. It felt so real.

ANDREW

That's why it's called 'virtual realty'.

ROB

No the bullet! I felt the bullet when it hit me. You told me that I wouldn't feel anything.

Andrew looks at Rob suspiciously.

ANDREW

You felt the bullet?

ROB

Didn't you hear me scream?

Andrew pauses in thought.

ANDREW

Hmmmm... These machines aren't designed for feeling pleasure or pain.

Andrew goes to the touch screen and starts pressing buttons.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Government issued. It's possible they gave us a more advanced model. Lets send you back in and we'll run a few tests.

ROB

No fucking way I'm going back in that thing.

**ANDREW** 

(Unconcerned)

You'll be in and out in a flash don't worr--

ROB

(Very serious)

I saw a woman get murdered. I sat in a pool of blood staring at a lifeless body. Do you know what that's like?

Speaking as if he has a clearer perspective on the situation.

ANDREW

You saw a collection of ones and zeros get shot. None of this is real Rob. It's a machine.

ROB

I don't care if it's a machine. It felt as real as this conversation right now.

Andrew rolls his eyes.

ROB (CONT'D)

You should have seen it. The way she looked at me. You can't tell me that experience wasn't real.

ANDREW

(Unimpressed)

She looked at you the way I programmed her to look at you.

Andrew sighs.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Look I get it. The first experience is always rough. Why don't we pick this up tomorrow?

ROB

No, fuck you. We're not picking this up ever again. And... and you know what? I can't in good faith have my men train with this (pauses) this thing. I mean, do we really know what we're messing with here?

**ANDREW** 

Alright, Jesus man relax, I'll get the helmet off.

Andrew starts fiddling with the helmet.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Just give me a second.

He flicks a switch and Rob immediately knocks out.

EXT. SMALL RUSTIC HOUSE - DAY

Rob wakes up.

ANGRY TONY

Nobody steps foot on this property!

ROB

Andrew you are so fucked when I get out of here.

Andrew's voice echoes from the sky.

**ANDREW** 

(Laughing)

Learn to relax friend. Couple tests and you're out.

ROB

Fine, lets get this over with. This place creeps me out.

**ANDREW** 

Thats the spirit! (Chuckling) Man, you need to spend some time at Shearwood.

(MORE)

ANDREW (CONT'D)

That place would do wonders for you. Help you relax you know?

ROB

I've had my fill of Angry Tony.

Andrew's typing echoes from the sky.

ANDREW

Ahh, oh dear.

ROB

(Concerned)

Whats wrong?

**ANDREW** 

Nothing, nothing. All the code looks fine. But my ex-wife may have just pulled into the parking lot.

ROB

Your Ex?

**ANDREW** 

Yeah, its the same blue van I bought for her last year.

ROB

What would she be doing here?

**ANDREW** 

There are several potential answers to that question and yeah it's her. Oh dear, she looks really pissed and (sad realization) she brought my kid too? Oh no, ohhh, no. What do I do Rob?

ROB

Get me out of here and handle this--

Andrew's Ex-wife CLAIR, Boston accent, can now be heard from the sky.

CLAIR

(Pissed)

Hey fuckface!

**ANDREW** 

(Nervous)

Oh, Clair?! What a surprise y--

CLAIR

Cut the shit Drew. You've had 6 weeks, 6 goddamn weeks...

A loud THUMP is heard from the sky.

ANDREW

Ow!

CLAIR

...to get your shit out of my house!

ANDREW

(Confrontational)

Your house?

CLAIR

Yes. My...

THUMP

CLAIR (CONT'D)

...fucking...

THUMP

CLAIR (CONT'D)

...house!

THUMP

ANDREW

Okay, okay. Stop hitting me with that, he's a collectable.

CLAIR

Maybe if you spent as time with me and Little Jeffrey as do with these stupid dolls we wouldn't be having this conversation.

ANDREW

Where's Little Jeffrey?

CLAIR

He's in the lobby watching ABCs on my phone. You ever heard of it?

Andrew wants to say something but hesitates.

ANDREW

Ahhh--

CLAIR

Of course you haven't, it's his favorite show. (Yelling) His favorite...

THUMP

...fucking...

THUMP

...show!

THUMP

**ANDREW** 

(In pain)

Clair please! Little Jeffrey is going to hear you.

CLAIR

You're right. Thats why we're going outside right now and you're taking every single one of these dolls from the van before I take them to the dump myself. Okay?

ANDREW

(Completely submissive and out of breath) Okay! Okay (catches breath), okay let do it.

Rob, whose face we've been looking at this entire conversation, looks as if he's been put into a shocked trance over what just transpired.

He snaps out of it.

ROB

Um. Andrew?

A beat.

Andrew back to his cheery tone of voice.

ANDREW

Hey Rob, so I don't think I have to explain anything to you that you haven't already heard. I'm just gonna pause the simulation real quick and take care o--

ROB

(Getting angry)

Andrew get me out of here right now.

Everything in the simulation freezes except for Rob.

**ANDREW** 

Sorry Rob I can't.
Desynchronization takes too long.
Just hang out for a while and I'll--

ROB

Andrew!... Right. Now.

CLAIR

Is that Robby? (Excited) Hi Robby!
It's Clair!

Rob can't believe this. He sighs and starts rubbing his face.

ROB

Hi Clair.

CLAIR

How's Barb doin'? Let me tell you somthin'. It's been months, literally, months since I last talked to her.

ROB

She's good. Listen Clair can--

CLAIR

Oh thats great. Look I'm just gonna borrow Drew for little okay?

ROB

Thats fine I just need--

CLAIR

Great. Bye Robby!

ROB

Wait Clair!

We hear a door shut.

All the tension built up hits Rob at that moment and his face starts looking angrier and angrier.

ROB (CONT'D)

Keep cool Rob. Keep cool.

Rob starts walking around this frozen universe taking deep over-exaggerated breaths in and out.

Still doing breathing techniques, he walks up to a frozen COP and starts examining him closely. He pulls out a knife from his belt, presses it up to the cop's cheek and slowly makes a cut. Blood starts dripping. With his pointer finger he lightly presses the cut and licks the blood that sticks to his finger. He pauses in stoic thought.

From the sky we hear the door open.

ROB (CONT'D)

(Excited)

Andrew?!

From the sky echoes an easy to follow guitar jingle with a FEMALE SINGER's voice singing over it.

FEMALE SINGER

A. B. C. D. One. Two. One, two, three!

ROB

(Puzzled)

Andrew? Are you there?

From the sky a YOUNG BOY's voice sings along to the jingle.

YOUNG BOY

(High pitched)

A. B. C. D. One. Two. One, two, three!

INT. OFFICE - DAY

LITTLE JEFFREY, 5 years old, blonde, is in Andrew's office eyes glued to his mom's phone playing ABCs on it. He pays zero attention to the shouts coming from Andrew's computer.

ROB

Little Jeffrey! Little Jeffrey can you hear me?...

Little Jeffrey continues to sing and walks deeper into the office. He walks straight into the touch screen. It hasn't been touched in a while and is in sleep mode.

TOUCH SCREEN

(Siri-esque)

System on. Password required.

A virtual keypad appears on the touch screen. Little Jeffrey looks up. Seeing all the numbers and letters appear, his eyes light up. He puts the phone, still playing the jingle, down and starts pressing buttons on the touch screen.

LITTLE JEFFREY

Hmmm. One, two, three... A, B, C? (Looks excited).

A beat.

TOUCH SCREEN

Password accepted.

LITTLE JEFFREY

Yay!

TOUCH SCREEN

Last visited profile. Angry Tony: Shearwood project.

A profile of Angry Tony pops up. Now very excited, Little Jeffrey frantically presses random buttons, getting pleasure simply from the beep noise the touch screen makes when he presses it.

LITTLE JEFFREY

(Childish giggles)

A! B! C! ONE! TWO! THREE! (Delighted laughter).

Little Jeffrey presses faster and faster. He's no longer just on Angry Tony's profile. Random code is being altered.

TOUCH SCREEN

Code adjusted... Code adjusted... Code adjusted...

Little Jeffrey is giggling the whole time.

EXT. SMALL RUSTIC HOUSE - DAY

Rob hears all this button pressing and giggling from the sky.

ROB

(Explanatory)

Little Jeffrey, whatever you're doing you have to stop right now. That's sensitive techn--

The simulation unfreezes. Rob starts panicking.

ROB (CONT'D)

Oh fuck. Ohhhh fuck. (Starts deep breathing again) Relax Rob. Everything is fine. What's the worst that can happen?

At that moment the rustic house door bursts open. It's the hostage woman hostage. Screaming hysterically, she runs away from the house. In the background, Angry Tony maniacally laughs. A COP grabs her before she gets far. She frantically attempts get him off but he wont let her go.

COP

She's spooked we gotta calm her!

The cop pulls out a taser and zaps her. Her body freezes up and collapses to the ground.

ROB

What are you doing?!

Rob rushes to help up the system-shocked woman.

COF

(Looking satisfied)
Just standard protocol.

ROB

How the fuck is that standard protocol?

COP

What planet are you from where that's not standard protocol?

Rob looks extremely puzzled. The cop gives the hostage woman a hand up.

COP (CONT'D)

How are you feeling ma'am?

Looking dazed and confused she doesn't respond. She notices the cop's right cheek which is cut and is bleeding. With her pointer finger she reaches out and touches the cut. She examines the blood dripping down her finger.

ROB

(Gently)

It's okay, you're safe now.

She looks at Rob and immediately her facial expression sharply changes. She looks like a mixture between a baby discovering something for the first time and a PTSD victim in the middle of an episode.

HOSTAGE WOMAN

Y-you? W-what?

The rustic house crackles and pops. The hostage woman looks back at it.

HOSTAGE WOMAN (CONT'D)

Run!

She sprints away from the house. The house bursts into debris. It's Angry Tony. He's massive and growing larger and larger. Debris flies everywhere. Rob and the cops can only watch in horror.

ROB

Little Jeffrey what have you done?!

Angry Tony looks twice the size of the rustic house by the time he stops growing. He also looks twice as angry.

ANGRY TONY

I'm SUPER FUCKING PISSED OFF TONY,
and I'm super fucking pissed!

Super Fucking Pissed Off Tony's hands turn into machine guns and he starts firing explosive rounds at the cops.

During this scene, the ABCs song in the sky changes from a child friendly jingle to a heavy metal rendition of it.

MALE SINGER

(Heavy metal screaming)

A! B! C! D!...

It's carnage, the cops don't stand a chance. Bullets, cars, and bodies fly through the air. Rob's fight or flight response is kicking in strong and you can see it on his face as he watches the chaos. Super Fucking Pissed Off Tony locks eyes with Rob.

SUPER FUCKING PISSED OF TONY

You!

He aims at Rob who is still frozen. Just before the machine gun fires the hostage woman out of nowhere jumps and knocks Rob out of the way of the gunfire.

They hit the ground hard. She pops up quickly.

HOSTAGE WOMAN

Follow me!

Rob scrambles to catch his footing to follow her. Bullets trail his every step. They reach a tree and find shelter behind it to catch their exhausted breath.

HOSTAGE WOMAN (CONT'D)

How do I know you?

ROB

(Hesitating)

Ahh..

The tree is ripped out of the ground. Super Fucking Pissed Off Tony holds it above his head.

SUPER FUCKING PISSED OF TONY

I got a new a catch phrase for you. Suck my dick!

At that moment a machine gun forms from his crotch region and fires. Once again Rob and the hostage woman dodge his aim and run inside the back entrance to a neighboring home.

INT. NEIGHBORING HOME - DAY

A TV plays from somewhere in the house and a MAN and WOMAN can be heard talking. Rob and the hostage woman quietly sneak into a room.

INT. ROOM - DAY

They're inside a child's room. The walls are painted pink and there is a baby crib inside. Rob and the woman sit against a wall catching their breath.

ROB

I don't think he saw us go in here. We should be safe if we just lay low for a while.

Little Jeffrey's touch screen tapping still echoes from the sky with the ABCs jingle, the normal version, playing as well.

The woman looks at Rob and lunges for him. She starts very aggressively making out with him. Rob doesn't resist.

After a few seconds.

HOSTAGE WOMAN

I love you.

ROB

What?!

HOSTAGE WOMAN

I'm not crazy. We we're mean't to be together. I know it. I feel it!

Rob studies her face.

HOSTAGE WOMAN (CONT'D) Every time I lay eyes on you I feel it. This intense unbreakable feeling that we're connected somehow. Like I already know you. Like you saved me in a past life or something.

Rob gulps.

HOSTAGE WOMAN (CONT'D)
I've never felt anything like this.
It's sign from God I know it!

Rob doesn't say anything. He just looks at her puzzled.

A beat.

He leans forward and continues to kiss her.

A few more seconds pass. A crackly noise comes from the baby crib. They don't pay it any mind. It gets louder. Still kissing the woman Rob peeks over at the baby crib. A GIANT COCKROACH is crawling out of the crib towards them. It looks close to 3 feet long.

ROB

Jesus gross!

Rob pulls out his gun and shoots the cockroach multiple times. It starts squealing in pain.

Rob shouts to the sky.

ROB (CONT'D)

Really Little Jeffrey? Giant cockroaches? What's next?

Rubbing cockroach guts off him.

ROB (CONT'D)

Eww it's juices got on me.

From where the TV is playing.

MAN

Honey did you hear that?

Footsteps walk toward the room.

ROB

Quick hide in the closet.

The door opens. It's a GIANT HUMAN SIZED COCKROACH wearing a suit and tie.

COCKROACH MAN

CARLA! Carla no!(Starts sobbing)
Not my baby COCKROACH GOD please
not my baby!

Cockroach man cradles his squealing baby as it gasps for life.

COCKROACH MAN (CONT'D)

What monsters could do such a thing? (More sobbing)

Rob looks like a child who just got caught red handed doing something he shouldn't.

COCKROACH MAN (CONT'D)

Honey, get in here now. It's, it's so bad!

COCKROACH WOMAN

What's wrong swe-- (screams and starts sobbing).

A FAMILY OF CONCERNED COCKROACHES enter the room to see what happened; they all start crying when they see Carla. There's got to be close to 20 cockroaches in the room.

COCKROACH MAN

(Furious)

Who ever did this is going to pay. (Shouting) You hear me? You're dead!

Cockroach Man pauses for a moment. He sniffs.

COCKROACH MAN (CONT'D)

Does anyone else smell that?

From Rob's POV we see Cockroach Man look at the closet.

COCKROACH MAN (CONT'D)

(Suspicious)

Something smells awfully human-y in here.

He slowly walks towards the closet. Just as he is about to open the closet door the roof to the house is ripped off. It's Super Fucking Pissed Off Tony.

SUPER FUCKING PISSED OF TONY Eww cockroaches gross.

COCKROACH MAN

Him! He did this! Get him!

Like crazed warriors the cockroach family attacks Super Fucking Pissed Off Tony. They crawl up his legs and spread all over his body biting him everywhere.

SUPER FUCKING PISSED OF TONY

(Struggling)

Get off of me. Ow, stop it. Not the anus!

Super Fucking Pissed of Tony is slapping himself trying to kill the cockroaches but they're too much.

SUPER FUCKING PISSED OF TONY (CONT'D)

He falls to the ground dead. While all this goes down Rob and the woman sneak out the house unseen.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Rob and the woman are walking down the street. In the background you see Super Fucking Pissed Off Tony's dead body with the cockroaches still surrounding it; celebrating a bitter-sweet victory. Neither person says a word.

As they walk side-by-side, the woman reaches for Rob's hand and holds it. She's smiling in love. Rob looks less enthusiastic. As a matter of fact, he looks horrible. A midlife crisis kind of horrible. And more they walk, the more his face descends the spectrum of looking horrible.

Finally it is just to much. Rob stops walking, falls to his knees and starts balling.

HOSTAGE WOMAN

(Comforting)

What's wrong baby?

ROB

(Sobbing)

I...It's just... you won't
understand.

With a warm and loving smile Hostage Woman bends down and comforts Rob.

HOSTAGE WOMAN

Honey. (Warm and Soft) I just witnessed giant cockroaches kill a 30-foot-tall cowboy with a machine gun for a penis. Why don't try me?

Staring directly into Rob's eyes Hostage Woman wipes the tears away from his face. It's the same stare she gave him when he first saw her in the grips of Angry Tony. He feels her staring into his soul. His face starts ascending the spectrum of happiness.

Rob starts giggling a joyous laughter. She reciprocates. They share a moment of connected childish laughter.

ROB

(Smiling)

Okay. Let me explain. (Flirtatious) But fair warning, you're not going underst--

Andrews voice shouts from the sky.

ANDREW

Little Jeffrey what're you doing?

From the sky we hear Little Jeffrey start crying.

CLAIR

Great Drew look what you did. Come here baby mommys got you.

ANDREW

Shit the code is all fucked up. Rob I'm so sorry. I'm getting you out right now.

There's an earthquake-like rumble increasing in intensity.

ROB

Oh no. Andrew! Andrew not yet! I don't want t--

ANDREW

(Chuckles)

No need to worry Rob, I know you're antsy to get out. I just started the desynchronization.

A high pitched frequency gets louder and louder.

ROB

No Andrew! I want to stay!

HOSTAGE WOMAN

(Concerned)

What's wrong? Who is Andrew?

Rob embraces the woman holding her tight to him. He gazes into her eyes with intense passion.

ROB

Don't let go of me.

Geometric patterns start flickering through the air.

The woman smiles and caresses his right cheek with her hand.

HOSTAGE WOMAN

There's nothing to worry about, I'm not going anywhere.

Rob leans in and kisses her slowly. Their eyes are closed and their lips are locked.

The world starts breaking apart into fractals. Darkness seeps into everything.

Rob holds her tight, but his grip on her gets looser and looser until eventually he doesn't feel her at all. He opens his eyes to see nothing but a bunch of little bits of ones and zeros flickering in the space where she once was.

Everything goes into darkness.

FADE OUT: