



UNIVERSAL CABLE PRODUCTIONS

Mr. Robot

Pilot

Written by

Sam Esmail

Polish
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Universal Cable Productions
100 Universal City Plaza
Bldg. 1440 / Floor 14
Universal City, CA 91608

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"Our democracy has been hacked. The operating system has been taken over and turned to uses that are somewhat different than the ones our founders intended to emerge." - Al Gore, 2013

"Give a man a gun, and he can rob a bank. Give a man a bank, and he can rob the world." - Internet Meme, c. 2011

BLACK.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 Hello friend. Hello friend? That's
 lame. Maybe I should give you a name?
 But that's a slippery slope. You're
 only in my head. We have to remember
 that.

(then)
 Shit. It's actually happened. I'm
 talking to an imaginary person.

Loud, violent jazz RISES on the soundtrack. Within the black
 of frame, silhouettes begin forming.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 I sometimes think dinosaurs never
 existed. For absolutely no scientific
 reason do I think this. I have
 chronic insomnia. I think aliens are
 real. I think they're invisible and
 staring straight at us. I also
 believe there's a shadowy group of
 rich people who secretly run the
 world.

We pull out to reveal we're in an office looking out of a very
 tall Manhattan skyscraper. Shadowy figures sit and stand
 around a conference table, arguing.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 I'm talking about the ten or fifteen
 zillionaires that we don't know
 about. The guys who control the guys
 that control. The guys that play God
 without permission.

CUT TO BLACK.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 And now I think they're following me.

INT. NYC SUBWAY (MOVING) - MORNING

We finally meet ELLIOT (late 20s). His hoodie throws a sliced
 shadow over his face.

He sneaks looks at a couple of mysterious MEN DRESSED IN
 BLACK, one on either side of the train. One reads the NY Post.
 The other looks straight ahead, suspiciously so.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 This is about last night. I should
 have gone to Angela's birthday party--

INT. PHIL'S COFFEE (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT

A small coffee shop with a few patrons. A cheesy sign that reads "Phil's Coffee" displays proudly above. Elliot sits by himself, hoodie on, no coffee. His leg taps nervously.

Elliot intently watches as a mild-mannered Indian with a mustache walks into the shop. This is PHIL (50s).

He orders a latte from the front and sits alone. He pulls out his iPad and sips his latte, enjoying the quiet evening to himself.

Elliot musters courage with a deep breath and walks over. He sits across from him without saying a word, his leg twitching.

Finally, Phil looks up.

ELLIOT
You're Phil.

He nervously gestures to the cheesy sign. Confused, Phil just offers a quick smile in return--

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
But your real name is Rohit Pathak.
(nervous and robotic)
You changed it to Phil when you bought your first Phil's Coffee shop six years ago. Now you have seventeen of them with eight more coming next quarter. You married an American woman named Linda Fielding, age thirty-one, then had two kids with her. Smallbiztrends.com said your life was so perfect it felt like "the stuff of sitcoms."

An awkward silence. Phil licks his lips, not sure if he should be flattered or concerned.

PHIL
(thick Indian accent)
May I help you with something?

ELLIOT
I liked coming here because the WIFI was fast and with no dropouts. It was good. So good that it scratched that part of my mind-- the part that doesn't allow good to exist without condition. So, I snooped on the traffic and that's when I noticed something strange in the filenames--

Elliot looks down, nervous to go on. But he looks back up with *
confidence. *

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
That's when I decided to hack you. *

Another awkward silence. Phil goes to say something-- *

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
I know you run a website called
Lolita City. *

Alarms suddenly go off in Phil's world. *

PHIL
Pardon me? *

ELLIOT
You use the company servers to run it
through Tor networking, *

SUPER: "Tor Networking - a system intended to enable online
anonymity"

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Routing the traffic from shop to
shop, making it virtually
untraceable. You made it really hard
for anyone to see it.

Even though Elliot came off a little amateurish at first, his *
confidence builds as he continues to talk. *

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
But I saw it. With all the public
info out there on you; birth dates,
anniversary dates, family names,
pets...
(clears his throat)
I cracked your password in three
minutes. *

Angry and confused, Phil eyes Elliot carefully. *

PHIL
Sir...What is the meaning of this?

ELLIOT
(back to nervous)
Sorry, I'm a little nervous. It's my
first time doing this in person.

PHIL
(firm)
Sir, I must ask you to kindly leave--

Phil turns to the man working the register--

ELLIOT
I downloaded everything. All your emails, all your files, all your...pics.

Phil turns back around. This just got serious, and it shows.

PHIL
(angry)
Get out of here right now, sir, or I will call the--

ELLIOT
FBI? Do you want them to find out about the 100GB of child pornography you serve to your 400,000 users? That's a lot of bandwidth, of course, which explains the higher than usual speeds on all your shops' internet connections.

Phil is stunned silent. For a moment, all that can be heard is the soft musak and quiet sipping of coffee from the other patrons. Phil looks down, cornered and speechless. Elliot looks genuinely sympathetic.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Personally, I was hoping it was just going to be BDSM stuff. Do you realize how much simpler that would have been?

PHIL
So, you are not with the police?
(off his head shake)
Then this is illegal. This is forbidden, sir. I did not hurt anyone, I never did-- that is my business, my personal life!

All the blood in Phil's face has drained. He wipes his eyes as emotion begins to fill his face. Elliot looks at him, a mix of pity and guilt.

ELLIOT
I understand what it's like to be different. I'm very different too. I mean, I don't jerk off to little kids, but...I don't know how to talk people. My dad was the only one I could talk to. But he died.

At first, Phil is unsure on how to proceed. But sensing an opportunity, he takes a deep breath and nods sympathetically.

PHIL
I'm sorry to hear that. How did he pass, if I may ask?

ELLIOT
Leukemia. Definitely got it from the radiation at the company he worked at, though we couldn't prove it. Now he's dead. The company's fine though.

PHIL
My father passed when I was young too. I was close to him, exactly like you...

His mind clearly elsewhere, he can't help but start crying. Elliot genuinely feels for him.

ELLIOT
Can I call you Rohit? I prefer your real name. Phil is kinda lame.

*

Phil looks up and wipes away his tears. He nods.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Rohit. It's okay. I'm not gonna turn you in.

For the first time since we've seen him, Phil is relieved, though still concerned. Elliot looks out the windows, as if looking for something.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
If you do what I say, and pay me what I ask, we'll both come out of this happy. Sitcom happy.

PHIL
(scoffs, shakes his head)
So, that is what this is about?
Money. That is all you care about.
No. If I pay you now, you will want more and more. No matter how much I give, you will inform the police anyway. I won't pay you, sir.
Remember, you also broke the law.

Elliot notices something outside the window and nods.

ELLIOT
Actually, you're right. Partly.

Elliot stands, putting his oversized bookbag on.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
After looking at your calendar, I knew you were coming here. You always have a nightly check-in at all of your stores once a month. You're a good boss like that. I waited until you came to this one. This one was more convenient for me.

Phil looks around, wondering what Elliot is talking about.

PHIL
I do not understand.

ELLIOT
See, I usually do this kind of thing from my computer. This time, I wanted to do it AFK.

SUPER: "AFK - Away From Keyboard"

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
I'm trying to work on my social anxiety. But there's always the threat of you fleeing after I call you out. You'd tell your webmaster to take the servers down, delete the dirty pics and mpegs. So, I took the liberty of making sure to include the current time and location on my anonymous tip--

PHIL
(desperate, nervous)
Wait, hold on! I will give you the money. I will pay. How much do you want?! I will pay!

Sirens can be heard. Lights swirl outside the windows.

ELLIOT
That's the part you were wrong about, Rohit.
(shrugs)
I was just fucking with you about the money.

FBI AGENTS race into the shop as Elliot breezes past them, heading out, leaving the chaos to surround the destroyed Phil.

INT. NYC SUBWAY (MOVING) - MORNING

Back to present day, Elliot snaps awake. He eyes the two MEN IN BLACK who still sneak looks at him.

ELLIOT (V.O.)

Now I'm being followed. The higher ups don't like someone with my powers. In three short minutes, I destroyed a man's business, life, existence. I deleted him--

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On the far end of the packed train, a blonde man YAWNS loudly. He looks like a disheveled Californian who's been forced to relocate. He wears cargo pants and what looks like a gas attendant shirt that reads: Computer Repair With A Smile. Below it, a logo reads MR. ROBOT (40s).

He looks at Elliot with a stoner's smile as he brushes his scraggly beard. Elliot doesn't smile back. Across the crowd of people, the man shouts:

MR. ROBOT
Hey sonny, what's happening?

Elliot doesn't answer. Instead, he looks away, pretending he didn't hear him.

MR. ROBOT (CONT'D)
It's an exciting time for the world
right now. An exciting time...

Mr. Robot lies on his back, returning to his homeless slumber.

EXT. NYC STREETS - LATER

Elliot walks through the crowded streets of New York, carefully avoiding the touch of other humans. He carries a huge bookbag on his back.

INT. ALLSAFE OFFICES - LATER

He walks into the modest offices of AllSafe Cybersecurity, as announced by the boring, corporate logo.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
But I'm only a vigilante hacker at
night. By day, I'm a hired one, just
a regular cyber security engineer,
employee number 0652.

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INT. ALLSAFE OFFICES - GIDEON'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The AllSafe boss, GIDEON NORTON (40s), a bearded metrosexual with adult braces sits while ANGELA (20s), a blonde girl-next-door trapped in the prim and proper veneer of a private school upbringing, looks down at him sternly.

ANGELA
Gideon, I can do it.

Not wanting to respond, Gideon lets his attention get distracted by Elliot. He shouts through his glass doors:

GIDEON
Elliot, in here!

Elliot nervously walks in, curiously looking at Angela who pretends he's not even there. Gideon passes a file to him.

GIDEON (CONT'D)
They were hacked again. Last night.

Elliot looks over the notes.

ELLIOT
What am I looking at? Is this the code? This was a RUDY attack.

SUPER: "RUDY Attack - Also known as R-U-Dead-Yet? This tool attacks by starving available sessions on the web server until they die"

Concerned, Gideon nods. Elliot shakes his head, impressed more than he usually is.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
This is awesome--

ANGELA
Gideon, will you please answer me?

GIDEON
(to Elliot)
You think that's awesome? This is killing us, Elliot!

ANGELA
Gideon, I'm not leaving--

GIDEON
Angela, let's just see how the meeting goes today. They're getting hacked every week now. Who knows if they'll still even be with us.

ELLIOT
They're coming in?

Gideon's look confirms it. He looks at Elliot's hoodie.

GIDEON
What'd we say about the dress code?

Elliot sheds his hoodie, revealing an oversized, button-downed dress shirt underneath. He hates it.

GIDEON (CONT'D)
(re: file)
Look over that, be ready this afternoon.

INT. ALLSAFE OFFICES - HALLWAYS

Elliot and Angela walk out. Elliot smells something on her.

ELLIOT
Did you start smoking again?

ANGELA
(ignores his question)
Did you not get my texts last night?
I sent you exactly thirteen of them.

ELLIOT
Yeah, I'm sorry, I couldn't make it--

ANGELA
(looks at him)
You promised me that you would try this time.

FLASHBACK: Last night, Elliot nervously walks up to the entrance of a packed bar. Through the big windows outside he sees Angela, laughing, smiling, drinking with friends. Elliot's hand goes for the door, but his hand trembles--

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Stop thinking about something else when I'm talking to you. I hate when you do that.

ELLIOT
Sorry, I was thinking about work.

ANGELA
You're such a kiss-ass. Maybe that's why Gideon loves you so much. He thanks me all the time for bringing you in. But for some reason, I think you secretly hate it here.

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ELLIOT (V.O.)
 She was right. I liked most of the
 people, but our business-- a cyber
 security firm that protects
 corporations-- not so much.

ELLIOT
 No, it's cool. I like it here.

ANGELA
 I'm sorry, I'm just in a bad mood.
 I've been late on my last two student
 loan payments and I can't get Gideon
 to give me a raise--

A slick, good-looking Persian named ALI (20s) walks up and kisses Angela.

ALI
 (to Elliot)
 Yo, bud. Missed you last night, where
 were you?

ELLIOT
 Gotta go. Big meeting today.

Elliot doesn't wait for a response, he disappears into the maze of cubicles quickly.

ALI
 (to Angela)
 Did you find out what happened?

ANGELA
 He said he was working.

ALI
 (not buying it)
 Come on. You have to talk to him--

ANGELA
 (rolls her eyes)
 We're gonna be late for the staff
 meeting.

ALI
 He can't stand me and you know why.
 Angela, I can't have this kind of
 negativity in my life--

Angela glares at him. Ali points.

ALI (CONT'D)
 Exactly what I'm talking about.

INT. ALLSAFE OFFICES - CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

A wide conference room filled to the brim with account executives, programmers and VPs.

GIDEON

...The recent hacks on their network have been of grave concern not only to them, but to this company. Let's make sure we're on our A game this afternoon. But before we get into it, I hear we have a birthday to celebrate.

He gestures over to Angela who sheepishly smiles. Everyone starts singing happy birthday. Cake is being passed around. Smiles all around from the nice folks that work at AllSafe.

Elliot, his seat pushed just a little further out than the rest, observes cautiously. On the mounted TV in the corner, MSNBC is playing a clip from ex-Defense Secretary Leon Panetta. The conversation around him drowns out as he focuses on the TV.

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LEON PANETTA

...there's a strong likelihood the next Pearl Harbor we confront could very well be a cyberattack.

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MSNBC ANCHOR

Panetta went on to say that this is the future of US defense spending, computer engineers with expertise in hacking. This is the new soldier, the intelligence soldier.

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Elliot turns to his co-worker LLOYD (20s), a Chinese engineer with a fro, who talks openly with a mouth full of purple frosting. Elliot forces a smile as he passes on a piece of cake.

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CUBICLE - LATER

Elliot's cubicle is as vanilla as a cube could be. He furiously codes on a Linux command line, earbuds plugged in. His fingers take quick breaks to fetch McDonald's fries out of the bag. Ali interrupts his work with a wave of his hand and a phony smile as icing. Elliot reluctantly removes his earbuds.

ALI

Yo, man. Wanna do lunch today?

ELLIOT

Oh, um, yeah, I have other pla--

ALI

Plans, yeah, that's what you said the last three times I asked you. Look, bud, you and Angela have been close for a long time. But, that's even more reason why I want us to be on good terms. I just feel like it's awkward between us, don't you?

*

ELLIOT

I'm okay with it being awkward between us.

ALI

(scoffs)

Well, it's not okay with me. Lunch, today. Meet me at Sharon's Deli at 1:15. On me. It'll be epic.

A moment's hesitation, then Elliot nods.

ALI (CONT'D)

Cool bro.

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - DAY

Elliot shiftlessly walks through the streets once again, big bookbag in tow. His eyes wander around in paranoia. He continues to eat his McDonald's fries from the bag.

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

He sits across from his psychologist, KRISTA (40s), a slightly overweight African-American woman who tries too hard at youth with a short dress.

They're looking at each other in silence.

KRISTA

What are you thinking about?

ELLIOT

Nothing.

KRISTA

Wanna know what I'm thinking about?

(off his look)

The first time you came to me...

ELLIOT (V.O.)

I didn't exactly come to Krista, I was forced here. But I do like her.

(then)

Her password was simple, Dylan2791.

Favorite artist and the year in which she was born, backwards.

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INSERT: Krista's Gmail, Facebook, iTunes. We land on her
eharmony profile.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
I know she got a divorce four years
ago. I know she was devastated by it
and has been dating losers on
eharmony ever since.

INSERT: A profile pic of a salt and pepper handsome gent. He's
a pudgy, nice fellow with a friendly mustache and a welcoming
smile. His name is listed as Michael Hansen.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
Her most recent foray... Michael
Hansen. Something about him bugs me,
scratching that part of my mind
again.

Back to the scene. Elliot eyes Krista.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
Though she's a psychologist, she's
really bad at reading people. But I'm
good at reading people. My secret? I
look for the worst in them.

KRISTA
You were so angry. You hated
everyone. That's what you said. And I
told you, you can't change the system
by hating it. Do you remember that?

ELLIOT
I remember that.

KRISTA
I know you're not yelling like
before, which is good. But I can tell
you're still holding onto it. We have
to deal with your anger issues,
Elliot. You're angry at everyone, at
society--

ELLIOT (V.O.)
Fuck society.

KRISTA
You have a lot to be angry about, but
keeping it to yourself, staying quiet
like you're doing, that's not going
to help you. There's pain underneath.
That's where our work needs to go.

Elliot says nothing. Krista leans in.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
 What is it about society that
 disappoints you so much?

Elliot holds back as his eyes wander to the Apple insignia glowing off of Krista's laptop on her desk.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 Oh, I don't know, is it that we
 collectively thought Steve Jobs was a
 great man even when we knew he made
 billions off the backs of children?

His eyes shift to the glass framed Tour De France poster hanging on the wall featuring Lance Armstrong.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 Or maybe it's that it feels like all
 our heroes are counterfeit, the world
 itself just one big hoax.

His eyes refocus on the reflection of the glass frame, seeing that Krista's browser from her laptop is on Twitter.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 Spamming each other with our running
 commentary of bullshit masquerading
 as insight, our social media faking
 as intimacy.

Krista still eyes Elliot, waiting for him to respond. He returns his stare back at her, noticing the "I voted" sticker her on her blouse.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 Or is it that we voted for this? Not
 with our rigged elections-- *

His eyes now notice the expensive accessories of Krista. Her earrings, watch, shoes, her Hunger Games book on her desk.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 But with our things, our property,
 our money. But I'm not saying
 anything new. We all know why we do
 this. Not because earrings or the
 Hunger Games books makes us happier. *

Krista crosses her legs, still waiting on Elliot to respond. That's when Elliot spots a prescription bottle next to Krista's purse on her desk chair.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 But because we want to be sedated.
 Because it's painful not to pretend.
 Because we're fucking cowards. Fuck
 society-- but I've said that already.

He finally responds to Krista:

ELLIOT
Nothing.

Krista leans back, frustrated she's getting nowhere.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Don't be frustrated.

KRISTA
(confused)
And why shouldn't I be?

ELLIOT
You're different than most. You at least try... you at least understand.

KRISTA
(intrigued)
Understand what?

ELLIOT
What it's like to feel alone. You understand the pain. You want to protect people from it. I respect that about you.

Long silence.

KRISTA
Why do you think I know what it's like to feel alone?

ELLIOT (V.O.)
(shocked realization)
Shit! From her emails. The dangers of being a hacker; have to be careful not to ever slip about what you shouldn't know--

KRISTA
Elliot?

Unsure of what to say, Elliot stays quiet. Krista lets it go.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Let's talk about last night. Did you go to Angela's birthday party?

FLASHBACK: Last night, we pick up where we left off. Elliot's hand trembles as he reaches for the door to the bar. He sweats as he closes his eyes and tries to force himself to go in, but can't. The door opens, three people file out. Elliot quickly moves out of the way, avoiding physical contact at all costs. He takes a breath and looks through the windows again.

Angela is happy, surrounded by friends, enjoying her birthday. Ali walks up to her. They kiss. This is enough for Elliot to wrap his head in his hoodie and walk away--

Back to the scene.

ELLIOT
Yeah. It was nice.

KRISTA
Did you try to talk to anyone?

ELLIOT
Sure, a few people. I got a girl's number.

KRISTA
(impressed)
You did? Are you gonna call her?

ELLIOT
I think so, yeah. She's cute. She likes The Hunger Games.

KRISTA
(back to being suspicious)
You're hiding again. When you hide like this, your delusions will come back. It's a slippery slope, Elliot.
(off of his uneasy shift)
Let's talk about the men in black you were seeing. Are they still there?

ELLIOT
No, I told you, they're gone. The meds you gave me helped.

Krista doesn't buy any of this.

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - DAY

Elliot on his way back. The MEN IN BLACK discreetly follow him, eyeing him suspiciously. He's so distracted by them, that he doesn't notice Ali standing in his way.

ALI
So, where were you? I waited half an hour for you, man.

Still preoccupied with the MEN IN BLACK, Elliot looks around nervously but can't spot them anymore.

ALI (CONT'D)
Why are you such a weirdo, Elliot?
This isn't normal, you know? You don't just tell people you're going to be somewhere and then not show up!

Elliot forces himself to nod in agreement.

ELLIOT
You're right, that does seem counter-intuitive.

ALI
NOT cool, bro! Not cool!
(then)
We're going to Sharon's Deli now.

ELLIOT
But I ate already...
(off his look, V.O.)
Fuck me, he's not gonna let this go.

INT. SHARON'S DELI - DAY

The deli is busy with MANHATTANITES. Ali and Elliot share a couple of seats at the counter. Ali is droning on and on about something mundane. Elliot looks absolutely miserable.

ALI
...anyway, my point is, I think the Beatles are okay, but very overrated, you know? I mean, come on, there are lots of bands that are way better.

ELLIOT
No, I don't agree with that at all.

ALI
Well, we can agree to disagree.

He puts his arm on Elliot's shoulder-- but Elliot, not comfortable with the physical contact, brushes it away.

ALI (CONT'D)
Sorry, forgot about your touching thing--
(a more sympathetic tone)
Look, I love Angela, and I want us to try to get along for her sake--

As Ali drones on again, Elliot's stream of consciousness interrupts:

ELLIOT (V.O.)
Am I that crazy to hate this guy so much? Among some of his Facebook likes are--

INSERT: Ali's Facebook likes: George W. Bush's Decision Points, the movie Transformers 2: Revenge of the Fallen, and the music of Josh Groban.

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ELLIOT (V.O.)
Must I really justify my hatred any
further?

Back to the scene.

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ELLIOT (V.O.)
(eyes Ali)
His was the easiest to hack, password
was 123456, then 'seven' spelled out.

INSERT: Ali's Gmail account.

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ELLIOT (V.O.)
I witnessed his first "I love you"
with Angela over Gchat.

INSERT: Profile pic of a trashy woman named Stella B.

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ELLIOT (V.O.)
I've also witnessed the first of many
flirtations with Stella B.

Back to the scene. Ali's still in the midst of his phony plea.

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ELLIOT (V.O.)
I've thought about telling Angela,
but she has shitty taste in men and
I'm not quite ready to see what comes
after this just yet. Plus, I can
manage Ali easier than the others.
For now, anyway.

ALI
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ALI
...but that's all I mean. I just want
you to know that. I like you, bro.
And I want you to like me too.

ELLIOT
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*

ELLIOT
I understand, Ali. I'll try harder.

ALI
*
*
*
*

ALI
That's cool, man. Whenever you're
ready, I'd love to just...chill--

Elliot's phone buzzes. He looks at it. His eyes grow wide.

ELLIOT
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ELLIOT
We've gotta go back. They're here.

INT. ALLSAFE OFFICES - CUBICLE - LATER

Elliot types away at his computer.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
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ELLIOT (V.O.)
Truth is, I shouldn't hate Ali. He's
not that bad a guy.

ELLIOT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
He's too dumb to be bad. In fact,
when I think about the really bad
people...

As if sensing it, Elliot stands and peeks out of his cubicle.
He sees Gideon greeting a handful of business SUITS at the
front. Angela is among the AllSafe greeters. They navigate the
SUITs towards the conference room.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
BEEP Corp.

BEEP - (whenever the name of the company's mentioned, it is
blipped out.)

ELLIOT (V.O.)
But they might as well be called Evil
Corp. In fact, after a thorough,
intensive self-reprogramming, that's
all my mind hears, sees or reads when
they pop up in my world. Krista would
have a shit fit if she knew I did
that. But that's what they are...

INSERT: Evil Corp's logo, which looks like the Enron "E" logo.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
A conglomerate of Evil.

VIDEO: Laptops, desktops, smartphones, nuclear power plants,
guns, farms, cereal, microwaves, pills, all sporting the Evil
Corp logo.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
It isn't just that they indirectly
killed or injured close to a million
people in the last ten years...

Back to the scene. Angela flashes a smile at Elliot before
closing the shades of the conference room.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
It's that they have no conscience
about it. They're a perfect monster.

Elliot sits back down.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
And now, I have to help them--

Gideon and the team of SUITS walk up next to Elliot's cubicle.

GIDEON
...we've got seven on-site engineers
on your account plus a few off-site
at the ISPs...

Elliot sneaks a peek at the head suit, a bald guy who's a dead ringer for Steve Ballmer.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
There he is, Terry Colby, the CTO.

TERRY COLBY looks around with a doofus smile.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
Even though he's the head technology
guy at one of the biggest companies
in the world, he owns a Blackberry.

Elliot's eyes shift to Terry's Blackberry on his belt. Terry looks at Elliot's desktop with confusion.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
It also looks like he doesn't see a
Linux operating system too often.
He's not a techie. He's a moron.

The suits, led by Gideon, keep on walking through the office.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
An arrogant moron. The worst kind.

Elliot goes to sit down, but a person from the pack walks up to him. He's good-looking, sharply dressed and has a rock star smile. His name is TYRELL WELLICK (30s). He reaches his hand out to Elliot. Elliot painfully takes it.

TYRELL
(thick Swedish accent)
Tyrell Welllick. Senior Vice
President, technology, Evil Corp--

Elliot quickly takes his hand back. Tyrell notices.

ELLIOT
I'm...Elliot. Just a tech.

TYRELL
Don't be so humble. I started exactly
where you are. To be honest, my heart
has always stayed there.
(looking at his screen)
Oh, I see you're running Ubuntu.
(off of Elliot's impressed
look)
I'm on Red Hat myself, I know the
desktop manager is better on here,
but old habits die hard.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
An executive running Linux? But--

TYRELL

I know what you're thinking, I'm an executive, why am I running Linux?
Again, old habits die hard.

Elliot uncomfortably smiles.

TYRELL (CONT'D)

Lookin' forward to working with you.
I should join the rest of the group.
Bonsoir, Elliot.

He takes off with an earnest smile.

Elliot sits back down in his cubicle with a resigned sigh. He takes in his small three-walled cube universe amidst the thirty other identical cubes.

ELLIOT (V.O.)

Sometimes I dream of saving everyone
from the invisible hand.

*

Elliot eyes his fellow employees sympathetically, all looking like enslaved serfs with their company badges hanging off them.

ELLIOT (V.O.)

The one that brands us with an
employee badge.

His eyes look over at Lloyd who is busy paying a Verizon bill online. He shakes his head angrily at the price.

ELLIOT (V.O.)

The one that forces us to work for
them.

EXT. NYC STREETS - NIGHT

Elliot walks through the streets alone as GROUPS OF FRIENDS laugh while walking in and out of bars. Credit cards are swiped, dollar-tips are thrown, a homeless man begs for change.

ELLIOT (V.O.)

The one that controls us everyday
without us knowing it. But I can't
stop it. I'm not that special. I'm
just anonymous. I'm just alone.

INT. ELLIOT'S LOFT - NIGHT

Elliot enters his messy small loft. A black cat named QWERTY greets him at the door.

*

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 If it weren't for Qwerty, I'd be
 completely empty.

She MEOWS.

MOMENTS LATER

Qwerty is chowing down on cat food. Elliot lies on the floor next to her, petting her while she eats. He starts crying hysterically.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 I hate when I can't hold in my
 loneliness-- this crying has been
 happening too often, every other week
 now. What do normal people do when
 they get this sad? They reach out to
 friends or family, I think?

INT. ELLIOT'S LOFT - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Elliot crushes up morphine pills. He puts the crushed powder on a small glass table and cuts it with a credit card.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 I do morphine. I can't make friends.
 And family--

INT. ELLIOT'S HOUSE (FLASHBACK) - DAY

A YOUNG ELLIOT (8) sits at the kitchen table. His MOTHER (30s), pretty but cold. Buttoned up, a short haircut, and expressionless face. She methodically smokes a cigarette.

Young Elliot looks like he's been scolded. His mother grabs his arm, digging her nails in until it bleeds. He goes to scream--

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 That's not an option.

INT. ELLIOT'S LOFT - MOMENTS LATER

Elliot snorts up a line of morphine. He lies back down on the floor as it takes effect. Qwerty plops on his stomach and watches him. He smiles.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 The key to doing morphine without turning into a junkie is to limit yourself to 30mg a day. Anything more just builds up your tolerance. I check every pill I get for purity, I have 8mg Suboxone for maintenance in case I go through withdrawals--

Elliot's eyes grow wide. He sits up slowly.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
Shit!

He stands and goes to the nightstand by his bed. He goes into his Altoids can and realizes with annoyance its empty.

He takes a deep breath and pulls out his Evil Corp smartphone. Through the cracked screen, we see his texts:

ELLIOT: Are you home?

SHAYLA: Yeah, R U?

ELLIOT: I'm out of my pills. Can I pick some up?

SHAYLA: B up in a sec.

MOMENTS LATER

SHAYLA (30s), a tatted, hipster girl, sits across from Elliot. She fingers out a baggie full of orange pills.

SHAYLA
You never tell me what these are for?

ELLIOT
(ignoring her)
How much?

SHAYLA
On the house.

ELLIOT
No, Shayla, not doing that. This is just a regular drug deal, like it always is.

Elliot offers her cash. Shayla resigns herself and takes it.

SHAYLA
What are you up to tonight? I was gonna post a party thing on your Facebook, but you still didn't create an account. I thought you said you were going to.

ELLIOT
I never said I was going to.

SHAYLA
Why not?

ELLIOT
Because I hate Facebook.

SHAYLA
(offended)
That's crazy.

Elliot shoots her a look, "I guess I'm crazy." Disappointed, Shayla pulls out two white pills from her pocket.

SHAYLA (CONT'D)
Wanna do these together then? My dealer says Lena Dunham buys them all the time. They're pure Molly.

The last line piques Elliot's interest, though his look is already regretting the decision.

INT. ELLIOT'S LOFT - LATER

Elliot lies naked in his bed, smoking a joint, while a nude Shayla lies next to him, fast asleep. He wears a dumb look.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
Don't ever make decisions when you're on morphine.

His cell beeps. He looks at it.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
Foursquare check-in for Krista at Bar None. It's Friday night. It has to be with Michael. I've gotta go to work.

He puts on clothes and looks at Qwerty.

ELLIOT
(re: Shayla)
Keep an eye on her while I'm gone.

EXT. BAR NONE - NIGHT

Elliot, in a hoodie, walks by Bar None across the street. He doesn't walk towards it, instead he stays put, lurking around the corner. He pulls out his phone and uses the camera to zoom in through the bar's big windows.

The camera finally lands on Krista and Michael dancing. Michael's goofy moves make Krista laugh.

EXT. BAR NONE - AWHILE LATER

Elliot's camera is still on Michael from across the street as he watches him kiss Krista goodbye. They part ways.

Elliot follows close behind as Michael walks through the streets. Michael hails a cab. Elliot snaps a picture of the number on top of Michael's cab as it takes off.

He quickly pulls out his cell phone and dials.

ELLIOT
(into the phone)
Yes, hi... I think I left my keys in
one of your cabs--
(looking at the picture)
Number 876496... yes, I have like a
photographic memory thing... yeah,
I'll hold.

Elliot looks around the city block he's standing on. In the distance, a late night diner shows two MEN IN BLACK having coffee. Elliot hides behind a bus stop, watching them.

Suddenly, the MR. ROBOT bum from the subway walks up to their table, begging for money. Elliot shoots a confused look-- but gets interrupted when the operator returns.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
350 Hawthorne Avenue. Thanks.

He hangs up and returns his gaze back to the two MEN IN BLACK. Mr. Robot is nowhere to be seen. He lets it go for now and returns to the task at hand.

EXT. 350 HAWTHORNE AVENUE - LATER

Elliot walks up and sees the cab, waiting by the curb. On the stoop in front of 350 Hawthorne, Michael smokes a cigarette as he begrudgingly walks his dog. It's as if Michael has completely dropped his cheery, nice guy act.

MICHAEL
Come on, asshole, piss already.

He kicks the dog, causing him to YELP.

Elliot charges from across the street.

The cowed dog looks up sheepishly at Michael as it nervously paces around the small patch of grass.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Fucking GO!

He goes to kick the dog again, when Elliot finally gets there--

ELLIOT
Hey!

Michael stops and turns. Elliot looks at the dog with sympathy, but then back at Michael.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Can I borrow your phone? Mine's dead
and I need to call my mom.

Michael reluctantly nods and pulls out his cell. He slides it unlocked with his passcode and hands it to him.

Elliot takes it, immediately memorizing all the apps on his homescreen, specifically the Wells Fargo app.

He dials his own number and calls. From within Elliot's back pocket, we see his phone light up and vibrate.

The cab, finally tired of waiting, peels out. The driver loudly SWEARS to himself about the waste of time.

Elliot gets his own voicemail. He hangs up, quickly deletes his call log and looks back at Michael.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
No answer. Thanks anyway.

Michael takes his phone back with a shrug.

EXT. NYC SUBWAY - LATER

Elliot walks out of the subway station, smoking a joint. His phone immediately vibrates. He looks at it with a question, then answers.

ELLIOT
Angela? Everything okay?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. ALLSAFE OFFICES - CUBICLE

Angela stands apart from Lloyd, who is desperately trying to tackle a tech issue on his desktop.

ANGELA
(into the phone)
No, it's not. Are you home? Were you asleep? I've been trying you for fifteen minutes.

ELLIOT
I was in the subway. What's going on?

ANGELA
(discreet)
I need you to come to AllSafe.

ELLIOT
You're there? It's three in the morning.

ANGELA
They hacked into Evil's servers again. But it's bad this time. It's a DoS attack.

SUPER: "DoS Attack - A Denial of Service attack, an attempt to make a machine or network unavailable to its intended users"

ANGELA (CONT'D)
All their sites are down, the store,
the corporate, email, phone system,
everything.

ELLIOT
Did you call Lloyd? He's on call--

ANGELA
Yeah, he's here.

Lloyd slaps himself out of frustration as he types.

ELLIOT
Is he talking to Evil's tech
department?

ANGELA
He's online with them, but so far,
nothing. This is bad, Elliot. It's
been down for almost an hour.

(lowered voice)
I don't think Lloyd can fix this.
Look, Gideon just put me on this
account. I can't fuck up the first
week. I need you. Please.

Elliot looks back into the subway. He tosses his joint.

INT. NYC SUBWAY (MOVING) - NIGHT

Elliot sits in his usual place, staring ahead, thinking-- but
for the first time, he looks perplexed.

INT. ALLSAFE OFFICES - NIGHT

Elliot races in. Angela walks up to him, panicking.

ELLIOT
Anything?

ANGELA
No. I called Gideon.

ELLIOT
Why? It's only been down for an hour
and a half.

ANGELA
Yeah, well, an hour and a half in
Evil Corp's time is like 13 million
dollars in revenue. Approximately. I
lied, actually, I calculated that.
That's exactly how much they lost.

ELLIOT
Don't worry, I got this.

They approach Lloyd who is sweating bullets in his cubicle.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Lloyd, what's the deal?

No response, Lloyd is locked in on his terminal.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Lloyd!

Lloyd snaps out of his trance and looks at Elliot.

LLOYD
Elliot. This is bad.

ELLIOT
What's happening?

LLOYD
We've got server overloads on all of them, not just the web servers.

ELLIOT
That doesn't make any sense. Most of the servers aren't even exposed. Shut down all the ports on 80--

LLOYD
I did that already, I think they might have gotten behind the switches.

ELLIOT
Wait a minute, I thought this was just a DoS attack.

LLOYD
Dude, this is fucked is what this is.

ELLIOT
I'm gonna login.

Biggie's "Somebody's Gotta Die" RISES on the soundtrack as Elliot types furiously on his desktop, navigating Evil Corp's servers. The music continues throughout this sequence as we--

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. KRISTA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Krista walks into her clean, Ikea-furnished apartment with a drunken smile pasted on her face. She mumbles to herself:

KRISTA
Don't fall in love, honey, come on.
It's still early. But it feels good,
it definitely feels--

Her phone beeps with a text. She excitedly takes it out.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Oh God, is that him?

MICHAEL: I miss u

She smiles as she types in a flirtatious response back.

INT. ALLSAFE OFFICES - NIGHT

Elliot finishes a can of Red Bull as he switches terminal windows, typing furiously.

INT. ALI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ali is in his boxers, studiously watching THE SECRET on DVD and writing notes on a legal pad. His laptop flashes a Skype alert. Stella B pops up on the screen. He grins.

INT. ALLSAFE OFFICES - NIGHT

Elliot types away as Gideon walks in. Even though he's angry, he keeps his cool. He sees Elliot, then faces Angela.

GIDEON
Status update-- what the fuck is going on?

ELLIOT
Someone's taken down their servers.

GIDEON
Where is it coming from?

ELLIOT
Everywhere. USA, Finland, Thailand, Kuwait. I can't trace them. They got behind the switches somehow. They're sending large numbers of IP packets to everything. Evil Corp's entire network is crashing in on itself.

GIDEON
Swap out the switches.

Elliot continues to type as he takes his orders.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
But if I were these guys, I'd know that and have a rootkit sitting on the firewall sending out attacks internally--

Elliot hits a few keystrokes hard and looks to Lloyd.

ELLIOT
Mine are swapped.

LLOYD
One and two are swapped.

Angela jumps on a computer and tries to go to Evil Corp's website.

ANGELA
Still down.

INT. KRISTA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Krista is in her robe, reading another text--

MICHAEL: I couldn't resist...

Her DOORBELL goes off. She opens the door and Michael is standing there with flowers. He passionately kisses her.

INT. ALLSAFE OFFICES - NIGHT

GIDEON
What about the firewall?

ELLIOT
I think...

Elliot taps on his computer slower now as he thinks.

GIDEON
What?

ELLIOT
I think they put a rootkit in the firewall.

SUPER: "Rootkit - A set of software tools with administrator-level access to a computer or network"

It starts to register to Gideon that this is bad. Very bad.

ANGELA
What's a rootkit?

LLOYD
It's like a crazy serial rapist with a very big dick.

ANGELA
Jesus, Lloyd!

LLOYD
Sorry! It's malicious code that takes over the operating system.

LLOYD (CONT'D)
It can delete system files, or worse,
install programs, viruses, worms,
anything it wants.

ANGELA
How do we stop it?

LLOYD
That's the thing, it can make itself
invisible. They're almost impossible
to find.

INT. TYRELL WELLICK'S SUBURBAN HOME - NIGHT

Tyrell Wellick snaps awake as his phone rings violently. He looks at the caller ID, but isn't pleased.

TYRELL WELLICK
(in Swedish, subtitles)
Yes? Is it absolutely necessary?

His Filipino, pregnant wife, JOANNA (30s), also stirs awake.

JOANNA
Babe?

TYRELL WELLICK
Shut up, go to sleep.

Tyrell gets out of bed, fully nude, and leaves the bedroom.

LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Still naked, he stands in front of his massive 70" Plasma TV. FOX News is reporting with a banner: "EVIL CORP'S NETWORK SUFFERS MAJOR OUTAGE"

Tyrell isn't fazed by this.

TYRELL WELLICK
(in Swedish, subtitles)
Yes, I see it... they've failed
before, they're more than welcome to
fail again.

INT. ALLSAFE OFFICES - NIGHT

Angela scans all the headlines on the news websites, then looks over to Gideon.

ANGELA
They're starting to report about the
outage.

GIDEON
(to Elliot)
Swap out the firewall again.

ELLIOT
(typing away)
Every time I swap a server load over
to another firewall, the rootkit
replicates itself before I take the
bad one down.
(then)
It's defending itself.

*
*

Everyone exchanges tense looks.

GIDEON
What's next?

ELLIOT
(thinks)
The only thing we can do is...we have
to deliberately crash the system.

A moment as the harrowing thought sinks in. Then, Gideon carefully unplugs a printer, picks it up and smashes it through one of the windows of the conference room.

INT. KRISTA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

They've moved to the bedroom, clothes are off as Krista climbs on top of Michael. She closes her eyes, savoring the moment.

INT. EVIL CORP HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Terry Colby walks in full rage, flanked by his team of engineers and Tyrell Wellick.

TERRY COLBY
Why do we have to shut down the whole
network? Who's on this?

TYRELL
We have AllSafe heading to our main
server farm in Virginia.

TERRY COLBY
AllSafe? Aren't they here?

TYRELL
We're flying one of their engineers
out on the company jet.

TERRY COLBY
Too much time. Just have one of our
guys out in Virginia do it--

TYRELL
To be honest sir, I don't trust them.
Not with this.

TERRY COLBY
And why is that?

TYRELL
(pause)
Gut instinct.

*
*
*

INT. PRIVATE JET (MOVING) - NIGHT

Elliot and Gideon sit silently in a small private Evil Corp jet. Evil Corp SECURITY sit on either side of the plane.

INT. ALI'S APARTMENT

Ali's late night video chat with Stella B gets interrupted when he sees a text from Angela. He browses to Google News and sees the headline, CRIPPLING HACKER ATTACK BRINGS DOWN EVIL CORP. He logs off with Stella and calls Angela.

INT. SERVER FARM - NIGHT

Elliot speed-walks into the loud WHIRRING of the large arrays of servers. He finds a console and terminals in.

GIDEON
Where is it?

Elliot rapidly types.

ELLIOT
Row 7A.

Both of them race through the rows of servers until they find it. Elliot scans the arrays until he sees the right stack of firewalls. He places his fingers on the Ethernet cables, then nervously pauses.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Here we go.

Elliot starts ripping the cables out--

INT. KRISTA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Krista climaxes. It's amazing. She slowly lies next to him, quivering with emotion. She looks at him dotingly.

KRISTA
I love you...

He kisses her--

INT. SERVER FARM - NIGHT

Gideon nervously paces around the pulled firewalls that are stacked up in a pile on the floor. Elliot is typing furiously as he configures the newly installed firewalls. A group of tech SPECTATORS have now formed around Elliot, watching him with anticipation.

GIDEON
(discreet)
Come on, Elliot, they've been down
for six hours--

ELLIOT
Hold on...try it now.

Gideon tries the Evil Corp website. It's back up. Gideon breathes a sigh of relief.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Wait, ask Angela. We need to see if
it's back up in the outside world.

Gideon video conferences Angela through his laptop.

ANGELA
(smiles)
We're good on our end guys!

The song comes to an end as the commotion finally subsides. The spectators CLAP. Gideon stands up proudly and squeezes Elliot's shoulder. Elliot shies away from the contact.

ELLIOT
I still have to finish the
configuration. Give me a minute.

GIDEON
(put off)
Okay. I'll meet you by the bathrooms.

The spectators disperse along with Gideon. Elliot continues to furiously type.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
They must have left a mark or
something. Every hacker loves to
gloat. They don't just do DoS attacks
for no reason.

That's when Elliot stumbles upon a file in the terminal that reads simply: fsociety.

He /dir's it and a flurry of files go flying by, the last one being README.TXT. He opens it. It reads simply: leavemehere

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 This was the rootkit. Fsociety? Is
 that supposed to be a joke?

Elliot steps out of the directory and types: rm fsociety/* He takes a pause before hitting enter.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 Wait. This note is for me. They're telling me to leave it here. But why?

Techs walk by, nervously surprising Elliot. He can't bring himself to delete it-- he closes the terminal and walks away.

INT. PRIVATE JET (MOVING) - DAWN

Exhausted, Elliot and Gideon sit silently together. Though Elliot is used to the all-nighters, Gideon isn't. He has a glass of wine as he sits back, deep in thought.

GIDEON
 Did you know that I was gay?

ELLIOT
 Um...no.

After an awkward pause, Gideon uncomfortably nods.

GIDEON
 Consider this me coming out to you then, okay? It's hard, because I don't like to talk about my sex life. But my partner-- he gets very paranoid, he thinks I'm ashamed of-- you know. He wants me to be more public about it. Anyway, I'm gay.

ELLIOT
 (awkward pause)
 Thanks.

Deep in thought again, Gideon slowly sips his wine. Elliot notices the troubled look on his face.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
 Don't worry about it. Hackers have a short attention span. They'll get bored and harass someone else--

GIDEON
 Evil Corp is thinking about leaving. And, I don't know if I blame them...

Gideon shakes his head.

ELLIOT
We have other clients.

GIDEON
We had other clients. Everyone's slashing their budgets, doing security internally. Evil Corp is seventy percent of our business right now. We can't lose them. I'm already extended on our credit line. If we lose them, that's gonna be it for us. That's gonna be it for me.

Gideon takes another sip of his wine and leans back in his chair. He looks up, hopeless, unsettled. He looks over.

GIDEON (CONT'D)
I feel like I can talk to you. More than the others, anyway.

They share a comfortable moment this time.

GIDEON (CONT'D)
I'm sure, in a strange way, you'll be happy if we went under.
(off his look)
Oh, come on. I know you hate the stupid meetings, the birthday cake, wearing that shirt everyday...*

As Gideon lists off the things he supposedly hates, Elliot finds himself sincerely worried he'll lose them.*

ELLIOT
Gideon?
(off his look)
I promise I'll find them.

INT. NYC SUBWAY (MOVING) - DAY

Elliot's drained face stares stoically out, trying to piece together the mystery of the recent hacks. He shakes his head sadly.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
I'll Google fsociety when I get home.
I've never seen their name on the boards though. They've gotta be new.
But they're good--*

Elliot's train of thought is interrupted when Mr. Robot sits across from him, donning the same gas attendant shirt.

MR. ROBOT
Rough night?

Shocked, Elliot's eyes grow large.

*

MR. ROBOT (CONT'D)
 I'm gonna leave on the next stop. I
 think you should come with me.
 (puts on a ski cap)
 But, only if you didn't delete it. If
 you deleted it, then we have nothing
 to talk about.

Mr. Robot stands and waits by the doors. Elliot sits there, paralyzed, not knowing what to do at all.

ELLIOT
 Are you talking to me?

Mr. Robot says nothing, but the empty car states the obvious.

The subway finally screeches to a halt. Elliot stands as it stops. Mr. Robot walks off the subway. Elliot stands there for a moment, wondering if he should follow him. He does.

PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Robot sits on the other side of the station. Elliot slowly walks over and sits next to him.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
 Who are you?

MR. ROBOT
 We're gonna wait for the Q.

ELLIOT
 And then what?

MR. ROBOT
 And then we're gonna go to Brooklyn,
 out by Coney Island.

ELLIOT
 Why? What's there?

MR. ROBOT
 Of course you're gonna ask a lot of
 questions. It's weird what you're
 doing right now. I get that. Thing
 is, I can't tell you anything until
 we get there.

Mr. Robot pulls out a cigarette and lights it.

ELLIOT
 I don't think you can smoke in here.
 (Mr. Robot ignores him)
 You've been following me. Why? What
 do you want from me?

MR. ROBOT

My dad was a petty thief. Never could hold down a job. So, he just robbed, convenience stores, shops, small-time stuff. One time, he sat me down and told me something that I never forgot. He said, "Everyone steals, that's how it works. You think people out there are getting exactly what they deserve? No. They're either getting paid over or under, someone in the chain always gets bamboozled. I steal, but I don't get caught, that's the contract I have with society. If you can catch me stealing, I'll go to jail. If you can't, then I earn the money."

(then)

I respected that shit, man. As a little kid. I thought that was fucking cool. But a few years after that, they finally caught him, and he goes to jail. Leaves three kids and a wife with no money. Dies five years after that, my respect goes with him. I thought my dad was free, doing what he did. He wasn't. He was in prison.

(looks at Elliot)

Just like you are now, Elliot. But I'm about to break you out.

*
*
*
*

Elliot shoots him a quiet, puzzled look. Mr. Robot puts on a pair of sunglasses, smiles big and then stares ahead.

EXT. CONEY ISLAND - STREETS - DAY

An impoverished, ghetto block. Elliot cautiously follows Mr. Robot down the street. An old Ferris wheel can be seen slowly spinning in the distance.

They finally reach a rundown, boarded up arcade. The sign reads: FUN SOCIETY ARCADE (but the U and N are faded). Mr. Robot walks up to the door and grabs the key from under a dead plant. He walks to the back, gesturing Elliot to follow him.

THE BACK - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Robot opens the backdoor. Blue, green, and gray Ethernet cables run from all sides of the door. The sound of KEYBOARD STROKES and CHATTER emanate from within.

Mr. Robot walks in. Elliot follows.

INT. FSOCIETY ARCADE - CONTINUOUS

An arcade with very little working games left. Using fallen games as tables for computers, four hackers type away: MOBLEY (30s) - an obese man with shaggy hair. TRENTON (16) - a nerd eating Ramen straight from the Styrofoam bowl.

*

MARLENE (20s) - an aggressive yet striking hipster who chain smokes. She wears a fur coat and blue Ray Bans. ROMERO (50s) - a long, gray-haired hippie with a fanny pack.

ELLIOT

Why would you guys actually meet IRL?

SUPER: "IRL - In Real Life"

None of them look up, all of them with earbuds plugged in as they type away. A Depeche Mode song plays over the loud speaker. Mr. Robot gestures for Elliot to follow him around the corner, into the kitchen. He makes himself a glass of beer from the tap.

MR. ROBOT

Remember LulzSec?

SUPER: "LulzSec - A computer hacker group that claimed responsibility for several high profile attacks"

MR. ROBOT (CONT'D)

They got outed by their own leader to the FBI, and six hackers went to prison for it. How do you think they got 'em? They went into the dude's computers and tracked all of them down through e-mails, VPN sessions, chat messages, texts-- one guy, and everything goes down. It's what you call--

ELLIOT

A central point of failure.

MR. ROBOT

(smiles)

Right. Because they didn't meet in person, they compromised each other every time they sent so much as a fucking smiley face. The rule here is, it's done here, and only here. It ends when you walk out that door, and begins when you walk in. Our encryption is the real world.

ELLIOT

How do you talk to each other then?

Mr. Robot walks over to the popcorn machine and starts eating straight out of it.

MR. ROBOT

We don't. We come and go, work on the project as much as we can.

ELLIOT
 (discreet)
 How do you trust them?

MR. ROBOT
 I have them do an exercise. If they pass, they become one of us. If they fail...

ELLIOT
 (realizing)
 The DoS attack...last night...you were testing me?

Mr. Robot takes off his jacket as he smiles yes. Elliot peers back to the hackers.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
 You said there was a project. What's the project?

MR. ROBOT
 (nods)
 We'll get to all of that. I just wanted you to meet the crew and show you the place.

They walk back into the main room. Mr. Robot sits down with the hackers, puts his earbuds in and slaps on a pair of sunglasses. He picks up a beast of an Evil Corp laptop and begins typing away. Elliot stands there, unsure of how to proceed.

MR. ROBOT (CONT'D)
 (pulls out an earbud)
 Not much for you to do without a CPU.
 Go get one, come back when you're ready.

INT. NYC STREETS - DAY

*

Elliot doesn't walk the streets so carefully this time, as his mind swims in the mystery of what he just witnessed.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
 I'm fucking crazy. I have to be fucking crazy. Because, that didn't just happen, right? This is a delusion. Is this a delusion? I'm a schizo. Really? Have I really lost it this time. No, last night happened. It was real. We were in Virginia. Evil Corp's servers were compromised. Those are facts, not delusions. I know, I know, I realize I'm saying all of this to an imaginary person--but I created you.
 (takes a breath)
 I didn't create this.

*

INT. ELLIOT'S APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

Elliot walks into his hallway and sees Angela sitting outside his door, smoking a cigarette by the window. She stands when she sees him.

ANGELA

Thank God you're here. I was just about to go wait in that Starbucks on the corner. You live in a bad neighborhood, do you know that?

ELLIOT

I do know that.

She shows him a BACK TO THE FUTURE II DVD.

ANGELA

Wanna get high and watch our favorite movie? You saved our asses last night. I thought Gideon was definitely going to fire me. Where have you been? I thought you'd be sleeping.

ELLIOT

I-- fell asleep on the train.

ANGELA

(skeptical)

Sounds like such a lie but, whatever, I don't wanna get into it right now. So, you wanna do this? I miss Qwerty, hope she's happy to see me.

Elliot unlocks the door and they walk into the apartment.

INT. ELLIOT'S LOFT

Shayla sits up, still naked. She covers herself.

ELLIOT

Oh, shit.

SHAYLA

Um, Elliot, who is this? What day is it? It's not Wednesday, is it?

ELLIOT

(to Angela)

Look, can I talk to you outside?

Angela, looking at Shayla's tattoos, doesn't register Elliot's question at first, but then nods.

HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

ELLIOT
She wasn't supposed to be here.

ANGELA
It's okay. This is great, Elliot. I'm
happy for you.

ELLIOT
It's not like that.

ANGELA
Well, maybe it should be. It's good
that you're dating.

Elliot reluctantly nods in defeat.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
And stop looking so sad.
(he looks up)
You're always looking sad--

INT. FUNERAL RECEPTION (FLASHBACK) - DAY

YOUNG ELLIOT (14) wears black. He looks sad, but doesn't cry. He sits alone in the corner. YOUNG ANGELA (14), also in black, walks up to him.

YOUNG ANGELA
You're always looking sad.

YOUNG ELLIOT
(caught off guard)
My dad died.

YOUNG ANGELA
I know.
(she sits next to him)
But you've looked sad before. I've
seen you.

YOUNG ELLIOT
You have?

YOUNG ANGELA
Yeah.

This makes Elliot feel good. In fact, this might be the first smile he can remember.

YOUNG ANGELA (CONT'D)
I'm gonna go--

INT. ELLIOT'S APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY (PRESENT DAY)

ANGELA

I'll see you on Monday. We'll do movie night next time. I promise. Okay?

(re: Shayla)
Oh, and have fun.

Elliot nods as she walks away. Frustrated, Elliot walks into his apartment and immediately says:

ELLIOT
Shayla, leave. NOW.

CUT TO:

INSERT: Google, 4chan, reddit, message boards, craigslist, blogs, news sites, etc.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
No mention of Mr. Robot anywhere. No mention of fsociety. Not on any of the hacker boards. Not on 4chan, Reddit, Digg, Slashdot, IRC. Nothing.

INSERT: Google maps on the fsociety arcade.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
Property was owned by Fun Society Amusement, LLC for thirteen years, owner was shot and killed a year and a half ago, no owner since. And the ownership history before that is sparse to nonexistent. This guy is good. Very good. Doesn't matter. This is enough to turn them in.

Elliot prints out the incriminating pages and files them in a blue manila envelope.

Elliot sits back down, looking at the Google Maps picture of the fsociety arcade. The temptation is too strong, he cracks.

EXT. CONEY ISLAND STREETS - LATER

Elliot, carrying his bulky bookbag, walks through the slums of Coney Island, back to the fsociety arcade.

Outside, Marlene sits on the curb and smokes. She has fuzzy pink ear muffs on to protect her from the cold air.

Elliot enters through the metal gate and walks up to her. She doesn't say anything to him.

ELLIOT
Hey, I'm Elliot.

Marlene shoots him an odd look.

MARLENE
Fucking weirdo.
(off his confused look)
When are you gonna give us the password?

ELLIOT
What?

MARLENE
Don't fuck with me, I wrote that rootkit. I still have to run the IP trace back to Colby's laptop.
(off his confused look)
You really don't know what I'm talking about?

Marlene shakes her head with disgust and flicks her cigarette.

MARLENE (CONT'D)
Dickhead.

She gets up and walks towards the back, leaving Elliot perplexed. Mr. Robot enters from the street, through the gate, holding a grocery bag full of goodies.

MR. ROBOT
Elliot! I scored the last batch of twinkies at Gristedes. Want one?

ELLIOT
She just called me a dickhead.

MR. ROBOT
(smiles)
Yeah, that's Marlene.
(gestures toward the Ferris wheel)
Hey, you like Ferris wheels?

EXT. CONEY ISLAND - FERRIS WHEEL - DAY

Elliot and Mr. Robot stand in a slow-moving, empty Ferris wheel car as it does its circular motion up. Mr. Robot looks down at the sparse crowd with a grin, eating a twinkie.

ELLIOT
I'm here to tell you that I'm turning you in. I'm giving them the IP and mac address, plus the logs--

MR. ROBOT
Let me tell you why you're really here.

Confused, Elliot says nothing.

MR. ROBOT (CONT'D)
You're here because you sense
something wrong with the world.
Something you can't explain, but you
know it controls you and everyone you
care about. It turns them into
slaves. And that *angers* you.

ELLIOT
What are you talking about?

MR. ROBOT
Money. Money hasn't been real ever
since we got off the gold standard.
(turns to Elliot)
It's become virtual. Software. The
operating system of our world. And
the rules are simple: those who have
less of it are forever subjugated to
those who have more of it.

ELLIOT
Money? Is that what you and your
little family back there do? Steal
money?

MR. ROBOT
(offended)
This isn't the mafia. We're not a
family. Family members trust each
other, and that's what usually fucks
them. This isn't about trust, it's
about freedom.

ELLIOT
Any of those guys back there can call
the cops on you anytime. Fuck, they
can call the cops on me.

MR. ROBOT
They'd do that whether I trusted them
or not. They're selfish, just like
everyone else. They're gonna always
do what's in their best interest, and
as long as I know that, everyone's on
the level. Right now, it would be in
no one's interest to call the cops.
Not when we're this close.

ELLIOT
Close? To what?

Mr. Robot's smile returns.

MR. ROBOT

Well, Elliot, we're on the verge of taking down this virtual reality.

(gestures outside)

The one out there.

ELLIOT

(long stare)

Are you crazy? Is that what this is?
Are you some crazy rich man that's on mescaline or something--

MR. ROBOT

It's pure economics. What if you took down one conglomerate-- a conglomerate so deeply entrenched in the world economy, that too big to fail doesn't even come close to describing it.

ELLIOT

(skeptical)

Doesn't exist. They'd find some way around it, they always do--

MR. ROBOT

We've run the simulations. Even in the best case scenarios, this conglomerate's collapse couldn't be saved.

(eats another twinkie)

And if this conglomerate goes down, well...it'd be a domino effect. Every crony partner company dependent on them would fall shortly after. Their bought governments after that. In eight months, their entire empire would be erased from history.

ELLIOT

You want to create another financial meltdown? Like the one we just had, but way worse? Why would I want that? Everyone would lose their money--

MR. ROBOT

What if I were to say that this same conglomerate also happens to own seventy percent of the global consumer credit industry? That if we hit their data centers right, we could systematically format all the servers, including backup--

ELLIOT

That would erase--

MR. ROBOT

All the debt we owe them. Every record of every credit card, loan and mortgage-- wiped clean. Without a single digital trace, it'd be impossible to reinforce outdated paper records. It'll be gone-- the biggest single instance of wealth redistribution in history.

Elliot realizes what he's talking about. To underline this, he sees an Evil Corp logo proudly displayed on top of a building in the horizon.

ELLIOT

The conglomerate. This is about Evil Corp.

(off his look)

That's why you picked me. Because I work at AllSafe.

Mr. Robot hands him a slip of paper with an IP address.

MR. ROBOT

Tomorrow, AllSafe is going to get a visit from the FBI and the US Cyber Command. Put this IP trace on the rootkit with the diagnostics you give them. Trenton found Colby's encrypted laptop address from Facebook.

ELLIOT

You wanna frame Terry Colby for the hack? No one's gonna believe that. I met him, he's a moron.

MR. ROBOT

So are the FBI. Even if they don't believe he did it, they'll believe he gave someone access to it.

ELLIOT

But, he'll just go to jail. What will that do?

MR. ROBOT

You don't take down a conglomerate by shooting them once in the heart. That's the thing about conglomerates, they don't have hearts. You take them down, limb by limb. And once they unravel...

(gestures out to the people)

Their illusion of control goes with it.

Elliot takes a hard look at Mr. Robot, questioning his seemingly altruistic motives.

ELLIOT
Who are you?

Mr. Robot lights a cigarette.

MR. ROBOT
That'll all come later. You have a lot to think about it. You have to turn in that report tomorrow, and Colby's IP trace has to be in it. You do that, and you will have set in motion the biggest revolution the world will ever see.

Elliot's look of doubt is all but whittled away.

ELLIOT
What if I get caught?

MR. ROBOT
If you can get caught, then you're not good enough to do this.

ELLIOT
(challenged but confident)
What makes you think I would do this anyway? What makes you think I give a shit about Evil Corp?

Mr. Robot nods, fair question. He lifts himself up on the old Ferris wheel car, as it squeaks loudly. He stands on the edge, holding onto the sides as it swings high above.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
What are you doing--

MR. ROBOT
I know you feel pain, Elliot. I know you feel loneliness. We all do. It's not our fault. We want the pain to stop. Not the bullshit pain people cry about on blogs, but *real pain*--

Mr. Robot lets go of one of the sides as he looks down below at the hard pavement. The OPERATOR down below sees Mr. Robot.

OPERATOR
Hey! What are you doing? Are you crazy?!

MR. ROBOT
GO FUCK YOURSELF!

OPERATOR
ASSHOLE!

Mr. Robot closes his eyes as he ponders jumping. He's
immediately filled with emotion.

MR. ROBOT
I'm so fucking tired of our only
options being to put our heads down
or get knocked the fuck down--

Mr. Robot tears up from the deep sadness. He turns to face
Elliot, letting go of both sides, balancing himself with only
his legs as the old car swings. A small crowd has now formed
below to watch the impending jumper.

MR. ROBOT (CONT'D)
I want my head up! I want to see the
world for the first time, not through
their eyes, not what they allow me to
see, but what I want to see--

The Ferris wheel starts its decline as the infuriated operator
hurriedly tries to bring it back. Mr. Robot's balance wavers
as the car moves. He slips and almost falls back--

The crowd gasps as they point--

Mr. Robot reaches for the side of the car but can't grab it--

Elliot leaps forward and grabs Mr. Robot's hand. Mr. Robot
holds his hand. It's a rare moment of human contact for
Elliot, and it's powerful. Mr. Robot climbs back into the car
with a smile.

MR. ROBOT (CONT'D)
I know you know what I'm talking
about. It's the part of you that
didn't delete the rootkit. It's that
part of you that told you to come
back here. It's that part of you that
hates Evil Corp for killing your
father.

Elliot is speechless.

MR. ROBOT (CONT'D)
Put that fucking IP trace in the
diagnostic tomorrow.

The ride finally finishes. Their carriage returns.

MR. ROBOT (CONT'D)
(eats another twinkie)
Looks like our ride is over.

INT. CONEY ISLAND STREETS - LATER

Elliot walks fast as a small smile begins to grow on his face. He listens to Neil Diamond's "If You Go Away." He stops short to see a billboard of a college student with a sad face. The copy reads: "How am I ever going to pay back my student loans?" Underneath: EVIL CORP

*NEIL DIAMOND
If you go away on this summer day*

INT. NYC SUBWAY (MOVING) - NIGHT

Elliot can't contain the flurry of emotions pulsing through his entire body. The intercom is in the midst of playing a commercial:

SUBWAY INTERCOM
--just log on to www.evilcorp.com to purchase now...
(repeating)
Hello! Wanna save on your health insurance premiums? At Evil Corp, we not only laugh at you for thinking that, but we charge you more for it...

Sensing Elliot's excitement, a CHILD smiles at him. Touched, Elliot smiles back. The MOM, noticing the exchange, shoots a friendly look at Elliot.

*NEIL DIAMOND
Then you might as well take the sun away*

INT. ELLIOT'S LOFT - NIGHT

Elliot types away on his computer, we see text as he's skipping around. HuffPost - Mortgage lenders now have more equity in U.S. homes than Americans. BBC - The global gap between rich and poor is at its highest level for 20 years and growing. NY TIMES - Debt Slavery, The New American Dream.

He pulls up another browser window and logs into Citibank's site. We see that the account belongs to Angela. He clicks through her statements and lands on her private Evil Corp student loans. She owes \$197,455.64.

Elliot looks over at Mr. Robot's slip of paper next to him. He opens a new command-line and begins typing up the report.

MOMENTS LATER

The final pages of the new diagnostic report prints out. He places the report in a red manila envelope.

MOMENTS LATER

Faintly smiling, Elliot sleeps soundly in his bed. The E logo of Elliot's Evil Corp desktop pulses in sleep mode, casting a shadow on Elliot periodically.

*NEIL DIAMOND
If you go away, as I know you must*

INT. NYC SUBWAY - PLATFORM - LATER

As Elliot waits for the subway, he stares at a poster for a blockbuster movie called VILLAINS, the tagline reads: Evil Always Wins.

*NEIL DIAMOND
There'll be nothing left in this
world to trust*

The MEN IN BLACK on the platform sneak Elliot looks. Elliot's excitement from the night before starts a slow descent.

INT. ALLSAFE OFFICES - NEXT MORNING

WORKERS file in for another day, but the mood is somber. Terry Colby and his Evil Corp executives are crowded in the conference room. FBI Agents are also walking in and out. Gideon looks stressed. The air is thick with tension. Colby wants someone's head on a platter.

Angela walks in with a worried look. Ali walks in, sharing the same look of dread as everyone else.

*NEIL DIAMOND
Just an empty room, full of empty
space*

Elliot nervously walks in, eyeing his blue and red manila envelopes. The smile from the night before is now but a distant memory.

*NEIL DIAMOND (CONT'D)
Like the empty look, I see on your
face...*

INT. ALLSAFE OFFICES - CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Gideon, AllSafe account executives, FBI, Evil Corp execs, Tyrell and Terry Colby himself surround the expansive table. The red manila envelope sits in front of Elliot. He's sweating profusely as he swaps the red back into his bag for the blue. *
He shakes his head in disappointment. *

Tyrell Wellick notes the folder swap.

NEIL DIAMOND
*The good's gone from goodbye, if you
 go away, if you go away, if you go
 away....*

TERRY COLBY
 So, what do we got?

GIDEON
 So, if you take a look at the first
 page of the agenda--

Everyone flips over one page of their packet. Terry looks over at Elliot. Elliot nervously looks back.

TERRY COLBY
 You're the one we sent to Virginia?
 (off Elliot's nervous nod)
 Great work. The gals in analysis said this was a tough one. All things being equal, that should have shut us down for days. So, you did good.

ELLIOT
 (uncomfortable)
 Okay.

Gideon tries to move on.

GIDEON
 We should start with our account executive, Angela, who handled the initial alert. Elliot comes in later.

Angela awkwardly waves. Terry isn't impressed.

TERRY COLBY
 Okay then. What do we have, Angela?
 Walk us through this thing.

ANGELA
 We first noticed the breach at 2:07 A.M. Eastern Standard on Friday night-

TERRY COLBY
 You mean, Saturday?

ANGELA
 Sorry, yes, Saturday. Technically, Saturday morning.

TERRY COLBY
 (condescending)
 Yeah, Angela, that's what we're here for. The technicals.

Noting the condescension, Angela hides her anger.

ANGELA

Right, I'm sorry. Anyway, he arrived at the office at 2:35--

TERRY COLBY

So, almost a half hour after the initial breach? Why didn't anyone pipe in from their laptops?

ANGELA

It's not protocol--

ELLIOT

It wouldn't have been secure if someone terminated in on this. It would have put the servers at more risk. It was the smarter move to have someone come in so they can login on a secure line.

ANGELA

(annoyed)

Exactly. Then Lloyd was able to--

TERRY COLBY

Actually, one sec, hon.

Terry gestures to Gideon. Gideon leans in and Terry whispers something in his ear. From the look on Gideon's face, it's not good. Angela looks like she's gonna flip out.

After the brief exchange, Gideon walks over to Angela and relays the message. Angela angrily collects her papers and walks out of the conference room.

TERRY COLBY (CONT'D)

(to Elliot)

Let's pick it up where you left off.

ELLIOT

What happened to Angela? She was the account exec on this--

TERRY COLBY

She's not gonna work out for us. Not on this level. We wanna stick to the more tech savvy here. Now, let's get right to the heart of this thing, because I can't sit here and read a packet for the next twenty minutes. Who did this? Were you guys able to find that out or not?

Elliot's eyes shift back and forth between the embarrassed Angela who is walking down the hallway, the red manila envelope still in his bag and Terry Colby's curious look. Elliot instantly gains courage. He swaps the blue manila for the red.

ELLIOT

I have all the diagnostics right here. We were able to track down the IP address, including the traceroute. Timestamped and everything. I will also provide an encrypted PDF version.

INT. ALLSAFE OFFICES - ELLIOT'S CUBICLE - LATER

Elliot nervously watches from his cubicle as the FBI, Colby and the rest of the execs examine the diagnostics.

His eyes wander to the head of the office to glimpse Angela talking to Gideon. Gideon hugs her as she walks out the door. Gideon walks over to Elliot and Lloyd's cubicle.

ELLIOT

Is she gonna be okay?

GIDEON

Yeah, I told her to take the rest of the day off. I'm gonna move her off the Evil Corp account. I'm gonna assign Ali to you guys.

Elliot eyes Ali across the way. Elliot sinks in his seat and shakes off the disturbing thought. His eyes shift back to the FBI and Colby. He looks at you with concern.

*
*

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. ELLIOT'S LOFT - MORNING

Elliot hasn't slept and it shows. He quickly checks his phone. Google alerts: 0. He busts out his laptop and quickly searches around news blogs and hacker boards. His face falls.

ELLIOT (V.O.)

Nineteen days... no news, no arrests, no revolution.

*

INT. NYC SUBWAY (MOVING) - DAY

Elliot looks around for Mr. Robot.

ELLIOT (V.O.)

No Mr. Robot on the subway.

EXT. CONEY ISLAND - DAY

Elliot walks by the fsociety arcade, but it's abandoned. No wires, no hackers, no Mr. Robot.

ELLIOT (V.O.)

No signs of anyone at the arcade.

INT. ALLSAFE OFFICES - DAY

Elliot walks in, he sees Angela ahead of him. She's dyed her hair jet black. He tries to catch up and say hi, but she gives him the cold shoulder.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
(eyes the empty conference room)

No FBI, Colby, Evil Corp. Maybe Mr. Robot was wrong after all.

*
*

INT. ALLSAFE OFFICES - CUBICLE - LATER

Bored, Elliot stares at his computer screen. A banner ad for the movie VILLAINS flashes on a website.

EXT. NYC STREETS - DAY

*

Elliot walks down the street on his cell.

ELLIOT
Hi, this is Sam from Wells Fargo security fraud department.
Unfortunately, we have to inform you that your account has been compromised.

MICHAEL (O.S.)
What? Really? What happened?

ELLIOT
First, before I can continue, I need to verify some information. Are you still at 350 Hawthorne Avenue?

MICHAEL (O.S.)
Yes. Apartment 2C.

ELLIOT
Great. And the last four of your social security?

MICHAEL (O.S.)
Umm...6457.

ELLIOT
Mother's maiden.

MICHAEL (O.S.)
Fabien.

ELLIOT
And your security question...

A painful pause on the phone.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
I always stretch for this one.

MICHAEL (O.S.)
Oh, um, I think, dog's name. Flipper.
Wasn't it that?

INT. ELLIOT'S LOFT - NIGHT

Elliot sits in front of his rundown, stickered up Evil Corp desktop as a command line program runs password checks with the keywords Elliot has inputted.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
With those details plus a dictionary
hack, it'll take my program maybe two
minutes to crack his password.

*
*
*

While he waits, Elliot goes on Facebook and looks up Angela. He scans through the pictures of her and Ali. Christmas vacations, Halloween, beach parties, barbecues, etc.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
What I wouldn't give to be normal. To
live in that bubble, the reality of
the naive.

He switches Facebook accounts to Krista, his therapist. More happy pictures of families, vacations, friends.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
That's how I justify this. To keep
their optimism intact. To protect
them.

His password program BEEPS. He switches screens hurriedly and discovers the program didn't come up with a single match.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
How? He's too old to have a
complicated password. It had to have
been a combination of these things.

Elliot puts his head down and thinks.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
I'm missing something. I'm missing
something. I'm missing something.

He closes his eyes. He slouches as he rocks back and forth in his chair. His leg twitches rapidly as he mumbles thoughts to himself. Finally, he looks up at his screen.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
His phone number.

*
*

He quickly goes on Google and does a reverse look-up on Michael's phone number.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
Michael Hansen isn't his real name.

Elliot sits back, disappointed.

EXT. 350 HAWTHORNE AVENUE - NIGHT

Michael walks down his street carrying a screaming baby. His WIFE walks next to him. They exchange words before she heads into the corner convenience store and he walks towards their apartment building, baby in arms. Elliot sits on his stoop, in his hoodie, smoking a cigarette, waiting for him.

Elliot's silhouette takes Michael by surprise.

ELLIOT
You're gonna stop seeing Krista.

The sound of her name immediately makes Michael's eyes grow wide. Elliot stands and faces him. The baby cries.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
You're gonna break up with her
tonight and you're never going to see
her again.

MICHAEL
(recognizing him)
You're the guy that used my phone--

ELLIOT
You cheated on your current wife with
seven different women and I have
digital proof of all of this.

Stunned, Michael remains still. His wife stands in line at the checkout.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)
Ashley Madison, online escorts, fake
Facebook pages. I have it all. And if
you don't break up with Krista
tonight, your wife will know
everything along with the police.

MICHAEL
The police?

ELLIOT
Two of the escorts were fifteen.

Michael puts his head down with a wince. The baby screams louder.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
That part I made up. But he did have
a proclivity for young escorts that
helped the lie.

ELLIOT

But I'm not going to do any of that
as long as you break up with Krista.
Tonight.

Michael looks up at him, now out of fear. His wife is putting away her wallet and is about to walk out.

MICHAEL

Done. I'll breakup with her--

ELLIOT

You're also gonna tell her the truth.
That you're married. That you cheat
on your wife. That you hire
prostitutes. That you never had any
intention of being serious with her.

MICHAEL

Why? That would destroy her.

ELLIOT (V.O.)

Exactly. Krista needs to avoid
dickheads like you in the future. Her
radar needs fixing.

ELLIOT

I'll know if you skip a detail. So
don't, or the emails go beaming out.

Michael nods quickly as his wife exits the store.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Oh, and one last thing. Need you to
go upstairs and get something for me.

INT. ELLIOT'S LOFT - NIGHT

Elliot brings Michael's dog, Flipper, home-- much to the chagrin of Qwerty.

ELLIOT

Come on, Qwerty, he's nice.

Qwerty isn't happy, her back raised as she scurries to the top of the kitchen counters.

Elliot gives the dog some water. He laps it up happily.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Good boy.

MOMENTS LATER

Elliot is on his computer burning a CD. The folder he's copying is called MICHAEL HANSEN FILES. Once the burn is complete, he pulls out a sharpie and labels it PINK FLOYD - WISH YOU WERE HERE.

He grabs a large CD Case from underneath his bed and flips it open. Several other CDs labeled everything from the BEATLES to ZEPPELIN are in there. He files the newly fake-labeled CD and sends the envelope back under his bed.

He jumps back on his computer and deletes the Michael Hansen folder. With a small hope in his eyes, he checks his browser for news alerts again. Nothing. He goes to bed.

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Elliot sits in his usual chair. He looks at Krista, who looks disheveled and completely out of it.

ELLIOT

Krista?

(off her look)

Are you okay?

KRISTA

(clears her throat)

Sorry. I'm fine. Go on.

ELLIOT (V.O.)

The look of disillusionment. He told her. She cried all night. Now comes the sadness. I don't like seeing her sad.

*

ELLIOT

I think Angela blames me for what happened with the Evil Corp meeting. What do I do? I need to talk to her.

KRISTA

I think you just answered your own question.

(off his look)

Talk to her.

ELLIOT

But she won't respond to any of my texts or emails--

KRISTA

Go to her apartment, knock on her door and tell her you need to talk.

(pointed)

Communication is key, Elliot. Real human interaction. That's what's important for you right now.

Elliot takes in the ground-breaking idea.

EXT. ANGELA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

He knocks, then nervously waits for Angela to open the door.

She does. It's clear by the look on her face she's as shocked as he is that he's there.

After a hesitation, Angela lets him in.

INT. ANGELA'S APARTMENT

Elliot looks around her apartment. It's well kept, friendly and warm. It's the opposite of his place. CNBC plays muted on the flatscreen hanging on the wall.

ANGELA
What's going on?

ELLIOT
You won't talk to me. You haven't talked to me since the Evil Corp meeting--

ANGELA
I don't want to talk to you, because I feel embarrassed every time I think about what happened. I'll get over it, it's fine.

ELLIOT
It's been three weeks--

ANGELA
You didn't have to take care of me in there. I know you were trying to help, but just don't do it again. Even if I'm losing. Let me lose.
Okay?

(off his confused look)
Don't look confused, just say okay.

Elliot nods. She puts her head down, disappointed in herself. Though this is awkward for him, Elliot slowly hugs her.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Elliot... I'm sorry...

A momentary hesitation as they eye each other. The moment quickly feels like it could be a kiss. But then Elliot realizes Angela's eyes are looking behind him. He turns.

ON TV:

Terry Colby is arrested by FBI and taken into custody. A CNBC banner reads:

BREAKING - CTO of Evil Corp, Terry Colby, has been arrested for his alleged role in Evil's high-profile hacking.

Elliot's eyes go wide.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
No fucking way.

Angela turns up the volume.

*

ON TV:

TERRY COLBY
No comment, no comment, no comment.

NEWS REPORTER
FBI agents claim that Colby either used hacking groups or worked in conjunction with them to pressure Evil Corp during his contract negotiations. After a long and exhaustive investigation, sources close to the FBI have confirmed that the hacks were in part tied to Terry Colby's personal laptop.

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - DAY

Elliot walks down the street, no longer in a zombified, shiftless state-- but with life and purpose.

He looks at his phone. News alert headlines read: EVIL CORP'S STOCK DOWN ON NEWS OF CYBERCRIME.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
(incredulous)
It's happening. It's happening. It's happening. It's happening.

Elliot stops in Times Square and looks at the TV's around him announcing news of the disastrous Evil Corp scandal.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
Maybe I can change the system by hating it!!

He stretches his arms out like he's just won the gold--

A limo screeches to a halt in front of him. A MAN IN BLACK jumps out and opens the door. Elliot's smile is long gone.

MAN IN BLACK
Sir, step inside the car.

Other MEN IN BLACK stand behind Elliot. Sweating immediately, Elliot even notices POLICE looking the other way.

MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)
Sir. Get inside the vehicle. Now.

Helpless, Elliot slowly climbs in. The limo peels out.

*

INT. LIMO (MOVING) - DAY

Elliot sits across from two other MEN IN BLACK. An eerie silence is the only sound that occupies the limo.

INT. SKY RISE - ELEVATOR (MOVING) - DAY

A nervous wreck, Elliot stands in the high speed elevator as it quickly climbs several stories into the air.

The elevator DINGS when it reaches the top floor. The MAN IN BLACK by the doors opens the digital latch with his phone. The doors open and almost immediately we hear LOUD ARGUING.

MAN IN BLACK
Go ahead.

ELLIOT
(nervous)
Where are we?

MAN IN BLACK
Sir, go on in.

INT. TOP FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Elliot enters alone. He sees a number of MEN circle around a grand conference table. We only see their silhouettes, as they bicker and argue with one another.

Elliot's silhouette now joins them, dead center in the mess of black outlines.

Realizing that Elliot has shown up, their loud arguing hushes into an abrupt silence. The dark shadows now face Elliot, who remains catatonic.

What follows is the longest silence of Elliot's life as he and the dark faces exchange long, tense stares. No one speaks.

ELLIOT (V.O.)
Please tell me you're seeing this
too...

Loud, violent jazz RISES again as we push into the darkness of the menacing silhouettes, until the screen is filled with...

BLACK.