

FADE IN:

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

A sign featuring the U.S. flag tells us that we're on the premises of "R & D: IMAGINING OUR FUTURE".

STAN (twenties) waits. Nervously. A GUARD waits with him.

Stan taps instructions into his "Bee", a device he wears like a wristwatch. STAN'S GUIDE (a hologram that is his information interface with the world) pops up in front of him, in the form of a SEXY BLONDE, who smiles seductively:

STAN'S GUIDE

Hey Stan.

STAN

Messages?

STAN'S GUIDE

Sorry, sweetie.

Stan taps his Bee, and she changes looks and voices as she continues (he's scrolling through different versions of his Guide):

STAN'S GUIDE

How 'bout some music while you wait? You love that new cut by --

A door opens. Stan taps his Bee; his Guide disappears.

O walks in. He's a male android who looks completely human -- like an executive in a business suit: calm, easy, self-assured -- except that he's quicker, sleeker, more efficient. His (human) assistant, MANDY, accompanies him.

O

Sorry to keep you waiting, Stan, busy day.

O nods to the Guard, who leaves. Stan blurts out anxiously:

STAN

Listen, I know I blew the last --

O

We don't expect anybody to get it right all the time, humans aren't capable of that.

Stan isn't sure whether this is good or bad...

O

Joke, Stan, loosen up. What we look for is imagination, nobody bats a thousand. I've got good news: we're going to promote you.

Stan relaxes: maybe everything is okay.

O

They're going to adjust your retinal scan for security, Mandy will fill you in. If you have any questions, just give me a shout.

Mandy opens a door to an anteroom. Stan, heartened, goes through the door. Smells something. Stops, panicked. Turns back -- but the door slams shut.

A blinding red light flashes around the door frame.

O

It's the smell that frightens them, we need to work on that.

MANDY

(making a note)

Smells like X bombs -- that kind of sensory-inspired fear is hard to get rid of in us humans --

O smiles -- a smile that turns your blood cold. Mandy realizes she's committed a faux-pas -- and is frightened:

MANDY

Sorry about that "us humans", wasn't thinking.

O

I'm not sensitive, you know that.

MANDY

I also know you want to be treated as if you're like us.

O shrugs it off, and strides out, tapping his Bee, which is implanted in his wrist:

O

We're coming to look at potential replacements for Stan of the Holloway family --

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CITY - DAY

Welcome to America a few years from now. It doesn't look very different from today. It's much more crowded -- large buildings hunch up against each other, soaring shafts of steam plume out of buildings and up from beneath the streets -- but everything is organized, clean and emphatically fun: more Disneyland than Blade Runner.

The busy masses of people are polite -- if very much in their own worlds, occupied with their Bees and Guides.

They pay little attention to (if they notice at all) the bomb sites everywhere. A cafe, a church, the whole front of a building are all being repaired by efficient, partially automated crews.

The destruction is hidden by temporary walls, onto which (like the walls of all the buildings) is projected news, entertainment and ads. It's all bright, upbeat and distracting... like this ad:

ANNOUNCER

Upgrade to your new, free Bee 6.0 today and receive TWO THOUSAND free credits, plus fifteen points toward Premiere Status.

The Announcer morphs as people pass, their own Bees altering the Announcer's look and voice:

ANNOUNCER

Bee 6 features SenseWorks, our fresh new interface that makes it easier than ever to change your Guide. Don't like blondes? Gone. Want your Guide's voice lower? Your sense is our command. And your own custom images and vocabulary styles are easier than ever to upload.

The Bee device in the ad morphs into a smiling honey bee.

ANNOUNCER

Remember, we're your Bee -- but to us, you're always A.

A BOY passes the ad. The bee winks at him. He pulls his MOTHER's sleeve:

LITTLE BOY
Mommy mommy, I want it --

CUT TO:

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

A WOMAN IN A LEATHER JACKET AND JEANS (TINA) puts a jar of mayonnaise into her grocery bag and walks out of the store. There's no checker; nowhere to pay. Instead, as she leaves, her hologram Guide (a studly guy) pops up in front of her:

TINA'S GUIDE
Yo Tina, that's thirty-six bucks,
twenty cents. Want to take that
outa your general account?

TINA
Yeah.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Tina comes upon a BANK that has just been bombed. It's still smoldering, workers are pulling out bodies, and sliding in temporary walls to mask the devastation.

Tina is the only passer-by who stops and looks. Her studly Guide tries to distract her:

TINA'S GUIDE
This branch is closed, babe,
there's one at Main and Sixth.

Tina peers at the damage inside the bank. Smiles.

TINA'S GUIDE
Hey Tina, I got real-time video of
Michael Jackson being released
from prison right this minute!

VIDEO of, yes, Michael Jackson getting out of prison is projected from Tina's Bee onto a temporary wall as it is fixed into place, blocking Tina's view of the bombed bank.

CUT TO:

EXT. SEEDY APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Tina passes a lamp-post. ZOOM INTO THE LAMP --

SURVEILLANCE VIDEO (FROM THE LAMP-POST)

Tina goes into the building.

INT. SEEDY APARTMENT - DAY

Tina walks into the microscopic one-room apartment. The only window is blacked-out with aluminum foil, which is covered on the inside with a something white and gooey.

Two other CELL MEMBERS (a MAN dressed as a GARDENER and a TEENAGED BOY) assemble three bombs at the kitchen table.

GARDENER

You get them?

Tina takes three metal vials of liquid out of her purse. Hands one to the Gardener, another to the Teenager, and slips the third into her pocket.

The Teenager starts to open his vial --

TINA

(alarmed)

Not now!

Rattled, the Teenager puts the unopened vial into his pocket.

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

O strides in, trailed by Mandy. TWO ASSISTANTS who have been arguing with each other immediately quiet themselves.

O

So. Replacement for the brother
in the Holloway family.

FIRST ASSISTANT

(jumping in quickly)

Hank Skinner --

The four walls come alive with surveillance video of HANK (twenties; a normal, worker-bee, upwardly mobile guy -- or that's what he wants to believe; underneath, he's intuitive, creative, bright -- but he denies these qualities even to himself, sensing that they are not useful, even suspect).

FIRST ASSISTANT

Smart, funny, loyal, hard worker --

SECOND ASSISTANT

He's risky, his parents were revolutionaries -- members of the so-called Free Republic.

O

Do I detect sarcasm? They had the right to call themselves whatever they liked, it's a free country.

SECOND ASSISTANT

They engaged in illegal acts against the State --

O

And they failed, nobody remembers anything about them any more, they didn't engage the popular imagination. Not surprising with a name like "Free Republic".

FIRST ASSISTANT

(pointedly, to Second Assistant)

Anyway, they're dead.

(to O)

Years ago, car accident --

O

That works for us.

SECOND ASSISTANT

Unless the apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

O

Any sign of revolutionary sympathies?

SECOND ASSISTANT

Hard to say, he keeps his head down.

FIRST ASSISTANT

We'd know. I mean...

He gestures to the surveillance info that surrounds them.

SECOND ASSISTANT

But we don't necessarily know, surveillance doesn't tell us everything -- isn't that why we're recruiting these people for R & D?

O

It's about balance. You want them to have initiative, be curious, creative -- but not too much.

FIRST ASSISTANT

And that's why Hank's perfect.
This was taken this morning --

The walls display SURVEILLANCE VIDEO shot through windows, from satellites, etc. It's much better than back in 2004: crisp and clear, if always from outside.

INT. HANK'S APARTMENT - DAY (SURVEILLANCE VIDEO)

(A nice but miniscule apartment.) HANK, in his boxers, sits beside his bed, drawing on a sketchpad.

FIRST ASSISTANT (O.S.)

Wait till you see this...

SURVEILLANCE VIDEO FROM ANOTHER ANGLE OUTSIDE THE APARTMENT MOVES IN ON HANK'S SKETCH:

The sketch is of his girlfriend VAL, who is asleep in bed. Looks just like her -- except that he has drawn her pregnant, and she doesn't look it.

FIRST ASSISTANT (O.S.)

Val Abbott, they've been together off and on since college, she moved in for the first time five months ago when she lost her job --

SECOND ASSISTANT (O.S.)

Live-in girlfriend, that's a problem.

O (O.S.)

Or something we can use.

Val wakes up. Hanks puts away the sketchpad -- but not quick enough. She reaches for it. He holds it away. She thinks it's a game, tickles Hank to make him let go of the pad:

VAL

Come on, let me see --

She sees that he has drawn her pregnant. Freezes.

VAL

... How'd you know?

HANK

(disappointed)
Why didn't you tell me?

VAL

I just found out yesterday, I was going to but...

HANK

Not a good sign, is it? About us.

He forces a smile. Gets up and heads to the bathroom.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Photos of Hank's sketches pop up on the wall screens. They uncannily capture the subjects' moods, thoughts, secrets.

FIRST ASSISTANT

He sees people -- perceives who they are, what they want, what they're hiding. Right up our alley.

O

Very promising.

SECOND ASSISTANT

But she's pregnant -- would he be willing to leave her behind?

O

He seems ambivalent, maybe we can take advantage of that if we move fast. Have we got a way into him?

INTERCUT WITH SURVEILLANCE VIDEO from the wall screens:

INT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - DAY (SURVEILLANCE VIDEO)

One-room, puny (all the homes are claustrophobic). A sickly man (DAVE SKINNER, thirty) stumbles from bed to the bathroom.

FIRST ASSISTANT

Hank's older brother Dave. Only sibling, no other relatives. Neuroendocrine carcinoma. Stable now but still suffers.

O

He can't afford an SCI? And neither, I suppose, can Hank.

FIRST ASSISTANT

Neither of them are even close to Premiere Status.

O

That's a nice shiny carrot.

Other images are projected onto the wall screens: Hank at work, at the gym; out to dinner with Val, on vacations, etc.

FIRST ASSISTANT

Hank doesn't lose his cool. Anything goes wrong, he sucks it up and keeps everything under control. Doesn't even vote -- seems politically indifferent. A perfect citizen.

SECOND ASSISTANT

Or he's a revolutionary in disguise, keeping a low profile.

FIRST ASSISTANT

There's no sign of that. Also, he's a great match for the Holloway family. He had a strong, creative mother, a preoccupied father, one sibling --

SECOND ASSISTANT

The Holloway matriarch is a grandmother, not a mother, the sibling is a sister, not a brother --

FIRST ASSISTANT

The psychological and emotional dynamics match, they all bode well for an easy adjustment.

SECOND ASSISTANT

I've got some troubling file footage --

A new video file appears on a wall screen:

INT. SPORTS BAR - NIGHT (SURVEILLANCE VIDEO)

Hank is out with some BUDDIES, among them DUANE. Different sports games with odds tickers are broadcast on screens, as the guys eagerly place bets with their Bees:

HANK

Get it, get it away from --

DUANE

Catch the ball you --

Duane's Guide, a NAKED BIMBO, pops up:

DUANE'S GUIDE
 Hey handsome, that dickhead Palmer
 just lost you two hundred bucks.

HANK
 (laughing)
 You bet on Palmer? Palmer?
 What's wrong with you?

He grabs Duane's arm, slips Duane's Bee off his wrist --

DUANE'S GUIDE
 Duane, your Bee's off!

DUANE
 I'll lose points -- !

Hank taps some instructions into Duane's Bee --

DUANE'S GUIDE
 Hey stud, they just docked you
 twenty Premiere points -- and you
 were so close to Premiere status --

DUANE
 Hank come on, quit messing --

Hank points his Bee at Duane's bee. Laser communication
 shoots between them --

Duane's bimbo Guide hiccups and rewinds, then giggles at him:

DUANE'S GUIDE
 Ooo -- you just upgraded, sexy,
 you're more massive than ever!
 Welcome to Bee 6.0.

HANK
 Your bet's erased. Check it out.

Hank slips the Bee back on Duane's wrist.

DUANE
 How'd you do that?

Hank makes sure nobody's watching, then whispers to Duane --

SURVEILLANCE VIDEO FINDS A DIFFERENT ANGLE AND PUSHES IN:

HANK
 When it was re-writing your
 software, it wrote over the last
 two minutes.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

O

Lots of people figured out that bug.

SECOND ASSISTANT

Do we want those people working for R & D?

FIRST ASSISTANT

They're exactly the people we need -- resourceful, imaginative --

SECOND ASSISTANT

Anti-establishment? Maybe even revolutionary? I know it's a balancing act finding the right kind of recruit, but we can't keep erring in the wrong direction.

O

That's why I'm here -- androids are much better equipped for risk-assessment than humans.

The Second Assistant, chastened, nods. As O heads out:

O

Besides, if he doesn't work out, he can always be promoted.

CUT TO:

INT. HANK'S APARTMENT - DAY

Hank and Val grab breakfast, moving around each other with the ease of people who know each other well -- and with the caution of lovers who know the ice is thin:

HANK

I got these chem-berries for you.

VAL

They're so expensive --

HANK

Don't worry about it.

VAL

Easy for you to say.

He dishes the berries into a bowl for her. End of discussion.

VAL
 ... Thanks.
 (eating them, can't
 help but smile:)
 Remember that trip we took to the
 coast -- when you could still pick
 berries for real?

HANK
 These are sweeter.

VAL
 (diving in:)
 I didn't tell you about... that I
 was pregnant because I didn't want
 it to be the reason. The reason
 we split up or stay together.

Hank nods, pours ingredients into a blender.

VAL
 I know you're scared, I'm scared,
 too --

HANK
 I'm not scared.

VAL
 Hank -- let me in for once...

Hank turns on the blender. She turns it off.

VAL
 You know, the world won't come to
 an end if you let me know how you
 feel once in a while.

HANK
 I don't feel things as strong as
 you do --

He turns the blender back on. She speaks over it:

VAL
 I see you sketching -- you see
 things, you feel things most
 people can't -- how else could you
 have known I'm --

HANK
 They're just drawings, they don't
 mean anything.

She turns off the blender:

VAL
Just cause your mother was an
artist and got in trouble --

HANK
This has nothing to do with them.

VAL
Then what're you scared of?

HANK
I'm not scared. It's just -- the
only thing that's private any more
is how you feel, it's the only
thing that's all yours.

VAL
(not what she wanted
to hear)
You want this baby? Otherwise...

HANK
Otherwise what?

VAL
... I don't know. Sanctioned
abortions are expensive.

HANK
Not like we don't have the money.

VAL
I don't -- I don't have a job, I
don't have an apartment --

HANK
You have here.

VAL
Not if we split up.

HANK
You can stay here, I've got a job,
I've got money, we can do whatever
we want.

VAL
... So what does that mean, you
want to? Get an abortion?

HANK
What do you want?

VAL
I want to know what you want.

HANK
... I don't know. Sorry, really,
it's just sudden -- Look, I gotta
get to work, we'll talk about it
tonight -- okay?

VAL
I knew this would screw up
everything.

HANK
(drawing her close)
It'll be okay. Tonight, okay?

ANOTHER ANGLE - SURVEILLANCE VIDEO

captures them kissing goodbye.

REVEAL O IN HIS OFFICE

watching them on his wall-screen. He gets up briskly.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SEEDY APARTMENT - DAY

Tina, the Gardener and the Teenager coat the three bombs with the mayonnaise Tina bought at the store, then wrap them in aluminum foil.

They then place the bombs in a backpack, a purse and a plastic bag. A TV is on in the BG:

AD ON TV
-- the new Sierra Spring Surgery
Clinic where you'll find a full
array of aesthetic services.
Skin, height, voice -- you can be
everything you want to be, AND you
don't even need Premiere Status --

CUT TO:

INT. HANK'S OFFICE - DAY

Hank talks on a speaker-phone while working on a virtual keyboard and monitor that are projected onto the desk in front of him (they move with him, since they're projected from a small computer that hangs around his neck):

HANK
 We can hub everything through
 Detroit --

BOSS (V.O.)
 I told you, Detroit's backed up --

O walks in.

HANK
 Can I help you?

BOSS (V.O.)
 You better or you're out of here.

O
 (imitating Hank's
 voice)
 I'll get right back to you. End
 call.

HANK
 Hey -- !

O flashes an identity hologram from his palm:

HANK
 You're an android.

O
 Don't tell me you're racist. That
 wouldn't be like you, not with
 your parents.

HANK
 (tapping his Bee)
 Get my boss back on the line --

O
 I'm here to offer you a job.
 (smiling)
 I'm hoping that my antagonizing
 your boss will work in my favor.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

Hank and O walk past ads ("REAL WORLD 50' - SURVEILLANCE HAS NEVER BEEN SO MUCH FUN!"; "NEW NO-BOIL RICE - REMEMBER, THE SURGEON GENERAL HAS DETERMINED STEAM IS UNHEALTHY...")

O
 We work with law enforcement
 agencies --

HANK
 (skeptical)
 So it's a government job.

O
 We're outsourced. I don't need to
 tell you it's a dangerous world,
 Hank. People want law enforcement
 to be like garbage collection --
 just take away the bad stuff,
 don't make them see it. They
 don't want to worry, they want us
 to worry for them.

EXT. PARK ENTRANCE - DAY

Hank and O approach the entrance to the park:

O
 We've become very efficient at
 gathering data. We can see and
 hear pretty much everything we
 want to. I know more about you
 than you'd like me to. But. What
 we can't do is get into people's
 imaginations. That's where you
 come in.

HANK
 I'm not a psychologist or a --

Hank's hologram Guide (PABLO PICASSO) pops up:

HANK'S GUIDE
 Park visit is twenty dollars each
 hour.

O
 Picasso, huh?

O waves his imbedded Bee over Hank's wrist-strap Bee.

HANK'S GUIDE
 Most recent charge deleted.

O
 It's on the house.

Hank's Guide disappears. They walk into the park:

O
Picasso saw into people's souls,
you artists do that, you're
empathetic to emotions --

HANK
I'm not an artist, I just draw
people once in a while --

O
How'd you know your girlfriend was
pregnant?

Hank gapes at him: How'd he know that?

O
I told you we know more about you
than you'd like. How'd you know?

HANK
... I started sketching her and
I -- I guess I saw something --

O
Exactly: We can't see that.

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE PARK - DAY

The park is perfect: clean, sunny, the trees immaculately
trimmed, the water antiseptically clean.

O
Look at this park, it's perfect --
too perfect, I'm told. I mean I
like it, but then I'm synthetic.
It should have been designed by
people like you instead of by
bureaucrats with computers.

HANK
What does this have to do with --

O
Technology, despite its advances,
has no heart. And therefore it
can't read hearts. Turns out
that's the missing link in the
security puzzle.

HANK
Look, I'm just a regular guy --

O

You may want to be, but you're not. You can't actually enjoy that job of yours --

HANK

It's a good job --

O

Well, it will be waiting for you if you don't like our job.

HANK

I don't get it -- I'd be, what, "imagining" stuff all day? Drawing sketches of terrorists?

O

It's more about elaborating on data.

HANK

You've got people trained for that, intelligence officers --

O

Intelligence, not imagination -- different wiring. We get lots of chatter which we know is important but which defies a logical approach. People like you help us figure out what the bad guys intend.

HANK

I don't see how.

O

You will once you start doing it. Whether you know it or not, by sensing what people feel, you can extrapolate motives and thoughts. Everybody we recruit feels the way you do at first. But it works.

HANK

So this has been successful?

O

Know how we finally won the war in Syria? We hired some Hollywood screenwriters to imagine what the bad guys would do next.

(more)

O (cont'd)
 We can't miss the next attack
 because we can't imagine what it
 could be.

A child's ball bounces towards them...

O snatches it, hurls it at Hank. Hank, startled, catches it.

Without missing a beat, O takes a swing at Hank. Hank instinctively blocks O's punch with his left arm, without letting go of the ball in his right hand.

O
 Ambidextrous.

HANK
 (what the hell is he
 doing?)
 ... So what?

A LITTLE BOY approaches. O hands the ball back to the Boy:

O
 Careful, you don't want to lose
 the nice ball, do you?
 (moving Hank along)
 Michelangelo was ambidextrous, did
 you know that? Also Einstein.
 They did an autopsy on Einstein's
 brain, he had a much larger
 profusion of capillaries
 interlacing the cerebral cortex
 than average humans.
 (smiling at Hank's
 confusion)
 The two hemispheres of his brain
 were more evenly balanced -- like
 yours. You make connections other
 people can't.

EXT. PARK ENTRANCE - DAY

Hank and O return to the entrance:

O
 The world is better, safer than it
 used to be. Lots of people worked
 hard to make that happen -- your
 parents in their own way. But
 there are still many terrorist
 groups trying to destroy us.
 We've made your life easy --
 shouldn't you give something back?

HANK

I see you're programmed for guilt.

O

(laughs)

And for bribery -- the job has great benefits: You'll live in a luxurious, spacious house with other members of your family --

HANK

Family?

O

We get the best results when these research groups think of themselves as families -- it incubates their potential skills.

HANK

I was almost with you, but that's just too weird --

O

You'll be making five figures weekly, and upgraded immediately to Premiere Status. That should come in handy with things like your brother's illness.

Hank gapes at him: this is too creepy. He makes a decision:

HANK

Thanks for the offer, but...
(shakes his head, no)

O hands Hank a card. It reads: "R & D: IMAGINING OUR FUTURE", and there's an embedded code on it.

O

I hope you change your mind.

O watches Hank walk away. O's Second Assistant appears on O's Bee:

SECOND ASSISTANT

I've got some other candidates --

O

Not so fast.

SECOND ASSISTANT

He said no.

O
But I haven't.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Hank and Duane, in sweats, row in a scull on a lake.

HANK'S GUIDE
-- Val's not answering her Bee.

HANK
She leave a message for me?

HANK'S GUIDE
No. You want to leave another
message for her?

HANK
Yeah -- no --

HANK'S GUIDE
I'm an artist, I don't have time
for this shit.

Hank taps his Bee; his Guide disappears:

HANK
I gotta download a new Guide.

DUANE
Trouble in Val-adise?

HANK
No no, everything's cool -- just
our usual stuff, you know?

DUANE
Let me tell you something, buddy,
there's nothing better out there.

Hank nods.

DUANE
When're you and Val gonna set me
up with that girlfriend of hers?
Cause these days it's just my Bee
and my right hand, dude.

HANK
Yechh.

The lake suddenly sputters into a digital mess around them --

Then it "shuts off", revealing they're actually in an ACTIVITY ROOM AT THE GYM, on a scull machine. The lake was a virtual projection. Hank's Guide pops up:

HANK'S GUIDE

Sorry Hank, you're out of credit.

HANK

That's impossible --

HANK'S GUIDE

Want me to try your savings account?

HANK

Yeah, I got tons of --

HANK'S GUIDE

Nothing in that account either.

HANK

What? It's got to be a glitch --

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Hank strides, talking with a BANK SUPERVISOR projected as a hologram in front of him:

BANK SUPERVISOR

Your accounts were withdrawn today at --

HANK

But you need the password to do that --

BANK SUPERVISOR

Did anybody else have access to your password?

Hank gets really worried, breaks into a run --

CUT TO:

INT. HANK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The apartment is dark. There's a key in the door, and then soft lights, romantic music, and wall-to-wall sunset image all switch on automatically. Hank rushes in:

HANK

Val?

The closet is half-empty. He hurries to the bathroom: Same thing. Val's gone. He slumps onto the bed, touches her pillow...

CUT TO:

EXT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Hank's Guide leads Hank through the crowded station --

HANK'S GUIDE
-- the signal from her Bee places
her on the next platform --

Hank follows his Guide onto -- an empty platform.

HANK
She's not here.

HANK'S GUIDE
Yes she is.

HANK
No she's not.

HANK'S GUIDE
Don't yell at me, I'm just a
device.

HANK
Double-check the --

HANK'S GUIDE
The signal from her Bee is coming
from this location.

HANK
(figuring it out)
... She took it off and tossed it
here. Oh shit...

HANK'S GUIDE
Incoming urgent call from Dave.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Hank rushes in to find Dave looking terrible, lying in an ER cubicle, surrounded by medical devices. It's horrible:

HANK
Dave...

DAVE
So weird, I just fainted. They
say it can come back like that.

HANK
That sucks.

DAVE
I'm so sick of always asking you
for stuff.

HANK
The procedure? Don't worry about
it --

DAVE
Drugs, all that shit, I'm sure I
brought this on myself --

HANK
That's crazy --

DAVE
Easy for you to say. Perfect son,
perfect health, never a trouble-
maker --

HANK
So, what, this is my fault?

DAVE
I didn't say that. It's just --
maybe I should just...

HANK
(calling him on it:)
What? Maybe you should just what?

DAVE
Where are you gonna get the money
for the procedure?

HANK
I'll take that job --

DAVE
Oh no you won't, Mom and Dad'll
curse me from the grave.

HANK
So what do you want me to do?

DAVE
You can't work for the bad guys.

HANK
(talking himself into
it)
Mom and Dad were wrong, Universal
Surveillance isn't so bad -- it
keeps us safe, right?

DAVE
You really feel safe?

HANK
Sure.

DAVE
I haven't felt safe a minute of my
life since they died.
(admiring him)
Somehow you got their... bigness,
their steadiness.

HANK
Come on --

DAVE
You come on -- don't pretend you
didn't, not now.

HANK
(seeing it means so
much to him:)
... Okay.

DAVE
Even when you were a kid -- Mom'd
be finger-painting with you, I'd
turn up the TV loud, but she
wouldn't even look at me, not even
to tell me to turn it down. She'd
stand behind you, tell you to
concentrate, not listen to the TV,
just zone it out and concentrate
on whatever you were painting.
She'd put her hands over yours and
you paint together.

HANK
How do you remember this? I don't
even remember it --

DAVE
The fridge was plastered with your
shit.

(more)

DAVE (cont'd)
 One of your finger-paintings, a
 sunflower, your masterpiece, it
 stayed there till...
 (then)
 I'm just so scared, man.

Hank grabs Dave's hand:

HANK
 You're gonna be okay.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNI-CHURCH - NIGHT

Hank, deep in thought, walks up the steps of The Uni-Church.

HANK'S GUIDE
 You're out of credit. Uni-Church
 costs fifty dollars for thirty
 minutes.
 (disparagingly)
 Religion.

HANK
 I'll go on interest.

HANK'S GUIDE
 You've been approved, ten percent
 interest per week.

CUT TO:

INT. UNI-CHURCH - ANTEROOM - NIGHT

Hank walks in. A digital sign lists CHURCH ONE, TWO, THREE,
 etc., each designated OCCUPIED or AVAILABLE.

HANK'S GUIDE
 We're in Church Four.

INT. CHURCH FOUR - NIGHT

Hank walks into an empty room. There are pews, but nothing
 else: no religious iconography or decoration.

HANK'S GUIDE
 Catholic? Methodist? Jewish?

HANK
 The usual.

And the video screen walls become a Quaker Meeting House.

HANK'S GUIDE

Sermon?

HANK

(sarcastic)

Does it cost extra without?

INT. O'S OFFICE - NIGHT

O watches Hank in the Uni-Church on his wall screen.

HANK

sits in a pew, alone.

HANK'S GUIDE

Want your customized news? I can
order your usual take-out from Chi
and it'll be ready when you --

Hank turns off his Bee, his Guide disappears. It's
completely silent. A first.

Hank sits and thinks.

BACK TO O

O's eyes shine, glued on Hank, fascinated by him --

HANK

takes the sketch of pregnant Val out of his pocket --

O

O's breathing becomes shallow -- what's Hank going to do?

HANK

Takes out the card O gave him. Waves the card over his Bee.

HANK'S GUIDE

Dialing.

BACK TO O

whose phone rings. O leans back, relieved. Wipes sweat off
his upper lip -- not very Android-like behavior.

He smiles and answers the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE BUILDING HALLWAY - DAY

O leads Hank toward a lab:

HANK
You said this was a trial basis.

O
Absolutely.

HANK
I need your help finding my
girlfriend, she's disappeared --

O
Disappeared -- or left you?

HANK
I just need to find her.

O
That shouldn't be a problem.

HANK
And I need an advance on my
salary.

O
Consider it done. Welcome to
Research and Development.

He holds open a door for Hank --

CUT TO:

INT. LAB - DAY

A LAB TECH selects an earwig (a tiny device that fits in the
ear) from a tray:

TECH
This won't hurt.

Hank regards the earwig warily as the Tech brings it to
Hank's ear:

TECH
You can trust me, I'm programmed
specifically for this task.

He fits it in Hank's ear --

O (V.O.)
Hey handsome.

TECH
Go ahead and answer him.

HANK
There's no mike --

O (V.O.)
Don't need one, I can hear you.

ZOOM INTO HANK'S EAR

The earwig sprouts legs, and burrows into Hank's ear,
clamping down --

HANK (O.S.)
Hey! Something's wrong --

HANK

reaches into his ear:

LAB TECH
It's adjusting so it won't fall
out.

HANK
But how do I take it out?

O (V.O.)
You don't.

CUT TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The Teenaged Cell Member, surrounded by students, opens his locker. Puts in that backpack into which we saw him place his bomb. HOLD ON THE BACKPACK --

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - DAY - CLOSE ON TINA'S PURSE

as Tina sets the purse containing her bomb in a drawer at her desk, and walks out. HOLD ON THE PURSE IN THE DRAWER --

CUT TO:

EXT. HOLLOWAY HOUSE - DAY

Hank approaches, slows in amazement. It's a big old wood Craftsman house, a real throw-back. The city has built up around it, enclosing it...

Hank knocks on the door. It's opened by MRS. JACKSON, sixty-ish, with a big, kind grandmotherly smile -- but make no mistake, she's sharp, and the sugar masks vinegar underneath:

MRS. JACKSON

Mr. Skinner, you're here. Was the traffic bad? We were worried...

Hank steps in, through the looking-glass --

INT. HOLLOWAY HOUSE - DAY

HANK

Worried...?

MRS. JACKSON

Well, you are ten minutes late. They like us to get these family conferences started on time --

HANK

Yeah, about this "family" stuff --

MRS. JACKSON

You're a member of the Holloway family now, we pride ourselves on being punctual. But the cookies are still warm, I baked them myself.

She offers him a plate of fresh-baked cookies. You don't say no to her. Hank reaches for one --

SUSANNA

Don't touch them!

Hank jerks his hand away.

SUSANNA BLADE (early twenties, seems self-assured, has great equipment and knows how to work it) steps in, singing "White Rabbit":

SUSANNA

"One pill makes you larger, and
one pill makes you small -- "

(taking him in:)

You must be my new brother --

HANK

New brother?

SUSANNA

You're replacing Stan, he was the hottest brother I ever had... till now.

MRS. JACKSON

Susanna's an "actress" -- she tried so hard, didn't you, dear? She's been much more successful with our work here in the family.

SUSANNA

Why Grandma, what sharp teeth you have.

MRS. JACKSON

(ignoring her, to Hank)

So we understand you're an artist? Very impressive.

HANK

It's just something I do, I've got a real job.

MRS. JACKSON

You have a really important job now, young man.

SUSANNA

I used to be an artist's model -- nude modelling. Wanna do me?

MRS. JACKSON

I'm a writer -- you've probably never heard of me: Frank Jackson?

HANK

Frank Jackson, the spy thrillers?

MRS. JACKSON

Publishers thought they'd sell better with a male name.

HANK

But your books are so...
(stops himself)

MRS. JACKSON

Masculine? I was in military intelligence. When they put me out to pasture, I took up writing.

SUSANNA

She gives most of her royalties to
the National Rifle Association.
Seriously.

MRS. JACKSON

Well we can't all be bohemians.

GILMAN HOLLOWAY (forties) comes downstairs, carrying a toy
Flash Gordon-type weapon. He's passionate about the work,
but the passion hides a dark anger and fear underneath:

GILMAN

(to Hank)

Sorry to be late -- Gilman
Holloway -- I'm the "Dad". I was
up all night with this --

He points the toy weapon at a wall and FIRES IT.

There's a nearly silent BLAST -- but when the smoke clears,
the wall looks unchanged.

SUSANNA

I've had nights like that.

Gilman sticks his hand through where he fired: that part of
the wall has been blasted away, replaced by a hologram of the
wall the way it was.

GILMAN

It takes a photo of the target
right before it fires, then
instantly projects a hologram of
the target the way it was.

SUSANNA

Cool.

MRS. JACKSON

That's how Al Amir got into the
power plant without anyone knowing?

(off Gilman's nod)

O will be pleased. Have a cookie.

(to Hank, proudly)

Gilman's the one who figured out
how to get the Star Wars shield up
and running.

GILMAN

Didn't do much good, turned out
the enemy was inside the shield.
(more)

GILMAN (cont'd)
 (re: the weapon:)
 Stupid looking prototype, but it
 was lying around.

SUSANNA
 (quietly)
 Was it Amy's?
 (off Gilman's nod, to
 Hank)
 This was Gilman's house, his kid
 sister Amy was killed by
 terrorists.

MRS. JACKSON
 And he's done an excellent job of
 moving on.

GILMAN
 Mrs. J lost her husband and son in
 the line of duty --

MRS. JACKSON
 Shall we "move on" into the family
 room?

CUT TO:

INT. SHOPPING MALL - DAY - SURVEILLANCE VIDEO

The Gardener (the male Cell Member), works on a planter --
hiding in it the plastic bag containing the last bomb. The
 image FREEZES, and we're in:

INT. HOLLOWAY FAMILY ROOM - DAY

The wall screens are filled with shots of the three cell
 members planting their bombs.

XRAY SHOTS ZOOM IN ON THE purse, locker and plastic bag,
 revealing black blobs inside --

As O briefs the family (Hank, Susanna, Mrs. Jackson and
 Gilman) via a holographic video hook-up:

O

We've been tracking Tina Falk's
 cell for several days, no apparent
 connections to other terrorist
 groups.

MRS. JACKSON
 There are so many out there.

O

We believe these devices to be bombs, but they've somehow disguised them so we can't get visuals. Of course, that makes them suspicious in and of itself --

HANK

Why haven't you arrested them? Or picked up those bombs?

SUSANNA

'Cause the bombs are decoys, right? Look at her body language --

She imitates Tina, as surveillance video showing Tina planting her purse in the office is projected on the wall:

SUSANNA

She's putting on a show -- making sure she's not blocking a surveillance camera, opening the drawer more than necessary so we can see inside. It's like she wants surveillance to see her.

O

Exactly. What we need you to figure out is, Why plant decoys? What are they trying to distract us from?

HANK

I still don't get why you don't arrest them.

O

You think they'll just tell us what their plan is? We have to keep the cell in play until you can figure it out.

HANK

But if those are real bombs, they're gonna go off --

MRS. JACKSON

And that's why we need to get to work, dear.

(for her earwig:)

Decoys, domestic terrorist groups.

Research files pop up on the wall in front of her --

GILMAN

Change angles -- let me see the
devices from above. C3 Filter.

The surveillance shots of the devices change at his command.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - DAY

Susanna leads Hank in, as she listens to her earwig:

SURVEILLANCE TECH (V.O.)
-- second table to your left.

Susanna looks at that table, spots Tina eating alone.
Susanna leads Hank to a table facing Tina, who is oblivious:

SUSANNA
So what's she thinking about?

HANK
I'm not psychic.

SUSANNA
Me, I need to imitate their body
language, act them out -- it helps
me get inside their skin, feel
what they're feeling. Maybe you
need to do something like that to
draw them.

They look at Tina, who is eating a huge lunch. A WAITRESS
brings her a jar of McMahon's mayonnaise which she slathers
on her food.

SUSANNA
She can put it away.

HANK
And she's so skinny.

SUSANNA
I hate her.

Susanna hands him a pencil, as if to say: Go.

Hank picks up the pencil. Looks at Tina as he takes his
sketchpad out of his backpack. Puts pencil to paper -- draws
for a moment -- then tosses the pencil down:

HANK
This is stupid.

He gets up. Susanna grabs his hand:

SUSANNA

Find a way to make it work.

He's surprised by her urgency.

SUSANNA

You don't run out on your family.

HANK

I have my own family.

SUSANNA

Well I don't -- or I didn't before the Holloways. My foster parents adopted me for the benefits, I got them on the fast track to Premiere Status.

HANK

What about your birth parents?

SUSANNA

Don't know. The Holloways are my family now.

(then:)

It takes getting used to, but it works.

CUT TO:

INT. HANK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Hank tosses in his bed. Turns on the light. Gets up. Picks up his sketch pad. Looks at drawings of his real family...

O (V.O., in Hank's earwig)

Any brainstorms?

HANK

(startled)

God! What're you, watching me sleep?

O (V.O.)

The people you've sketched, they're all people you know. Maybe you need to know our subject better, I'll prepare a file. And we really do need you to move in to the Holloway house.

Hank doesn't respond, switches on a lamp.

O (V.O.)
Is there a problem?

HANK
Well, I can't sleep with this
thing in my ear.

INTERCUT:

INT. O'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Surveillance of Hank in his apartment is on a wall screen.
But O is gazing at another image (which we don't see -- yet)
with... well, lust. What is it he's looking at?

O
We can give you something to help
you sleep.

HANK
You been able to find anything
about Val?

O
The last surveillance we have of
her is at the Northern railroad
station -- taking off her Bee.
That makes tracing her more
challenging...

We finally see what O is gazing at lustily on a wall screen:
it's Val, asleep in a jail cell.

O
Don't worry, we'll find her.

Hank turns off his lamp.

WE STAY WITH O:

Without taking his eyes off Val, O drops his hand and starts
stroking down there, rhythmically, faster and faster --

Suddenly, he stops, aware of something, spins around to see:

Mandy (his assistant) staring at him, shocked. She's just
come in; her hand is still on the door.

In one incredibly fast movement, O zips up his pants, shuts
the door and forces Mandy to sit down.

He looks down at her, regaining his composure and power,
waiting for her to say something.

MANDY
 (shaking)
 ... You're human.

O
 Unfortunately. But I have had
 some work done.

MANDY
 "Work"...?

O
 Some people have surgery to change
 their mood or improve their
 strength -- I went in for neural
 transplants.

He goes to his desk, takes out a syringe and a plastic vial:

O
 Synthetic cells. They speed up
 synapse connections, enable me to
 process information more
 efficiently --

As Mandy watches, not daring to move, O drains down the vial
 into the syringe...

O
 People don't question androids.
 They trust them to make
 unemotional choices, efficient
 decisions. It's easier to
 maintain authority when people
 don't question you.

He whips a rubber strap out of his desk, tourniquets it
 around his arm, and shoots up:

O
 Experimental but the results speak
 for themselves. Although I
 haven't been able to rid myself of
 all emotions yet -- as you saw.

He pops off the strap -- and, holding the drained syringe,
 approaches Mandy. She can't take her eyes off the empty
 needle...

O
 It's bracing, like an icy
 cocktail. I can feel my cells
 firing.

(more)

O (cont'd)
 Right now I'm evaluating possible
 scenarios much more effectively
 than you ever could...

He grabs her. Terrified, she struggles to free herself.

O
 Don't struggle, let me do the
 work. That's what androids are
 for.

He jabs the syringe into her neck, emptying air into her vein.

CUT TO:

INT. HANK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Hank wakes up -- the apartment is filled with fog... or is it steam? It's weird, nightmarish...

Alarmed, Hank rises, trying to peer through it. He slides silently out of bed, treads carefully toward the kitchen --

A hand grabs his arm. Hank spins toward the intruder. Through the fog, all he can see is a powerful man --

The man (REB) drags Hank to the stove, pushes Hank's head down toward a pot of boiling water. Hank desperately struggles to free himself --

But Reb is too strong -- he twists Hank's head so that Hank's ear is right over the boiling water --

Hank furiously fights to get free --

Suddenly, Reb lets go of Hank's head -- but then he grabs Hank's arm and holds it over the boiling water:

REB
 I'm not going to hurt you. Their
 surveillance doesn't work through
 steam -- I temporarily disabled
 your earwig, now I'm going to do
 your Bee.

Hank looks at his Bee through the steam -- its display fizzles out.

REB
 I've only got a minute before
 they're back online.

Hank sees that the steam that shrouds the apartment comes from a device strapped to Reb:

HANK

Who the hell are you?

REB

I don't have a name, I don't exist, not in Their records. I'm going to let you go, okay?

Hank nods. Reb lets him go.

Hank lunges for the door. Reb grabs him. They struggle.

REB

Listen to me, listen! Your job, it's bogus, they're lying to you.

Reb gets Hank in a clinch:

REB

You think your bank accounts just happened to be depleted the day They offered you a job? Your girlfriend didn't take your money.

HANK

(floored)

... What do you know about her?

REB

Your brother's cancer, why do you think it suddenly got worse?

HANK

...What're you saying? They somehow spread his cancer so I'd --

REB

They're going to tell you your girlfriend is dead.

HANK

What??

REB

They're going to tell you she's dead, it's the way they work, cut you off so you have nobody but your new "Family". They did it to your predecessor, but he wouldn't play along, that's why they "promoted" him.

Hank's Bee buzzes back to life. Reb spots it.

HANK
What're you saying? They killed
him?

Reb disappears into the steam.

HANK
Where's Val?

Hank peers around as the steam dissipates. Reb is gone.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

Morning rush hour; everybody consults with their Bees. Hank hurries past a wall ad for a no-steam iron:

WALL AD
-- smooth as silk with none of
that unhealthy steam!

He slows as he takes that in, then hurries on --

CUT TO:

INT. HOLLOWAY HOUSE FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Wall screens are filled with images. Hank and Susanna pour over surveillance files of Tina and the other cell members; Mrs. Jackson and Gilman refer to weapons files while consulting with O in his office via the video hologram:

MRS. JACKSON
I can't find any precedent of
decoy bombs that are fake -- to
divert attention, the decoy has to
be a real threat.

GILMAN
And I haven't been able to infer
what the bombs might be, but there
is evidence of timing devices.

O
How much time do we have?

Gilman shakes his head; he doesn't know.

MRS. JACKSON

We're focusing on the wrong thing:
The decoys are irrelevant, they'll
only cause collateral damage --

HANK

"Collateral damage"? You mean
they'll only kill irrelevant
people?

MRS. JACKSON

Of course not dear, I mean
whatever this cell is planning has
to be bigger than a couple of
hundred casualties.

(to O)

You should arrest those three
terrible people and interrogate
them.

GILMAN

There may be other cell members
involved, you don't want to tip
them off --

HANK

This is weird -- they're all
eating tons of food.

MRS. JACKSON

(impatiently)

Do try to stay focused, Hank --

Surveillance shows Tina, the Teenager and the Gardener eating
huge meals everywhere.

HANK

I mean, look at Tina: She's skinny
as a rail but since last week
she's been putting it away.

SUSANNA

And the teenager and the other guy
have been porking out too.

GILMAN

McMahon's mayonnaise.

MRS. JACKSON

What?

HANK

He's right, McMahon's
mayonnaise -- it's in every shot,
they're all eating it.

MRS. JACKSON

(thinking out loud:)
Maybe it's a signal -- or maybe
they're preparing to run off...

SUSANNA

What're you saying, they're
squirreling away mayonnaise for
the winter?

MRS. JACKSON

I'm sure you must have a better
idea then, dear.

SUSANNA

(thinking out loud)
McMahon's is the fattest kind of
mayonnaise around -- why would
they all want to put on weight?

HANK

To raise their cholesterol -- ?

GILMAN

That would take months...

Hank takes out his pad and starts sketching Tina...

CUT TO:

INT. SEEDY APARTMENT - DAY

Tina, the Teenaged Boy and the Gardener finish sandwiches,
which they slather with McMahon's Mayonnaise.

Some of that gooey white substance covering the aluminum foil
that blocks the window slides off. The Gardener gets up,
slaps some more mayonnaise over the window in its place.

TINA

It's time for our next step.

The Teenaged Boy and Gardener glance at each other...

TINA

No seeing each other any more
until the action. Right?

The Gardener folds the Teenager into an embrace, as if they're father and son -- and never going to see each other again.

They rise somberly; something weighty just happened...

CUT TO:

INT. HOLLOWAY KITCHEN - NIGHT

Hank comes in; Susanna makes a salad, her back to him:

SUSANNA

I hope you're not vegetarian.
Kissing vegetarians is like making
out with a lawn.

Hank is surprised that Susanna knew he was there without seeing him. Mrs. Jackson, working at a counter, notices:

MRS. JACKSON

Eyes in the back of her head.

Susanna moves to the stove to check out pasta which boils away, cascading steam around her.

MRS. JACKSON

And a real bitch in bed.

That surprises Hank. Susanna doesn't react.

MRS. JACKSON

Deaf as a post when her earwig's
off-line, poor lamb. Save
anything you don't want her to
hear for when she's steamed up.

Susanna moves away from the stove and steam.

Hank notices Mrs. Jackson is chopping two different things with two knives, one in each hand. She catches his look:

MRS. JACKSON

We need to get back to work ASAP.
Those veggies need to be washed.
(as Hank does so:)
Being ambidextrous only indicates
you have a predisposition for our
work. You have to develop it.

HANK

... I don't know if I can.

Gilman comes in with a color chart:

GILMAN

How many colors do you see here?

HANK

... Eight.

GILMAN

The Berinmo tribe in Papua New Guinea sees five -- they only have names for five colors. Our work, it's like opening yourself up to see new colors. It's wonderful.

MRS. JACKSON

My sainted father loved reading stories aloud -- but I always knew how they were going to end. I could see, actually visualize, the stories from inside the heads of the characters. Spoiled it for Dad. I always thought I was freakish --

SUSANNA

Can't argue with that --

MRS. JACKSON

-- until I started doing this work.

GILMAN

Exactly, it's made me feel normal -- no, not normal, useful. My sister, all the other kids played with their toys -- as soon as I got one, I'd take it apart and put it back together in a better way. All they saw was parts and computer chips -- I saw purpose and beauty.

SUSANNA

My turn? I'm the deaf bitch in bed.

(to Mrs. Jackson)

My earwig isn't my only resource. I'm keeping the rest to myself.

Hank dries his hands, heads for the back door:

HANK

I'm going home for a while.

MRS. JACKSON

This is your home now.

HANK

Look, I'll help you as much as I can, but this family thing, living together, it's too weird.

(heading out)

I just need to take a break --

MRS. JACKSON

And we need you here. You boys always think you can come and go --

HANK

(that stops him:)

Us boys? Stan left too? I thought he got promoted.

GILMAN

Hank please, we can't afford another failure, they'll --

Mrs. Jackson flashes Gilman a warning look. Hank catches it:

HANK

They'll what?

None of them respond -- or look him in the eye. O comes in:

O

Hank?

CUT TO:

INT. HOLLOWAY FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

O leads Hank in:

O

I have bad news. Val's dead.

Hank freezes. How should he react? Is it even true?

HANK

... How do you know?

O taps his Bee. Video clips show Val getting on a train, the train being blown-up, Val's body being pulled from it.

HANK

... oh god.

O

Terrorist bombs. I'm sorry.

HANK
 (grief flashing into
 anger:)
 No you're not.

O
 Excuse me?

HANK
 (covering)
 You're an android, how can you be
 sorry.

O
 I'm programmed for it.
 (then)
 We're not so different, Hank. I
 don't feel emotions, you've spent
 most of your life trying not to.

Hank won't let O see his grief. He stalks to the front door.

O
 The irony is, you'll only be
 useful to us if you allow yourself
 to feel.

HANK
 (turning back)
 "Useful"? Are you threatening me?

O
 Of course not -- but it would be
 disappointing if you gave up so
 quickly.
 (goes to him, hands
 him a card:)
 Tina's address. It seems you need
 to interact emotionally with the
 subject to get into them -- that's
 why your drawings of Val and your
 brother and your parents are so
 incisive.

HANK
 What happened to Stan? Was he not
 "useful"?

O
 Based on his performance, Stan was
 promoted. You could be, too.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNI-CHURCH - NIGHT

Hank approaches. A HOOKER peels up alongside Hank.

HOOKER
Hey baby, got a light?

She holds up a cigarette. A tiny dart shoots out of the cigarette, hitting Hank in the neck.

Hank is suddenly jello, slumping over the Hooker...

SURVEILLANCE VIDEO

It looks as if Hank is pawing the Hooker, pushing her into the shadows where a steam shaft blows out of the Uni-Church's ventilation system --

INT. O'S OFFICE - NIGHT

O, watching Hank, is surprised:

O
Why Hank.

SURVEILLANCE VIDEO

As Hank and the Hooker disappear into the steam, the video and sound fizzes out --

EXT. UNI-CHURCH - NIGHT

The Hooker jabs a needle behind Hank's ear. He wakes instantly, with a start, coughing:

HANK
What the hell...

Reb is there, waiting for them in the shadowy steam.

REB
You're easy to find, you go to Church when you have to make a decision.

HANK
I'm here cause Val's dead. You were right, you satisfied?

REB
What I said was, They were going to tell you she's dead. She's not.

HANK
I saw video, I saw her body --

REB
I could show you video of your own
death. They're detaining her.

HANK
(wants to believe it)
How do you know?

REB
They need something to hold over
you.

HANK
Why? Why would they do that?

REB
Anybody the State can't control is
a threat to them. They want to
get rid of you, all of you with
imagination, why do you think
They're rounding you up into these
"Families"?

HANK
(distraught with
confusion)
That's crazy --

REB
Then leave, don't listen to me.

Hank starts to leave -- but something Reb says makes sense to
him, no matter how much he tries to talk himself out of it:

HANK
They need us to --

REB
Fight terrorists? That's their
excuse, and your ego.

HANK
So, what? there's no terrorists?
Is that what you're saying?
There's bombs, killings every --

REB
Of course terrorists exist,
because the State needs terrorists
to exist. Terrorists play into
Their hands --

HANK

This is radical paranoid bullshit,
I've heard it all my --

REB

If there wasn't terrorism, we
wouldn't need security -- if we
didn't need security, we wouldn't
let the State to steal our freedom.

HANK

I'm free...

REB

How can you be free when the State
watches your every move? When
They coerce you into working for
Them?

HANK

(all he cares about:)
You know so much, help me -- help
me find Val.

REB

Help us.

Reb takes several small X-shaped devices out of a bag.

HANK

(scared)
... All the X-bombs were destroyed.

REB

That's what the State thinks, so
They won't be looking for them --
or for you. Universal
Surveillance is the State's
greatest strength -- but it's also
Their greatest vulnerability: If
we can shatter it, Their power
will be devastated. We'll help
you locate Their surveillance
hubs --

HANK

But X-bombs destroy everything for
a block, they'll kill hundreds --

REB

Of Them. Some collateral damage
can't be avoided --

HANK

"Collateral damage"? You're as bad as they are --

REB

As bad as Them? They killed hundreds of thousands. They "amended" our Constitution until it meant nothing. You think you can reason with Them? Decades of talk and protests, what good did it do? People are more numb than ever, they're doped up on technology. All we're trying to do is give people back the right to think for themselves. You remember what that was like.

Hank does. He looks away, knowing there's truth in it...

REB

Like I said, they're not looking for these. But just to be safe --

Reb takes a jar of McMahon's Mayonnaise out of his bag.

REB

Coat them with this -- something in the molecular structure, the synthetic fat, surveillance can't see through it.

Hank takes the jar of mayonnaise. That's a coincidence. He stares at it, not knowing what to make of it.

Reb misunderstands Hank's confusion:

REB

So simple, I know. But we're only a step ahead of Them -- soon enough They'll figure this out, and we'll have to come up with something else.

Reb holds out the X-bombs for Hank:

REB

We'll contact you, the best way to avoid being seen by Their technology is not to use it.

Hank gazes at the bombs...

REB
 Break one arm, fifteen minute
 delay. Break two arms and it goes
 off right away.

Hank Shakes his head. No. He turns away without taking the
 bombs, and disappears into the fog.

CUT TO:

INT. SEEDY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tina takes out her metal vial of liquid --

CUT TO:

INT. FLOP HOUSE - NIGHT

The Gardener unscrews his identical metal vial --

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

The Teenaged Boy hesitates, then drinks from his vial --

CUT TO:

INT. DAVE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Hank comes in. Dave is in bed, with tubes all over the place.

DAVE

Hey.

HANK

Doctor says the operation went
 well.

DAVE

(nods; then:)

Thanks, man.

HANK

No problem.

DAVE

You look like shit.

HANK

So do you.

They chuckle. Dave peers at Hank, sees something's not right:

DAVE
What's up?

HANK
Everything's cool.

DAVE
Think I don't know when you're
bullshitting?

Hank takes a breath. Can he tell Dave? Hank glances up at the surveillance camera -- realizes he has to be careful.

DAVE
Let me help you for a change.

Hank wants to -- and sees it's important to Dave, too.

HANK
It's Val, she's --
(eye on that camera)
... gone.

DAVE
Gone? What do you mean? She left
you?

Hank wants to confide his doubts, but knows the camera is on:

HANK
She's dead.

DAVE
What?? Shit. How -- ?

HANK
Terrorists.

DAVE
Oh man I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.
This is so screwed up, this whole
world is so... I was wrong, man,
what I said the other day, about
your job. Working for the bad
guys isn't bad if you catch worse
guys.

HANK
(really needs to
know)
You think?

DAVE

Mom and Dad, they were wrong.
Fighting for the Free Republic?
What did that even mean?

HANK

(cautiously)

The Free Republic was against
surveillance and centralization of
power, the State taking over
media, education --

DAVE

There are terrorists out there,
killing innocent people like Val,
they gotta be stopped. You're
doing the right thing.

He sees that Hank still isn't so sure:

DAVE

When I woke up from the operation,
I thought, I want to live, I want
to live in a world that's safe.
I'll change, I'll be more like
Hank, he's doing the right thing.

CUT TO:

INT. HANK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Hank wheels a suitcase to the front door. Takes a last look
around. Spots his sketchbook. Stuffs it in his backpack.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TINA'S SEEDY APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

The noise of a door closing wakes Hank -- he's spent the
night in the car. He looks up at the entry to the building.

Tina has just left, is heading up the street. Hank hurries
out of his car, slipping on his backpack, follows her.

CUT TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Students make their way past the locker in which the Teenaged
Cell Member placed the backpack with the bomb.

There is a CLICK from inside the locker --

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. TINA'S OFFICE - DAY

Tina's desk EXPLODES --

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. SHOPPING MALL - DAY

BLASTS, FIRE and SCREAMS rip through the crowded mall --

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - DAY

Tina sits at her usual spot, eating her usual sandwich...

Hank takes a deep breath, goes to her:

HANK

Excuse me? This is gonna sound weird, but... can I sketch you?

TINA

No thanks.

HANK

I'm not trying to sell you anything, or come on to you or anything like that -- I'm an art student, you've got an interesting face.

Tina shakes her head, no. Hank turns to other diners nearby:

HANK

Don't you think she's got an interesting face?

Other diners look at her, and at this guy making a scene. Tina doesn't want attention drawn to her:

TINA

Okay okay, do it fast.

HANK

Thanks, I really appreciate it.

Hank sits opposite her, starts sketching:

HANK

There's something cool about your face -- you look decisive, like someone who knows what they want.

Nothing from Tina. Hank keeps pitching as he sketches:

HANK

Knowing what you want, that's the opposite of me. I've had a lot of different jobs -- what about you?

No response.

HANK

Hope you don't mind me talking, it helps me get the likeness...

Hank glances at his sketch: Good likeness but not revealing. He girds himself to go deeper:

HANK

You married? Got a family?
(no response)
I had a girlfriend, she was pregnant. Killed. A bomb.

Tina takes him in for the first time.

HANK

You lose anybody?

TINA

Who hasn't?

HANK

That's the truth.

He glances at his sketch: still nothing helpful. He grabs the pencil tighter, pushes to provoke her to some emotion:

HANK

These terrorists, they're the scourge of the planet, they should be boiled in oil or something, something worse than just death.

TINA

(rising to that)
There's lots of things worse than death.

Hank sees a fire in Tina's eyes --

His hand starts sketching more quickly, almost independently of him, as he focuses on Tina without looking at the pad. The rest of the room recedes...

His focus is broken when Tina's usual Waitress brings Tina a jar of McMahon's mayonnaise with a smile:

WAITRESS

Sorry honey, forgot your usual.

Tina keeps eating without even reaching for the mayo.

Hank reacts: That's weird.

Suddenly, POLICE SWARM IN, grab and cuff Tina. She doesn't resist -- in fact, she smiles.

Hank is taken aback: That's even weirder.

As the Police drag Tina off, Hank looks down at the sketch: In his sketch, Tina is dead!

Hank, stunned, snaps his eyes back at the unopened jar of McMahon's mayonnaise.

The penny drops. He's on his feet, stuffing the sketch in his pocket, racing out the door, shouting into his earwig:

HANK

O -- get me O.

CUT TO:

INT. HOLLOWAY HOUSE FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Hank bursts in. Susanna, Gilman and Mrs. Jackson are quickly flipping through wall-screen images:

HANK

I can't get O --

SUSANNA

They're in operation mode --

GILMAN

The bombs went off --

HANK

I was there when they arrested Tina, she wanted to be arrested --

SUSANNA

Wanted to be...?

HANK

She smiled --

MRS. JACKSON
Pleased the bombs went off --

HANK
No it was more than that -- the
mayonnaise, she didn't eat any
mayonnaise --

MRS. JACKSON
Jesus, the fucking mayonnaise
again, what's wrong with you.

HANK
It blocks surveillance --

GILMAN
What?

HANK
Surveillance can't see through
it -- they've been eating it
nonstop, they're trying to hide
something inside themselves!

Susanna has brought up surveillance video of the diner arrest:

SUSANNA
He's right, look, she smiles --

GILMAN
Freeze and Xray --

The image of Tina FREEZES INTO AN XRAY IMAGE. Everything
looks normal.

GILMAN
MRI it.

The image CHANGES TO AN MRI IMAGE, revealing Tina's soft
tissue and organs -- except for the area of her stomach,
which doesn't register on the image.

GILMAN
Can't see anything of her stomach.

HANK
The mayonnaise coated it --

MRS. JACKSON
... She's a Trojan horse!

SUSANNA
She wanted to be arrested --

HANK

-- so she could bring something in her stomach to wherever they're taking her.

Gilman has projected surveillance videos of the Teenaged Boy and Gardener being arrested.

GILMAN

Freeze and MRI.

Same thing: their stomachs don't register on the images.

O appears on the video hook-up:

O

I received your images -- I've been supervising the arrests and interrogations --

GILMAN

Where are they?

O

The Federal Center. This is real time surveillance:

Real-time surveillance videos appear: Tina, the Teenaged Boy and the Gardener are escorted separately from their individual cells by Guards down separate hallways:

MRS. JACKSON

Where are they taking them?

O

Arraignment.

HANK

Wait wait wait, they were arrested separately, right?

MRS. JACKSON

(thinking aloud)

-- taken to different cells, they haven't been near each other since they were arrested --

SUSANNA

The kid, look, he's walking fast, faster than his guard, like he's rushing toward something --

HANK

The gardener's terrified -- but
she's smiling, smiling again!
Something's about to happen --

SUSANNA

When they're all together --

GILMAN

Interactive agents! They've got
something in their stomachs that's
going to interact when they get
together -- !

MRS. JACKSON

That courtroom at the Federal
Center is a symbol of oppression
to these terrorist groups --

Hank pulls the sketch of Tina dead from his pocket, realizes:

HANK

The bombs are inside them, blocked
from surveillance! They're a bomb!

MRS. JACKSON

Together -- ! When they're all
together!

SUSANNA

You've got to stop them before
they meet in the courtroom -- !

O

(issuing an order:)

Federal Center: Stop the guards,
return prisoners to their cells --

They watch breathlessly as the Guards escorting the three
cell members separately stop, listening to their ear-pieces.

Suddenly, at the same time:

- The Teenaged Boy makes a run for the door to the courtroom.
His Guard tackles him.

- Tina knees her Guard in the groin. He slumps over,
releasing her. She runs toward the door to the courtroom.
He grabs her feet, bringing her down. She tries to crawl to
the door that is only a few steps away --

- The Gardener grabs the gun of his Guard, who is distracted
by the instructions he's listening to. The Gardener shoots
his Guard, and runs to the door to the courtroom --

The Gardener makes it into the courtroom -- but the other two have been stopped.

THE FAMILY

breathes a sigh of relief. It's over.

O

You just saved hundreds of lives
and denied the terrorists a huge
symbolic victory.

HANK

is congratulated by the Family. He can't help but be proud.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOLLOWAY HOUSE - HANK'S BEDROOM - DAY

Hank is unpacking when Susanna comes in:

SUSANNA

We just got the debrief. They had
swallowed chemical agents, they
would have mixed through the
air -- the charge would've taken
out a half-mile.

HANK

The chemicals could mix through
their skin?

SUSANNA

Skin is porous...

She takes his hand. He tenses up.

SUSANNA

I don't bite.

HANK

(covering with a joke)
You're my sister.

SUSANNA

(seductively)
We're a very tight family.

HANK

What happened to Stan?

SUSANNA
 (frightened)
 He was promoted.

HANK
 To what?

SUSANNA
 (dare she tell him
 the truth?)
 ... To Glory.

She leaves.

Hank lifts a photo of Val out of his suitcase. He's startled to find something taped to the back of it:

It's a business card, for the MIDTOWN SAUNA.

O (V.O.)
 (in Hank's earwig,
 startling Hank)
 Could you step into the family
 room, please, Hank?

Hank slips the business card into his pocket.

CUT TO:

INT. HOLLOWAY FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Video and photos of the Family's new assignments fill the wall screens as O briefs them via video hologram:

O
 -- with this chip and wiring
 implanted in a paraplegic's brain,
 he can move his prosthetic arm by
 just thinking about it.

MRS. JACKSON
 Surveillance of the research
 facility doesn't show who stole
 the chip?

O
 The chip wasn't stolen from the
 facility -- it was stolen from the
 subject of the experiment --

Video of a dead paraplegic whose head has been sliced open.

O
 -- at a time when he was off
 surveillance. We've upgraded our
 systems so they can see through
 condiments, but we still have a
 problem with steam.

Hank fingers the business card for the Sauna in his pocket.

O
 We need you to tell us what uses
 terrorists might make of the
 chip -- that should help us find
 the people who stole it.

GILMAN
 They could build an army of robots
 controlled by thought, which can't
 be traced --

O
 Yes, that's an application we have
 envisaged. But what uses might it
 have in the hands of evil-doers
 that we haven't imagined?

The Family kicks into gear, pulling up video, etc. -- except
 for Hank, who shoves the sauna card deeper into his pocket:

HANK
 I'd like to take a couple of hours
 off -- I'm not really useful
 unless I "get involved" with the
 subject, right? And since you
 don't know who the subject is
 yet...

O
 (with a smile)
 We know how to find you.

Hank heads for the front door --

O
 Hank -- how did you know about the
 mayonnaise?

HANK
 (covering alarm)
 ... What?

O
 McMahon's Mayonnaise -- how'd you
 know it was impenetrable to
 surveillance?

HANK
 I didn't know, I figured it out.

O
 Pretty big leap.

HANK
 ... That's what you hired me for.

He leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. MIDTOWN SAUNA - DAY

Hank, wearing a towel around his waist, pads through the
 sauna, not sure what he's looking for.

He heads into the steam room...

INT. STEAM ROOM - DAY

Hank sits in the steam room with a couple of other guys in
 towels. The steam gets thicker and thicker -- the other guys
 get uncomfortable and leave one by one.

Finally, Hank can't take it. He heads for the door -- to
 find REB suddenly beside him, in a towel, carrying a gym bag:

REB
 Congratulations.

HANK
 For what? Stopping three of your
 comrades?

REB
 They weren't our comrades. They
 were blood-thirsty murderers.

HANK
 And you're better than that.

REB
 There are many groups working
 against the State who want to
 create fear and terror so that
they can rule.

(more)

REB (cont'd)

They would overthrow one set of tyrants for another. We're the only group fighting to turn this country back to the people. We don't believe in symbolic violence --

HANK

No, you like your murders more specific -- like Val.

REB

I told you, she isn't dead.

HANK

How do you know that? Cause your group or whatever the hell you are, you're the ones holding her?

REB

No. But we can help you find her.

HANK

That's what you got me here to tell me? Bring her to me, then we'll talk.

Hank gets up to leave --

REB

Your parents believe in our cause.

That stops Hank:

HANK

Believe? You mean, believed.

Reb doesn't say anything.

HANK

My parents are dead.

REB

I was with your father when he was killed --

HANK

They died in a car accident --

REB

He died fighting for the cause.

Reb reaches into his gym bag:

REB

She didn't want to do this --

Hank eyes on Reb's hands -- what's he taking out of the bag?

REB

You knowing that she's alive makes
it more dangerous for all of us...

Reb hands Hank an old, much treasured folded piece of paper.

Hank, his hands trembling, unfolds it...

It's a child's finger-painting of a sunflower.

Hank cuts his eyes, misty from steam or tears, up to Reb:

REB

Our group has a name: We are the
resistance fighters of The Free
Republic.

OFF HANK --

BLACKOUT.