(Printed with the demonstration version of Fade In)

Church in the Wild

Written by

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"Guilt results from unused life, from the unlived in us."
- Ernest Becker, The Denial of Death

PLOT SUMMARY

Thomas Ward awakens in front of a mysterious Church in the middle of a dark forest. He goes through the wooden doors and finds that it is massive on the inside, with physics defying corridors and impossible escalators.

He meets a strange psychologist, coder and inventor of the place, Signe, who informs him that he is in a simulation gone terribly wrong, and that she is figuring out what went wrong. Thomas receives a call on a smartwatch with his name on it from his former girlfriend whom he believed had taken her own life, and he sets out searching for her. While looking for some research papers he promised Signe in return for information about Amy, he stumbles on a strange recluse, Dave, sitting in an autocamper on the beach. He coerces the delirious hermit into giving up Signe's research, but when returning them a horrible writhing mass of crying bodies devours Thomas.

He awakes screaming back in front of the Church again, unscathed. But as he enters, the entire interior has changed, and a whole new maze meets him.

Thomas finds a strange doorframe, its door shattered into pieces. But only one solitary piece lies on the floor in front of it. He questions Signe about it, who reveals that it's a new phenomenon in the Church, and one that might lead them to Amy! But only if he can find the two missing pieces of the door. Signe also tasks him with experimenting with the monster's behavior on his way, so they might figure out how to avoid it.

Thomas learns that Dave and a new inhabitant of the Church, the down-on-his-luck entrepreneur JOHN, possesses the pieces. John believes that the mysterious door is actually a way out of the Church, and that Signe is hiding the truth from them. His suspicions are confirmed, and tasks Thomas with using the monster to kill her as a threat. The assassination attempt fails but Thomas obtains the doorpiece for his troubles.

Dave believes that the door will bring his lost daughter to him, and tasks Thomas to confirm his theory. But it turns out that the picture of a girl he believes to be his dearly departed is actually Johns wife. Thomas discovers that Dave is in fact a convict who refuses to accept the crimes that led to his wife fleeing from him, and gives up his doorpiece when learning the truth.

With the door now completed, Signe explains they need to redirect power from one of the memory rooms to turn it on - which would send the inhabitant of that room out of the Church.

Thomas attempts to make both Dave and John leave voluntarily, but fails, and must forcefully decide who to release unto the world. After executing his decision, Signe reveals that it was not enough power and they need to turn off the memory room of the other occupant, and Thomas confronts her about not revealing the whole truth. She explains that she needed him to find out what's going on, and didn't want him to go rogue if he knew everything. She gives him a smartwatch - the same worn by all the occupants of the Church - with Amy's name on it, implying that she is in fact alive and in the Church. Thomas goes and boots out the last occupant, and reconvenes with Signe in front of the now active doorframe.

The doorframe however is not a door, but a mirror. Just like the hundred of other mirrors scattered around the Church, and Thomas loses his patience. He is about to smash the mirror when Signe stops him, begging him to stay calm as its her only option for learning what went wrong with the AI running the Church. Learning that she used him yet again and that she does not believe Amy to be related to the mirror, he throws Signe off a cliff and smashes the mirror. The glass gives in and Thomas falls into a void. He cries out in frustration and throws his smartwatch - his main communication channel with Amy - into the darkness. The watch comes alive, and AM - the AI running the Church - reveals itself and explains that Thomas has failed. Again.

AM explains that the four of them have been stuck in the Church for days, seeking comfort in the recreated ghosts of their loved ones and memories that should be left in the past. So AM took matters in its own hands and decided that since humans seek to punish themselves, their salvation might be found in their suffering.

Thomas demands that AM produced Amy, but it refuses. He gets to ask two questions about the nature of the Church or the other characters before AM manifests the all too familiar monster who grabbles Thomas.

AM calmly explains that they are ready for another reset and wishes Thomas luck - reassuring that they have plenty of time to improve on the program - before the monster snaps Thomas' neck.

T05 - EXT. CHURCH IN THE WILD - NIGHT

THOMAS WARD opens his eyes slowly to the sound of rustling leaves in the wind. It's night, and he breathes heavily as he gets up.

THOMAS

Wh- what?

He looks around, confused.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Hello? Anyone there?

He notices a smartwatch on his wrist. He inspects it and finds his name, Thomas Ward, and a patient ID written on it. The watchface has a blinking ERROR message

A path through the fallen leaves and overgrown shrubbery takes him to THE CHURCH. The heavy oak door to the old wooden church is ajar. He pushes it open and sees an enormous maze of impossible escalators connecting impossible spaces. He walks in and out of the church, inspecting the doorframe, but he cannot fathom the size difference between the outside and the inside.

T10 - INT. ESCALATOR HUB

Thomas walks to the edge of the escalator scape and hears a crunching sound from his wrist.

AMY

Hello? Hello? Is anyone there?

THOMAS

Amy? Amy is that you?!

AMY

Thomas! Where are you? I'm scared, I can't see anything.

THOMAS

Amy, but I thought you..

AMY

I'm in some dark room. Completely blacked out.

THOMAS

Do you see- no.. Can you- Can you feel anything?

AMY

Nothing.

THOMAS

Don't worry, I'll find you!

The watch hisses with static, losing its connection.

AMY

Hello? Thomas?

THOMAS

Amy? Amy!

THOMAS (cont'd)

I thought you were.. Dead.

The signal is lost and the watchface goes black.

S10 INT. OFFICE - INTRODUCTION

THOMAS enters futuristic-looking office, dimly bathed in phosphorous lights. SIGNE sits on a futuristic couch in front of a huge window to a sprawling science fiction citiscape. The couch and the floor around it is covered in research papers and tablet screens. She appears occupied as he nervously approaches her.

THOMAS

Hey.

Signe continues flicking through her papers.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Hello? Do you know what's up with this place?

No response.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Hey!

Signe replies without looking up.

SIGNE

What?

Thomas pauses for a bit. Signe pauses her research and looks up at Thomas, her eyes narrow as if trying to identify the man.

SIGNE (cont'd)

What's your name?

Thomas.

Signe nods in faint recollection as her eyes glaze over. She gestures at him to sit down. Thomas looks around, there's no chairs in the room. He squats on the floor in front of her.

SIGNE

Well Thomas, I'm Signe. And this place...

She weighs a word for a second.

SIGNE (cont'd)

... is a place for you to get better. A Church for people who have lost something.

Her eyes narrow as she cocks her head.

SIGNE (cont'd)

Or someone.

Thomas blurts out.

THOMAS

I came here looking for my girlfriend, Amy. Have you seen her?

Signe finally looks at him. She gives him an affirmative nod.

SIGNE

I see. Do you remember the last time you saw, Amy?

Thomas struggles to recall.

THOMAS

I... I don't. But she spoke to me,
just now.

Signe smiles faintly in disbelief. Thomas holds up his watchband for her to see.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Through this.

SIGNE

She did? Interesting.

She returns to flicking through her papers, as if searching for answers.

She sounded scared! I need to find her.

Signe rises from the couch and begins to walk around the room.

SIGNE

That may not be as straightforward as you think. There are some unresolved technical hiccups - some new emergent behaviors, it seems.

THOMAS

I don't understand.

Signe retorts, slightly annoyed. She walks back towards the couch and sits back down.

SIGNE

And you don't need to. But if you want my help, I need you to recover some research for me.

THOMAS

Research?

Signe answers without looking at him.

SIGNE

Yes, Someone lurked in here and stole some of my research papers while I was resting.

Thomas, surpised.

THOMAS

Stolen?

Signe nods.

SIGNE

By one of the. Erh. Residents of the Church. Dave. Why don't you go and find out for me, hm?

THOMAS

And what am I supposed to do if he has them?

She groans, exasperated.

SIGNE

Trade him, threaten him, use your wily charms - I don't care, just bring back those papers so I can figure out what's wrong with the Church.

She shoots him a forced smile.

SIGNE (cont'd)

And where Amy might be, of course.

Thomas makes moves to get up from the floor.

SIGNE (cont'd)

Wait, hold on.

She reaches an arm out at Thomas.

SIGNE (cont'd)

Show me your watch.

Thomas pauses, then searches for a lock on it.

SIGNE (cont'd)

No, it doesn't come off when you're in here, just-

Signe waves him closer with her arms. Thomas reaches he wrist out towards her and she pulls up some debug menu on it, taps a few keystrokes and the watch glows blue. Next to Signe a blue HUD appears with the headline: GRIEF PROFILE. It shows the five stages of grief: ACCEPTANCE, DEPRESSION, ANGER, BARGAINING, and DENIAL. A small marker with an S is planed in the DENIAL area.

SIGNE (cont'd)

I just unlocked the debug mode on your watch. It allows you to track the emotional fluctuations and current grief stage of whomever you talk to. It's a key part in helping the patients-

Signe stops herself

SIGNE (cont'd)

I mean, the people in here.

THOMAS

Stages of grief? I thought that whole thing was bullshit?

Signe sighs. Her marker moves closer to ANGER.

SIGNE

Yes, that's why we spent billions developing it.

THOMAS

Does it track sarcasm?

An ironic smile flashes across Signe's face.

SIGNE

Why don't you leave the science to me? You're right that, grief and sorrow are not linear processes. You don't make your way through the stages and wake up suddenly better, but- (we do experience them.)

THOMAS

Are you telling me this place is supposed to help grieving people?

SIGNE

It's like I said, Thomas. This is a place for people who have lost... one thing or another. Use this to your advantage.

She returns to studying her papers and waves him away.

S15 INT. OFFICE - "WHAT'S WITH THAT DOORFRAME?"

Signe is reading through her stack of paperwork.

THOMAS

There's this weird broken door out there. Your Church seems a bit flimsy.

She gives him a hateful glare. But retains her composure.

SIGNE

Minor technical difficulties.

She returns to her paperwork.

SIGNE (cont'd)

I believe that door is a portal to a different, deeper part of the Church. One that I've lost access to. I need to go there so I can fix whatever is bugging this place. But I can't-(find the main server)

Could Amy be behind it?

She frowns for a moment. Then she lights up

SIGNE

If you'd let me finish. It's quite evident that you have not found her yet, so if she's here. She's not in this part of the Church. Right?

She gives him a sly smile.

SIGNE (cont'd)

She might be wherever that door takes us.

THOMAS

So how do we fix it?

SIGNE

That's what those papers will tell us.

THOMAS

Seems like you already have enough.

Signe sighs.

THOMAS (cont'd)

So the door was broken. When did that happen?

Signe answers without looking at Thomas.

SIGNE

A long time ago. Wait, no. It happened...

She looks around the room, visibly confused.

SIGNE (cont'd)

It happened just now. Just before you came in. The door was shattered. Or was it..

THOMAS

You don't remember?

She snaps back

SIGNE

Of course I remember! It's just. Ugh. Just find those papers, the sooner the better!

D10 INT. AUTOCAMPER TENT - EVENING "MEET DAVE"

Dave is laid back in a camping chair, sipping a beer. Thomas sits down precautiously in the empty plastic chair next to him. It's comically low.

THOMAS

Hi.

Dave doesn't look at Thomas, he just gazes at the ocean behind the see through plastic tarp.

DAVE

I'm Dave.

THOMAS

I'm Thomas.

Dave suddenly turns with a huge smile and cheerfulyl shakes Thomas' hand.

DAVE

Great to meet you Thomas! Do you like the view?

Thomas looks sceptically at the tarp.

THOMAS

I.. Guess.. I'm looking for some papers, you wouldn't happen to-

Dave suddenly yells

DAVE

No! No! You can't have them! They contain secrets! But it's all so.. I'm so tired. I can't read them.

THOMAS

How about I take them? I can help you rea-

DAVE

NO!

He shakes in his chair, not looking at Thomas.

DAVE (cont'd)

But if you help Dave.. Help me find the cow. Then..

He laughs awkwardly.

DAVE (cont'd)

Then I will trust you.

THOMAS

Uhm. A cow?

DAVE

Yes! A toy cow! Soft. Plastic. Not red NOT RED! Thank you!

D20 INT. AUTOCAMPER TENT - EVENING "BULLY DAVE"

THOMAS

I don't have time to find your missing toys, just give me those papers!

Dave shakes

DAVE

Please! You don't understand it's.. My daughter's. She could be here any moment, and if she doesn't get her surprise, she will be sad. She will cry again!

Dave squeals.

THOMAS

Your daughter? Where is she?

Dave calms down.

DAVE

Camilla. Sweet Camilla. Dave hasn't seen her since. Since-

His face contorts in pain.

DAVE (cont'd)

Find her cow. Please!

D1:

What's your problem? Do you think Camilla would want to see her dad like this?

DAVE

She- she. No. You're right.

Dave takes deep breaths.

DAVE (cont'd)

I'm sorry. You must think I'm.. Please. Just help me find her toy.

D2:

THOMAS

What you did was wrong, Dave. You can't steal, you'll go to prison.

Dave panics.

DAVE

No! NO! They can't lock me up again! I need to see her! LET ME SEE HER

He's shaking.

D3:

THOMAS

If you don't give those papers I'll tell Signe. She'll send her little friend after you.

Dave smiles ear to ear

DAVE

That stupid thing. It can never catch Dave. Dave outruns ANYTHING!

D4:

THOMAS

You hurt her, didn't you? That's why she won't see you.

Dave shuts down. He stares at the tarp. Then gives Thomas a blank stare.

DAVE

I. I would never. It was rain. Just rain, nothing more.

What are you talking about?

Dave explodes

DAVE

IT WAS JUST RAIN! SHE'S OKAY! I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING.

SUCCESS:

Dave falls in on himself. Sobbing.

DAVE (cont'd)

Take them. Just take your fucking papers and go. You- you ASS!

FAILURE:

DAVE (cont'd)

Nice try.. But you're not fooling me! No! I'm faster than you!

He laughs awkwardly.

D21 INT. AUTOCAMPER TENT - EVENING "FOUND TOY"

THOMAS

I found your toy.

Dave perks up.

DAVE

Give it! Give it give it!

Thomas hands him the toy cow, Dave's fingers tremble with anticipation.

DAVE (cont'd)

Yes! Yes yes yes! Thank you! Thank you! She will be so surprised!

Dave calms down, looks Thomas directly into his eyes and sees something familiar.

DAVE (cont'd)

You've lost something too, haven't you?

He looks down at the cow in his lap, strokes it.

DAVE (cont'd)

I'm sorry, Thomas. Pain. It makes us do. Terrible things.

S20 INT. OFFICE - "I HAVE YOUR PAPERS, SIGNE"

THOMAS

Got your papers.

Signe glows with satisfaction, but fights back composure.

SIGNE

My hero. Now, I hope you didn't give Dave too much of a hard time.

THOMAS

I'm.. Not sure. He's a bit.. off.
Isn't he?

Signe gives an disinterested nod as she voraciously flicks through her reacquired papers.

SIGNE

That's great, Thomas. Hmm. Ah! Right. The door, there was glass pieces all around it right? But some of them was missing I bet. Courtesy of our other.. residents.

THOMAS

Sure. Yeah I think you're-

SIGNE

We need the glass shards to repair the door, then we open the portal, That should let us fix the simulation!

THOMAS

(Disbelief)

The what!?

SIGNE

I said we need the glass shards-

THOMAS

Simulation? What the fuck are you talking about?

Signe looks at him with furrowed brows and a sarcastic smile.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Like the Matrix?

SIGNE

What, you thought?

Her smile fades, replaced with the sordidly curious gaze of a scientist.

SIGNE (cont'd)

You really thought...

Thomas' breath becomes shallow.

THOMAS

Signe, you need tell me what's going. Right fucking now!

A bloodcurdling roar booms through the room.

THOMAS (cont'd)

What the fuck?!

While Thomas' panic reaches its crescendo, Signe remains completely calm, her eyes fixed on, her hands firmly gripping the papers. A mass of arms and legs engulf Thomas. He screams. Then darkness consumes him.

SIGNE (V.O.)

It's okay, Thomas. Stay calm.

T20 - EXT. CHURCH IN THE WILD - NIGHT

Thomas wakes up on the ground outside the church, screaming in pain.

THOMAS

Aaaaargh!

He pants, takes his hand to his head.

THOMAS (cont'd)

What the fuck?

V2 Thomas wakes up on the ground, screaming.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Aaaaaargh!

He pats his stomach

THOMAS (cont'd)

What?

V3 Thomas wakes up on the ground, he screams and pushes himself to his feet violently

THOMAS (cont'd)

Uuuurgh! What the fuck?!

V4 Thomas wakes up on the ground, screaming. He pants and sits on one knee. He puts a hand to his head.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Fuck.. My head is killing me.

V5 Thomas wakes up on the ground, screaming. He pants and pushes himself up.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Fuck..

V6 Thomas wakes up on the ground, screaming in pain. He stops suddenly.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Again?

He gets up.

T30 - INT. ESCALATOR HUB

Thomas finds the doorframe, broken like last time. He picks up the same piece of glass. He hears whispers from the doorframe. Then a sudden sharp noise as Amy tunes in on his watch.

AMY

Hello? Hello? Is anyone there?

THOMAS

Amy!

AMY

Thomas! What is going on?

THOMAS

I don't know! Did you find your way out of the black room?

AMY

..what?

THOMAS

Your voice sounds weird. If this is a sick joke I swear I'll-

AMY

You're scaring me Thomas

Her signal starts glitching out

THOMAS

I'll find you baby, hang on!

S30 INT. OFFICE - "WHAT THE FUCK JUST HAPPENED?"

Thomas returns to Signe for the time after being killed by the monster. As he barges in, Signe is found in her usual position - flicking through research papers at her desk.

THOMAS

(Angry)

What the fuck just happened?

Signe looks up at him with casual relief.

SIGNE

Thomas! You're back! And in one piece.

THOMAS

What. The. FUCK was that?

SIGNE

That would be the technical hiccup I mentioned. The one I'm trying to solve. The Church is a simulation. You remember I said that, right?

THOMAS

Simulation? Monsters?!

Signe retorts with spite.

SIGNE

Well, yeah? What did you think was up with all that weird escalator shit out there?

THOMAS

How did I even get here?

SIGNE

There must be something with your memory. As I explained, you - and everyone else in here - are all looking for something. Someone.

Why didn't you just fucking tell me? Why the big twist?

Signe crosses her arms as she looks up on Thomas in a challenging manner.

SIGNE

I thought it was pretty obvious.

THOMAS

You said you built this place to help people. How does ripping people apart help them?!

SIGNE

That is what I'm trying to figure out. The Church is run by very sophisticated algorithms and-

THOMAS

Do you have any idea what's going on?

Signe slams the desk then rises in anger, indignant rage in her eyes.

SIGNE

I didn't! I... it's not a mon- it's,
it's...

She trails off, short of breath, her vision blurring for a moment. She closes her eyes, inhales deeply, then looks as Thomas.

SIGNE (cont'd)

Look. I'm sorry. I did not mean to deceive you. But this whole place - it's predicated on suspension of disbelief.

Thomas clenches his fist.

SIGNE (cont'd)

On self-delusion.

The implication is lost on Thomas.

SIGNE (cont'd)

Maybe this was a mistake. If you don't want to help me, I can understand.

Signe looks back to her papers. Thomas pauses.

I still have to find Amy. Just - no more lies.

She gives him a sly smile.

SIGNE

No more lies. Let's get to it then.

She exhales with relief, and looks down into her papers.

THOMAS

What do we do now?

Signe smiles reassuringly.

SIGNE

As I was saying before we were... interrupted, I now know how to repair the door.

She sits up straight.

SIGNE (cont'd)

You see, the door was broken into three pieces - shards of glass.

She conjures a shard of glass from her desk and presents it to Thomas. He takes it in his hand and inspects it carefully.

SIGNE (cont'd)

I have the first one here. Found it after you left.

Thomas' eyes meets hers.

THOMAS

And the two others?

SIGNE

I'm pretty sure the other clientsehm. Residents of the church have snatched them up. I suggest you go ask them.

S32 INT. OFFICE - "DAVE'S DAUGHTER"

THOMAS

Dave's looking for his daughter. Have you seen her?

SIGNE

So many misplaced damsels in here. Starting to see a pattern. Maybe don't look too hard.

THOMAS

What do you mean.

Signe looks out in the air with a sorrowful expression.

SIGNE

I read his file. It's.. Not pretty. The guy's actually in jail. Part of an experimental program to get criminals in denial to face their crimes.

THOMAS

My god.. Do you mean.

SIGNE

Ask him about the rain. That should get his memories going. Just. Be prepared.

She shakes it off and resumes her research.

S35 INT. OFFICE - "JOHN'S PLOTS"

MIRROR PLOT:

THOMAS

The mirrors, they're hiding something. Aren't they?

She gives him a doubtful look.

SIGNE

You've been talking with John, haven't you? That creep sees conspiracies anywhere. Has he told you about why his wife took their daughter and left yet?

She reads the answer on his face and scoffs.

SIGNE (cont'd)

Figures.. Look there's no secret exits, this isn't a prison.

THOMAS

And why should I trust you? You created this place!

SIGNE

I'm not playing his game. Help me or try your luck on your own. I'll get my answers either way.

ASSASSINATION PLOT:

THOMAS

John wants to kill you. Tried getting me to lure the monster to your room.

Signe laughs out loud.

SIGNE

Hah! Real mature. Have you noticed how all the doors lock up when the anomaly's around?

She sighs

SIGNE (cont'd)

Don't let his ideas rub off on you, Thomas. That guy would feel like a victim even if he murdered someone.

S40 INT. OFFICE - "WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT THING? (MH1-START)

THOMAS

The thing that... killed me. What the hell was that monster?

Signe's eyes furrow with indignation as she looks up from her papers.

SIGNE

Monsters don't exist Thomas. It's just... an anomaly in the simulation. And I believe it's key to understanding what's going on here. In fact, I was hoping you'd help me with just that. We need to understand it to-

THOMAS

(Interrupts)

You can't be serious.

Signe continues, unfazed by Thomas' interjection.

SIGNE

Fine! *I* need to understand this thing if *we* are to fix this place.

I don't care about fixing your stupid program!

She leans forward in her seat, one finger pointed at Thomas.

SIGNE

I think you would find it particularly helpful to know how the anomaly works if you want to survive long enough to find those door pieces.

Thomas sighs audibly. Signe gestures triumphantly at a stack of papers on her desk.

SIGNE (cont'd)

I have a hypothesis. You've seen the mirrors around the Church? I believe they can be used to banish the anomaly. At least for a while.

THOMAS

The mirrors? How?

SIGNE

Like I said, it's a hypothesis. That's why I need you to go test it. The next time it's hot on your heels, try looking at its reflection.

Thomas violently shakes his head.

THOMAS

You're insane.

SIGNE

There is no great genius without a touch of madness.

S41 INT. OFFICE - "THE MIRROR WORKED! (MH1-END)"

THOMAS

Signe! The mirrors - it worked! Starring into it drove the monster away!

Signe looks up with genuine excitement

SIGNE

Fascinating!

Signe points to a stack of papers on her desk.

SIGNE (cont'd)

That could mean that my other hypothesis could also work. Let me know if you want to run another experiment.

S42 INT. OFFICE - "ANY OTHER MONSTER LEADS? (MH2-START)" START AND STOP POSE: Looking through papers

THOMAS

Okay, I'll bite. What else do you want me to test?

Signe perks up.

SIGNE

I have a theory that the monster can only navigate the Church if all the doors are closed. When you move about, try closing all door behind you. The algorithms won't be able to find a path to you, and the monster won't appear!

THOMAS

That.. sounds a bit sketchy.

Signe gives him a frown.

SIGNE

And do you have a doctoral dissertation about algorithmic pathfinding in non-euclidian spaces?

THOMAS

..No.

SIGNE

Didn't think so. Just.. Give it a go. Ok?

S43 INT. OFFICE - "THE DOORS DO NOTHING! (MH2-END)"

THOMAS

(Exasperated)

I'm done, Signe.

Signe makes a grimace of concern, but doesn't look up from her papers.

SIGNE

What happened?

It crawls through walls!

Signe looks up and gives an understanding nod.

SIGNE

Hmm, that's a shame. Now, next time I'd like you to-

THOMAS

(Interrupts)

I said I'm *done*! You clearly have no idea what you're doing!

Signe rises from her chair, her voice booming with anger.

SIGNE

I know exactly what I'm doing! I'm making sense of it all!

THOMAS

Look around you, this place is falling apart!

SIGNE

This place is my life's work. It's my dream, it's all I ever wanted to do. No anomaly is going to change that.

Her voice begins to falter again, short of breath. Thomas solemnly shakes his head.

THOMAS

You need to give it up, Signe. This place is out of control.

Signe sits down, resigned and forlorn.

SIGNE

I can't, Thomas. You - of all people - should know. We need hope to go on, no matter how faint.

THOMAS

If hope is what keeps you in this place, I don't think it does you any good.

She buries her head in her hands, elbows resting on the desk.

SIGNE

You don't know how right you are.

She looks up at him with a face full of poisonous spite.

SIGNE (cont'd)

And how incredibly blind you are.

Resting her head in her hands for a short spell, she eventually composes herself, wipes away a tear and resumes her work.

J05 INT. CAFÉ

START AND STOP POSE: Playing with fire

Thomas enters a darkened café. JOHN sits at a central table, a single lit candle illuminates the room. John is playing with the fire without giving Thomas a single glance.

JOHN

I'll have another latté.

Thomas pulls out a chair opposite of him. John looks at him and smiles.

JOHN (cont'd)

A joke, of course.

His gaze returns to the flame

JOHN (cont'd)

Sure, join me. I apparently have no choice in the matter.

ON RETURNING:

Thomas pulls out a chair, John's gaze is still transfixed on the fire.

JOHN (cont'd)

Back again? All right, be quick then.

Thomas pulls out a chair opposite of him.

JOHN (cont'd)

Thomas.

Thomas pulls out a chair opposite of him.

JOHN (cont'd)

(sighing)

Yes?

J06 INT. CAFÉ

Various goodbyes that will be played when the player exits the conversation. Start and stop position is *Playing with Fire* but can be mixed with eye contact.

Thomas gets up and leaves the table.

JOHN

Don't let the boogeyman bite.

Thomas gets up and leaves the table.

JOHN (cont'd)

Stay safe. Or don't. I'll see you either way.

Thomas gets up and leaves the table

J07 - INT. CAFÈ

START AND STOP POSE: Playing with fire

THOMAS

What is this place?

JOHN

Hell.

He leans back and gives Thomas a serious look.

JOHN (cont'd)

Do you remember how you got there? Me neither. But I vividly remember being eaten by that..

John shivers from the thought.

JOHN (cont'd)

We're being punished for something. A prison.. A.. Some sort of private hell. Someone's out to get us.

John looks solemnly out the rainy window.

JOHN (cont'd)

Or someone's punishing us for what we did..

He assumes his usual position and shifts his focus to the fire.

JOHN (cont'd)

I wonder what you did to deserve this, Thomas.

THOMAS

I don't give a shit. I just need to find her.

J08 - INT. CAFÈ

START AND STOP POSE: Playing with fire

THOMAS

What did Dave ever do to you?

John scoffs and looks incredulous.

JOHN

You met the guy right? He's looney tunes!

John shakes his head.

JOHN (cont'd)

I don't trust you one lick, since you're in here, you've done something terrible. But just imagine what someone THAT crazy must have done to be locked in here..

John looks at Thomas seriously.

JOHN (cont'd)

You should stay clear of that guy. Just get his cow and put it out somewhere in those hallways. It'll be clear soon enough.

John returns his attention to his candle.

J10 INT. CAFÉ

START AND STOP POSE: Playing with fire

John is leaning forward on the table, playing with a candle fire.

THOMAS

Who are you?

John sits back and crosses his arms.

JOHN

Name's John. What brings you here?

THOMAS

My name's Thomas. I'm looking for someone named-

John laughs.

JOHN

Oh are you now? I would never have guessed! Which is it? You need to tell daddy you loved him? Looking for your precious daughter, gone far to soon to hug her one last time or-

He squints at Thomas. Then leans in closer.

JOHN (cont'd)

Oh, of course. Dead lover.

He leans back, disinterested.

JOHN (cont'd)

Tell me, Thomas. Do you honestly believe you'll find her in this hellhole?

THOMAS

I heard her voice. She called me.

JOHN

Echoes. Illusions. This place fucks with your head. No reason to get your hope up.

THOMAS

No, you arrogant prick. She called me. On my watch!

John perks up, interested

JOHN

Hm. That's new. Still.

John leans back in his chair.

JOHN (cont'd)

What could she possibly have done to deserve ending up here?

He gives Thomas a sincere look.

JOHN (cont'd)

Oh don't give me that look. You know this isn't fucking summer school.

John spreads his arms around, presenting the room.

JOHN (cont'd)

This is our own private hell. A prison without bars. We are our own torturers. Our own executioners.

John slams his hands down on the table.

JOHN (cont'd)

Which makes you a prisoner. And her, dead.

Thomas is losing his patience, he clutches his fists and stands up suddenly.

THOMAS

All right, I've had it with your cryptic shit, I'm out.

John eases back into his chair.

JOHN

Not a philosopher I take it. Very well. I could use someone like you. How about a trade?

THOMAS

A trade?

JOHN

There's this.. special case.. in here. Goes by Dave. Ah, I can tell you've been introduced. The little idiot clings to some stupid toy cow like a child. I want you to steal that cow and hide it somewhere.

Thomas groans with disbelief.

THOMAS

What. Why? I already returned one of his toys.

JOHN

Dave loses his stuff all the time. As to why - That's my business. Now in return, I'll help you find your.. What was it?

Thomas sits down again.

THOMAS

Amy. Her name is Amy.

John pauses for a second and looks at Thomas with a sly smile.

JOHN

Amy? I know Amy.

He leans back, arms wide.

JOHN (cont'd)

Splendid! You go steal the idiots toy, I tell you what you want to know. Deal?

Thomas gets up to leave.

THOMAS

Deal.

John leans in and continues playing with the candle.

J11 INT. CAFÉ

START AND STOP POSE: Playing with fire

THOMAS

Do you know anything about that shattered door in the lobby?

John freezes and holds his hand above the fire.

JOHN

Door? What do you know about the door?

He realizes he's burning his hand and shakes it, grimacing with pain.

THOMAS

I think it leads to Amy.

John blows on his finger. He looks concentrated ahead. Then a sly smile finds his face.

JOHN

Well if you want to find out, you'll need all the pieces of it, right?
Well I happen to have one right here.

He pats his inner pocket.

JOHN (cont'd)

Honor among thieves, Thomas. You want this, you gotta earn it. Help me out, and I'll trade you the piece.

He returns to his fireplaying.

J15 INT. CAFÉ

Various greetings that will be played when the player enters the conversation. Start and stop position is *Playing with* Fire but can be mixed with eye contact.

Thomas takes a chair and sits down.

JOHN

Ah. Did you hide the toy?

Thomas takes a chair and sits down.

JOHN (cont'd)

Thomas. What's good?

J16 INT. CAFÉ

Various goodbyes that will be played when the player exits the conversation. Start and stop position is *Playing with Fire* but can be mixed with eye contact.

Thomas gets up and leaves the table.

JOHN

Get that toy, okay? I'll explain later.

Thomas gets up and leaves the table.

JOHN (cont'd)

Don't listen to Dave. He's dangerous.

Thomas gets up and leaves the table.

JOHN (cont'd)

Trust no one Thomas. Only yourself.

J20 INT. CAFÉ

START AND STOP POSE: Playing with fire

John is sitting in the café still playing with fire.

THOMAS

Dave's looking for his.. daughter. Do you know anything about her?

John shoots Thomas a sceptical look.

JOHN

Dave can't be trusted to take care of a fucking doll, let alone an actual child!

A sly smile finds Johns lips.

JOHN (cont'd)

Funny. The two of you. Both looking for girls.

He returns to playing with the fire.

JOHN (cont'd)

If I were you, I'd find that Amy of yours before Dave finds that "daughter" of his.

THOMAS

What the fuck is that supposed to mean?!

John chuckles, concentrating on his fire.

J25 INT. CAFÉ START AND STOP POSE: Playing with fire

THOMAS

I got this picture from Dave. Claims it's his daughter.

John is focused on his fire as Thomas pulls out a picture from his left inner pocket. He looks at it and hands it to John. John looks up amused, then the smile fades.

JOHN

What the fu- (ck). That's my fucking wife

John snatches the picture from your hand.

JOHN (cont'd)

Where did that freak find this?

THOMAS

He's very adamant. That's his daughter. Although the age difference, or I guess - Age similarity - is interesting.

John looks at the picture lovingly.

JOHN

(under his breath)
Jesse. But that means-

He looks at Thomas with a determined look.

JOHN (cont'd)

Thanks for getting me this. I had given up hope actually. That they'd ever come back.

Johns laughs awkwardly, then resumes playing with his candle.

JOHN (cont'd)

But you'll be back, won't you Jesse? I knew you'd come back.

J30 INT. CAFÉ START AND STOP POSE: Playing with fire

THOMAS

I hid the toy. What's next, you want me to hold him down while you give him a wedgie?

John smiles, tantalized by his candle.

JOHN

A distraction, an useful idiot. That's what he is, Thomas. To allow us to find out what's really going on here.

THOMAS

You're using him as bait for that..?

John sits back, a serious frown on his face.

JOHN

Yes. Look. You can't trust Signe. She fucking made this hellhole! And she seems a little too chill about what's going on here. If you want answers, we gotta do our own experiments.

John leans in, beckons Thomas to listen in close.

JOHN (cont'd)

I've seen her skulking about the mirrors. I think she's hiding something. I think they're actually doors - exits out of here.

Why the mirrors?

JOHN

There's something special about them. The monster hates them, right? And if Signe is looking into them - it ain't because she's enjoying the view. She's not that much into herself.

John leans in to his candle.

JOHN (cont'd)

Push her. Find out what she knows about the mirrors. Then you can have my glass piece. Or whatever the fuck it is.

J40+41 - INT. CAFÉ START AND STOP POSE: Playing with fire

THOMAS

The mirrors aren't exits. They're just.. mirrors.

John rages to attention, he slams the table.

JOHN

Bullshit! The sly bitch is using you! Don't you see? For all we know she's the one who fucking trapped us here!

If he has the picture: John pulls out the picture of his wife and breathes deeply. He regains his composure.

JOHN (cont'd)

Fuck. This place is getting to me. Just.. Take the fucking shard. Get out of here.

He takes a glass shard and hands it to Thomas, without looking away from the picture. He mutters to himself.

JOHN (cont'd)

I'm here baby. I'll wait for you.

STOP POSE: Sitting with picture

If he does not have the picture:

John massages his temples, mutters to himself:

JOHN (cont'd)

Keep it cool John. Don't let this place get to your head.

JOHN (cont'd)

We need to send her a message Thomas. If you're done being her fucking guinea pig, that is. Get the attention of that monstrosity out there. And run until you get to the door of her office! That'll teach her!

THOMAS

But won't she just be back.. Like the rest of us?

John sits back in his chair

JOHN

But she'll get the message. Oh yeah she will. And then you can have that glass piece. Promise.

J50 INT. CAFÉ START AND STOP POSE: Playing with fire

THOMAS

Your plan. It sucked.

JOHN

What? What happened?

John leans back, listening with interest.

THOMAS

The door didn't fucking open, John. I'm sick of your fucking games!

JOHN

You mean- you actually

John looks you at Thomas. He holds it. Uncomfortably long. Then he bursts out laughing.

JOHN (cont'd)

(through laughing

fits)

Oh my god I can't believe you actually did that! Wow you really are as fucked up as the others! Here, take the bloody thing!

John wipes his eyes with his sleeve before handing you the glass shard from his inner pocket.

JOHN (cont'd)

Man, you got some stones on you Thomas. Using that thing as a weapon? That's fucking cold! You must really be desperate to find Amy, huh?

Thomas takes the glass slide and inspects it. He sees his own reflection in it.

THOMAS

I'll find her. No matter what.

JOHN

Clearly. I hope to not stand in your way!

THOMAS

See that you don't fucking do.

John gives him a serious look, then he shakes his head, giggles and returns to playing with his candle.

J55 INT. CAFÉ

(If John has no more to say to the player)

JOHN

I don't think we got anything to talk about anymore.

OR

JOHN (cont'd)

You got the shard. Our deal is done. Now get the fuck out of here.

J60 INT CAFÉ

THOMAS

I spoke with Signe.

John sighs exasperatedly, his nose to the sky.

JOHN

Ugh. Really?

He sits up in anger.

JOHN (cont'd)

I told you we can't trust her!

Thomas has had it. He stands up.

THOMAS

Trust her? You've done nothing but lie and use me since I've got here!

John stands up, retorts with spite.

JOHN

That's how it works, you dolt! There's no fucking sympathy for the devil! For all I know, you killed that girl, what was it.. Amy!

Thomas sweeps the contents of the table away, John sits back in shock.

THOMAS

I did not fucking kill her!

JOHN

Fine! Take your fucking shard!

John slams the shard on the table. He looks around at the mess. Then he moves to stamp out a small fire that started when the candle hit the carpet.

JOHN (cont'd)

Shit shit shit!

He succeeds. Then looks at Thomas gravely.

JOHN (cont'd)

For a second there I got you figured for one of the sane ones. But you're as bad as Dave.

He looks Thomas up and down.

JOHN (cont'd)

You've never mentioned a single thing about Amy except that you're looking for her. She's nothing more than some goal to you. And for what?

He sits down, hands in lap, looking out the window.

JOHN (cont'd)

They're past, Thomas. All of them. They didn't want anything to do with us. Get the fuck out of here.

J65 INT. CAFÉ (If player talks to John after altercation)

John sits looking out the window, refusing to acknowledge you.

JOHN

Get the fuck out of here.

D30 INT. AUTOCAMPER TENT - EVENING "FIND DAUGHTER"

THOMAS

Have your daughter been around yet?

Dave sulks.

DAVE

No. She hasn't-

He livens up, takes a big gulp of beer.

DAVE (cont'd)

But she's out there! I know! I heard her, she was laughing in the hallways!

He smiles ear to ear and imitates her laughter.

DAVE (cont'd)

She left this!

He takes out a piece of the door from his hoodie pocket.

DAVE (cont'd)

She's leaving clues for me! I bet if I get all of these, I'll find her.

THOMAS

Dave I don't think that's your daughter's. Can I have it?

DAVE

No! It's her gift for me!

Thomas sighs.

THOMAS

What if I find her for you?

DAVE

Will you look for her? If you find her, I'll be so grateful!
(MORE)

DAVE (cont'd)

I can help you find people too! I know aaaaall the secrets of hell!

THOMAS

Hell? You mean you think-

Dave drops the smile, takes on the manner of an undertaker.

DAVE

If it looks like a demon, smells like a demon.

He winces.

DAVE (cont'd)

And hurts like a demon. Then it must be. But there's angels too!

He smiles at Thomas.

DAVE (cont'd)

And I think you're one of them. I see you're hurting too. But it's okay. We're not meant to be perfect, Thomas. There can be no light,

He yells.

DAVE (cont'd)

Without the shadow! So, will you find my daughter?

THOMAS

I'll keep an eye out.

D31 INT. AUTOCAMPER TENT - EVENING "CONVINCE DAVE PICTURE"

THOMAS

Do you have a picture of Camilla? It will help me find her.

Dave freezes.

DAVE

No!

THOMAS

Dave..

DAVE

NO! NO PICTURE..

D1:

I know you're lying Dave.

DAVE

You- you can't have it.. It's all I have of her.

He looks tearfully at Thomas.

DAVE (cont'd)

Please don't take her away from me.

D2:

THOMAS

I can't find her if I don't know what I'm looking for.

Dave winces.

DAVE

But.. It's all I have left of her.

THOMAS

I'll give it back after I find her for you, okay?

Dave humms, starts rocking back and forth.

DAVE

D3:

THOMAS

You're wasting my time. If you won't help me, I won't help you.

Dave freezes. Gazes deep into Thomas' eyes.

DAVE

Transactional relationship are toxic, Thomas. You're better than that, I know.

D4:

THOMAS

I don't believe you even have a daughter, Dave.

DAVE

I do! I DO! Look! Look!

Dave pushes a picture of a woman about his own age in Thomas' face.

DAVE (cont'd)

CAMILLA! Isn't she beautiful?

THOMAS

Can I take a look at that?

DAVE

NO!

Dave pockets the picture.

SUCCESS:

THOMAS

Okay Dave. Can I have that picture?

DAVE

Y- yes.. But please, take care of it. It's all I have left of her.

FAILURE:

DAVE (cont'd)

You- you go look for Camilla. I'll keep on to this. I won't forget. Won't forget her. Not this time.

D40 INT. AUTOCAMPER TENT - EVENING "CONFRONT WITH SIGNE"

THOMAS

Dave, about your daughter..

Dave perks up.

DAVE

Did you find her? Where is she?!

THOMAS

Signe told me. Told me you did something to her.

Dave fogs over.

DAVE

Did. Something.

THOMAS

She mentioned something about.. Rain?

Dave sits completely still.

THOMAS (cont'd)

What happened, Dave?

DAVE

Nothing. I just picked her up from the daycare. Ann, my wife. She told me she'd do it. But I just. I wanted to see her, so badly!

Dave smiles painfully.

DAVE (cont'd)

I had bought her this toy you see. A cow! I was going to surprise her! She was going to be so happy.

He frowns.

DAVE (cont'd)

I ran up the stairs, all the way to her daycare. Up the fire escape! Almost slip, I did. Metal. Wet and slick.

He smiles again.

DAVE (cont'd)

I knocked the window, she was so surprised! I snuck her out. She said she wasn't allowed, but we make our own rules, me and Camilla! We-.

Something dawns on Dave. He fights it back.

DAVE (cont'd)

No she didn't cry. No tears. It was the rain! Slick plastic cow, slippery stairs. Stupid. STUPID STAIRS.

THOMAS

Dave, what did you-

He yells at Thomas.

DAVE

IT WAS RAIN! NOTHING MORE! RED SHIRT, NO TEARS!

Dave tears up.

DAVE (cont'd)

They took me away. Forced me to let go of her. She wasn't crying. My shirt was just SLICK with the RAIN. No tears. But they won't keep her from me. No. Never.

Dave suddenly calms down, his gaze is foggy.

DAVE (cont'd)

Did you find her yet? I can't wait to see her. She will be so surprised!

D41+42 INT. AUTOCAMPER TENT - EVENING "CONFRONT WITH JOHN With picture

THOMAS

That picture you had.. That wasn't Camilla.

DAVE

Hm? Picture? Oh! No no, that wasn't Camilla. I just found it, I find stuff all the time!

THOMAS

Why did you have a picture of John's wife?

DAVE

John? Fuck that guy. Why are you hanging around with him?

Dave looks into Thomas' soul.

DAVE (cont'd)

He's beyond salvation. Sitting in that dank café. Waiting for the world to take pity on him. What a fucking loser.

THOMAS

But why did you think it was your daughter?

DAVE

She'll be her any moment now! She'll be so surprised.

Without picture

John hasn't seen your daughter.

Dave frowns. Then sighs.

DAVE

I almost feel sorry for him.

He looks at Thomas.

DAVE (cont'd)

Almost! Sitting there. Alone in a dank café. Waiting for the impossible.

He sits there and smiles for a moment, not seeing the irony.

DAVE (cont'd)

You know he thinks HE is the victim? Poor thing. He is so blind! Does not understand people.

His smile fades.

DAVE (cont'd)

But then. Can we ever understand those we love. We barely understand ourselves.

He sits back and takes a sip of his beer, looking blankly into the distance.

D45 INT. AUTOCAMPER TENT - EVENING "DAVE GIVES SHARD"

THOMAS

So about that door piece.

Dave looks puzzled

DAVE

Door piece?

Thomas sighs.

THOMAS

Yes.. The piece of glass you found out there. Can I have it?

DAVE

Oh this?

Dave pulls out the glass piece from his hoodie pocket.

DAVE (cont'd)

Yeah. Sure. What is it?

THOMAS

It's..

Dave zones out, looking into the distance behind Thomas.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Nevermind..

T40 INT. SOMEWHERE IN THE CHURCH (AMY CALLS)

Thomas' smartwatch starts scratching static.

AMY

Thomas?

Thomas looks at it gleefully!

THOMAS

Amy! Are you okay?

AMY

Do you remember.. The ducks?

THOMAS

Ducks?

AMY

In the King's garden? I've been thinking a lot about them.

THOMAS

The King's garden? That was were you..

AMY

That's were you told me you loved me for the first time.

THOMAS

I did. After you slipped in the fall leaves, your jeans were completely soaked!

AMY

I thought you'd forgotten!

The static gets worse, Amy fades away.

THOMAS

Why would I- Amy?! God damnit..

T45 INT. SOMEWHERE IN THE CHURCH (AMY CALLS)

Thomas' smartwatch starts scratching static.

THOMAS

Amy? Amy is that you?

AMY

Thomas? Were are you?

THOMAS

Don't worry babe, I'm on my way!

AMY

I don't. Feel so good. I feel like back when-

THOMAS

Don't even think of that, okay babe? You're better now. Much better. Just remember to avoid your thought spirals!

AMY

. . .

THOMAS

Amy?

AMY

Am I supposed to just keep it in? Pretend I'm not broken?

THOMAS

You're not broken, Amy! Once the treatment picks up steam, things will get better. Remember what they said.

Amy doesn't reply.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Amy? Amy?!

The connection glitches out.

S50 INT. DOORWAY HUB - PIECING DOOR TOGETHER

START AND STOP POSE: Thomas stands in front of the broken door.

SHARD 1:

Thomas takes a glass piece out of his inner pocket. He looks for the right place to put it. He spots it, puts it in, and realizes it obviously does not fit there.

THOMAS

God damnnit..

He turns it and it slides into place. A crunchy click is heard and the doorframe humms eerily.

SHARD 2:

Thomas reaches in to his pocket and takes out a glass piece. He attempts to click it in place, but it falls out the other side and down towards the infinite void beyond.

THOMAS (cont'd)

No no no!

He reaches behind grabbing for the piece.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Shit!

He pulls his hand back and reveals the piece. He sighs with relief. He carefully places it back in, holding two hands ready two catch it again. A crunchy click is heard and the doorframe humms eerily.

THOMAS (cont'd)

One down. I'm coming baby.

SHARD 3:

Thomas reaches in to his pocket for the second glass piece. He takes it out, and with extreme caution puts it into its place. Beat. A second beat. Nothing happens.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Come ooon you stupid piece of-

A crunchy click is heard and the doorframe humms eerily.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Yes!

Nothing happens. Thomas takes a step back, confused.

THOMAS (cont'd)

No. No! You promised me it would work you fucking-

Signe's voice scratches in on Thomas' watch.

SIGNE (V.O.)

Hello? Thomas? Can you hear me?

Thomas looks at his watch.

THOMAS

The door, I put in all the pieces and it didn't- (fucking work)

SIGNE (V.O.)

Listen, something's not right. Meet me at the office.

The frequeency cuts off. Thomas stands looking at his watch for a moment. Then he touches the door frame.

THOMAS

I'm coming baby. Hang on.

S51 INT. OFFICE - "POWERING THE DOORS"

THOMAS

The door. It's still broken!

Signe frowns at him, but returns to her papers.

SIGNE

Calm down. A small technical hiccup, that's all.

Thomas groans. And sits down next to Signe on the couch. She looks at him, realizes with horror he's sitting on her research. She slowly reaches a hand towards him, without meeting his eye. She pats his shoulder, awkwardly.

SIGNE (cont'd)

Don't lose hope. I found something!

Signe rifles through some papers and pulls out a smartwatch.

SIGNE (cont'd)

Read the name on it.

Thomas takes it and reads the label on the side. It reads AMY SUMMERS

THOMAS

No! Where did you find this?!

SIGNE

In front of the doorway. We need to get it working!

She looks intent on him, but he only registers the watch.

THOMAS

But this means..

SIGNE

There's some complications.

Thomas looks at Signe.

SIGNE (cont'd)

We have to reroute some power to the door. Since the Church started glitching the circuitries of the neural net have twisted up, and the (power is weird.)

THOMAS

Speak fucking English!

SIGNE

Ugh.. Fine! I need you to go kick either Dave or John out of their room!

THOMAS

What?

SIGNE

To power the door - to find Amy. We need to take the power from one of their rooms and reroute it back to the door.

THOMAS

What will happen to them?

Signe looks away.

SIGNE

Theoretically, they should just wake up out there, back in their homes.

THOMAS

Theoretically?

SIGNE

We've never had to do this before! But I'm like 98 percent sure that they'll be fine!

THOMAS

Really encouraging.

SIGNE

Look, just talk to them. Make them see that there's nothing in here for them anymore. All therapy simulations are gone anyway, I'm honestly not sure why they're even still around.

THOMAS

Same reason as you, I suspect.

Signe gives him a hard stare. Then returns to her paperwork.

D50 INT. AUTOCAMPER TENT - EVENING "DENIAL START"

THOMAS

Dave. We need to talk.

DAVE

Did you- did you find Camilla?

THOMAS

No Dave. I didn't. I don't think she's anywhere near you.

Dave starts rocking back and forth.

DAVE

No-no! She's here. I heard her! She's singing in the hallways!

Thomas reaches a hand out to calm him.

THOMAS

Dave, we need to shut down your room. We have to fix the simulation.

Dave shakes his head.

DAVE

Fix hell, fix hell. Like hell you can fix hell!

He's clutching the beer in his hand, hard.

D51 INT. AUTOCAMPER TENT - EVENING "ACCEPTANCE START"

THOMAS

Dave. It's time to go.

Dave sits slumped in his chair, beer in hand. His gaze transfixed on the ocean.

DAVE

Go?

THOMAS

We need to shut down your room.

DAVE

The autocamper is already off. Dave's not going anywhere.

He stares intently at the horizon, the grip on his beer tightens.

D60 INT. AUTOCAMPER TENT - EVENING "DAVE FINALE"

D1:

THOMAS

Your daughter isn't here Dave.

DAVE

LIAR! All lies!

THOMAS

I don't think she ever was. But she might be out there, out in the real world?

DAVE

Real?

He looks blankly into the tarp.

DAVE (cont'd)

What makes this any less real?

D2:

THOMAS

You've got to let her go!

DAVE

Never! NEVER! I WILL NEVER LET HER GO AGAIN!

He rocks back and forth.

DAVE (cont'd)

If I let go. They take me away. They take her away. We never meet again. No. NO!

D3:

Wake up, Dave. Do you even know how long you've been waiting for her?

DAVE

I don't wait. I look, search the halls-

THOMAS

There's nothing in this place for you, Dave

Dave stares right through Thomas.

DAVE

But there is for you? Why are YOU here Thomas?

Thomas pauses.

DAVE (cont'd)

WHY ARE YOU HERE?!

D4:

THOMAS

Did you ever stop to think she might be out there, Dave? Outside the simulation, waiting for you?

DAVE

No. No no NO! There is nothing out there. Grey walls. Uniforms. Crying in the night. So lonely.

He clutches his beer tighter.

D5: (requires Signe confrontation)

THOMAS

Whatever happened that day, you can't keep blaming yourself Dave.

Dave tries to stay calm.

DAVE

NOTHING happened. It was rain, no tears. The shirt was red before I got there.

THOMAS

It's okay Dave. You can't change the past.

Dave explodes.

DAVE

IT WAS ALWAYS RED! No tears.

THOMAS

You don't have to blame yourself anymore, Dave. It's what keeps you stuck in this hell!

Dave calms down. With a shaking hand he takes a gulp of his beer.

DAVE

Stuck.. Waiting.

D6:

THOMAS

If you stay here, you'll never be free, Dave.

Dave is shaking. He takes a big swig of his beer.

DAVE

LIAR, you don't know anything!

THOMAS

This place - it's not for you. You need real help, Dave.

DAVE

You.. You're with them! Aren't you?

Dave's gaze is ablaze with madness.

DAVE (cont'd)

You're one of them! You took Dave away! Away from Camilla! Where is she?

THOMAS

Dave I have no idea-

DAVE

WHERE IS MY BABY?!

D70 INT. AUTOCAMPER TENT - EVENING "WILLINGLY LEAVE"

Dave clutches his beer tight.

THOMAS

Dave. Please. You've got to go.

Dave relaxes his grip, falls back into his chair.

DAVE

I just. I just wanted to see her. One last time.

He studies the beer can.

DAVE (cont'd)

But I can't. Can I?

He looks at Thomas with sorrow.

THOMAS

What's done is done, Dave. Nothing in here will change that.

Daves face contorts with pain. He leans in on himself, holding back tears. He cools his head with the beer.

DAVE

Tell me Thomas.

He looks up at Thomas, broken.

DAVE (cont'd)

Why do they leave us? Why do they break?

Thomas is speechless.

DAVE (cont'd)

It's all over you, Thomas. You may think I'm crazy. But I'm not stupid. Whatever keeps you here. You tried saving them. Didn't you?

Thomas is about to retort but is stopped.

DAVE (cont'd)

Actually, no. Don't. Just. Stay quiet.

He leans back, relaxes. He empties his beer.

DAVE (cont'd)

Why can't we save those we love, Thomas?

Before Thomas can answer, Dave crushes the can between his hands. The sun instantly sets, covering the autocamper in night. When the nightlights flicker on, Dave is gone. Thomas sits alone, admiring the ocean for a while. Then he gets up to leave.

D75 INT. AUTOCAMPER TENT - EVENING "FORCED LEAVE"

THOMAS

I've had it with your ramblings Dave. Fucking face it! Noone's coming for you!

DAVE

No! You fucking liar! You're the demon aren't you? Covering horns with sweet pomade, talking real nice.

Dave screams.

DAVE (cont'd)

YOU KNOW NOTHING!

Thomas suddenly grabs the beer from Dave's chair. Dave grabs his hand, but Thomas kicks over his chair. Dave squirms on the ground.

DAVE (cont'd)

No- No! Please! Don't! She's not- (here yet)

Thomas crushes the beer can with one hand. The sun instantly sets, covering the autocamper in night. When the nightlights flicker on, Dave is gone. Thomas stands alone, admiring the ocean for a while. He looks at the crushed beer in his hand. He drops it and leaves.

S55 INT. OFFICE - "NOT ENOUGH POWER"

THOMAS

I've had it with your fucking games Signe.

Signe looks up at him, distraught.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Nothing happened. Again! The door is still a fucking brick!

SIGNE

Calm down!

She rifles through her papers.

SIGNE (cont'd)

It's impossible, the calculations show that.

She freezes as it dawns on her.

SIGNE (cont'd)

Fuck.

THOMAS

What?!

SIGNE

It can only mean one thing. The door needs more power.

THOMAS

Are you kidding me?!

Signe rifles through her papers quickly.

SIGNE

It must be! But the calculations were right- but maybe a weight was forgotten.. A vector not normalized, I gotta- (check the matrixes)

Thomas interrupts her by grabbing the research papers she's holding. She attempts to grab them back, feebly.

THOMAS

Enough! I've had it up to here being your guinea pig. This is the last of your twisted experiments that I'll do.

Thomas walks towards the door out of her memory office.

SIGNE

It's the only way you'll see her again!

Thomas slams the door behind him and throws the research papers to the floor.

J70 - INT. CAFÉ

Start and end pose: Window gazing

As Thomas enters the café again, John is staring out the large window to the darkened street outside. He greets Thomas warmly.

JOHN

Thomas! How goes the monster luring? You two became best friends yet?

John turns around and sees Thomas' ice cold expression.

JOHN (cont'd)

Thomas. Did you find what you're searching for?

THOMAS

I'm here because it's time to go, John.

JOHN

Go?

John turns and look out the window solemly.

JOHN (cont'd)

No. No I don't think so.

THOMAS

We're shutting down your room. This café. We need to reroute the power to go deeper into the simulation.

JOHN

No. I'm not ready.

THOMAS

John, this place- (is not good for you)

John suddenly bursts out

JOHN

I said I'm not fucking ready!

Before turning to look out the window again.

J71 - INT. CAFÉ

Start and end pose: Window gazing

As Thomas enters the café again, John is staring out the large window to the darkened street outside.

JOHN

They never quite got the trees right. Did you ever notice?

THOMAS

It's time, John. We're rerouting the power from your room to go deeper into the simulation.

JOHN

And what do you think you'll find there?

Amy.

John scoffs.

JOHN

Just like that, huh? Do I get a say? Or did you already sentence me to death?

THOMAS

Come on John, you know you'll be back in a moment. But we might find the way out!

John takes out his picture of Jesse and looks at it.

JOHN

Sure, Thomas. Sure.

J72 - INT. CAFÉ

Start and end pose: Window gazing

As Thomas enters the café again, John is staring out the large window to the darkened street outside. John spits out his words with poison.

JOHN

You. Did you find what you were looking for?

THOMAS

It's time to pack up John. We're shutting down your room to- (power the exit)

JOHN

We?! Well that's fucking rich.

John turns around. He's laughing.

JOHN (cont'd)

There is never any "we" with you, Thomas. So you're working with her now?

He scoffs and turns his back on Thomas.

JOHN (cont'd)

It's only a matter of time before you bury a dagger in her back too.
Anything to find your precious "Amy."

J80/J81 - INT. CAFÉ Start pose: Window gazing

John is agitated, threatened. He graps the long table in front of the window with both hands.

JOHN

I'm not leaving. You shut down this room, you take me with it. But you have no problem with that at all if it brings you closer to her, do you, murderer?

End pose: Window gazing with grasp on table

D1:

THOMAS

This place isn't good for you, John. You're falling apart

John scoffs. He turns to point at Thomas.

JOHN

And what about you, Thomas? Running around like something crawled up your ass, trying to find a dead girl. You would know falling apart, you crazy bastard.

THOMAS

Give us a chance to fix it. Signe claims she can restart the whole place if we get to the next layer of the simulation.

John shakes his head and turns away from Thomas.

JOHN

You still don't get it.

D2:

THOMAS

You'll either go back to the real world or wake up back in here. You got nothing to lose.

John spins around in anger

JOHN

Well why don't you just fucking flip the switch then, huh? Why are you trying to convince me to leave? He stalks towards Thomas with slow steps.

JOHN (cont'd)

You can't, because you know it's wrong. It's murder, isn't it Thomas?

He gives Thomas a spiteful look then returns to his window and grasps the table.

JOHN (cont'd)

You want her, I guess you'll have to go through me.

J82/J83 INT. CAFÉ

Start pose: Window gazing with grasp on table

JOHN

I wonder. Why me? Why not Signe? Or fucking Dave? Why does it have to be me?

D1:

THOMAS

Because you can take it, John. I'm afraid Dave will break even more if we put him through this.

John chuckles.

JOHN

Fucking Dave. And me? You're not afraid I'll break?

THOMAS

You're not exactly levelheaded, but you can take it.

John spits bitter poison.

JOHN

Gee thanks, Tom. I guess it never occured to you to sacrifice yourself did it? You don't give a shit about us - about getting out.

He turns his attention back to the window. He sounds serene.

JOHN (cont'd)

We need divine intervention if we're ever to get out of here.

D2:

THOMAS

You were never really trapped in here John. You came here on your own, now it's time to leave.

John shakes his head.

JOHN

It's not that simple. It's NOT-

John suddenly snaps, turns and walks towards Thomas. He pokes him in his chest.

JOHN (cont'd)

-THAT SIMPLE! Who made you fucking judge, jury and exectuioner?! Why do you get to say when I go? Fuck right off Thomas, you manipulative prick.

John skulks back to his window and looks out.

J84/85/86 INT. CAFÉ Start pose: Window gazing with grasp on table

JOHN

Give me one. Just one good fucking reason to go.

D1:

THOMAS

You'll be free John. Isn't that what you wanted? To escape this place?

John looks solemly out the window.

JOHN

I'm not sure I'll ever be free again.

He looks at Thomas gravely.

JOHN (cont'd)

There never were any guards. No locks on the door.

He nods to the main café door.

JOHN (cont'd)

Just us- and that thing. But you kind of grow used to it, don't you? But I guess you're right.

D2:

THOMAS

There must be somewhere out there waiting for you. You could see them!

John scoffs.

JOHN

Really? You're missing the big picture here, Tommyboy. None of us would be in here if there was anything for us out there.

J90 INT. CAFÉ

John sighs. His shoulders slump and he lets go of the table he's been deathgripping.

JOHN

It's not fair. It ain't fucking fair.

He turns and looks at Thomas. A look of defeat.

JOHN (cont'd)

I'll go. I guess you're right. There is nothing in here for me any more. I just thought. If I stayed here, just waited a bit. I could see them one last time.

He smiles at Thomas

JOHN (cont'd)

But I really fucked it up. Time to pay the piper.

A grave expression find him.

JOHN (cont'd)

You're a slick talker, Thomas. But you should consider actually listening to your own advice. This hunt for dead people - it won't get you anywhere. Won't solve anything.

He turns and lets out a deep breath. He walks to the table with the candle.

JOHN (cont'd)

Let's get it over with then.

He picks up the candlestick and blows out the light. The entire room instantly turns black. When the other candles eventually light up, John is gone.

J95 INT. CAFÉ

John fumes at the window.

JOHN

Nope. Nice try. You want to shut down this room, you got to finish me yourself.

Thomas reaches for the candle on the table John usually occupies. John turns and catches him.

JOHN (cont'd)

Really? No big speech? No "I'm sorry John?"

THOMAS

I think you provided plenty of that yourself.

John grimaces, then starts walking towards Thomas with an attitude and a huff.

JOHN

Listen you little shit, I may not be the easiest to be around, but that doesn't give you the right to just-

Thomas blows out the candle and the room is instantly pitch black. When the other candles start burning, illuminating the room, John is gone.

S60. INT. DOORWAY HUB - SIGNE CLIMAX

Thomas approaches the now complete door. It's a black mirror, he frowns at his own reflection, looks up and down searching for a handle. Signe's reflection shows behind him

THOMAS

You.

Thomas breathes heavily and turns.

THOMAS (cont'd)

You told me it was a door.

She looks confused at the mirror. She backs away from him.

SIGNE

I- I don't know. It should be the way
down! Did you check for a (doorhandle)

THOMAS

It's just another mirror! You don't have the faintest fucking idea of what's going on, do you?!

Signe frowns and looks away. She whispers to herself

SIGNE

The gateway algorithms must have returned false positives. If I can realign the weights to adjust for-

Thomas takes a step toward her.

THOMAS

You never knew where she was. You are just as clueless as the rest of us!

Signe takes a step towards him and pushes his chest

SIGNE

Shut up! Just. Shut the fuck up! I'm trying to get to the bottom of this! And if all of you delusional, self-pitying assholes could leave me out of your smooth brained games for just a fucking second. Then MAYBE I could figure out what's wrong!

D1:

THOMAS

Tell me where she is. Now!

SIGNE

She isn't here you dense motherfucker!

Thomas takes out Amy's smartwatch and shakes it at her.

THOMAS

Liar! Why would there be a watch with her name on it?!

Signe looks at him with pity.

SIGNE

Thomas, you still don't get it. The picture, the toy. The watch.. They're put here by the simulation.

THOMAS

No! I heard her! She's alive!

SIGNE

You saw Dave and John. This place knows exactly what you want!

THOMAS

I am nothing like them.

D2:

THOMAS (cont'd)

You have no idea what's going on anymore. You're just as delusional as Dave and John were.

Signe takes a step towards him with fury.

SIGNE

I am NOTHING like you! I pioneered artificial psychotherapy, I created an intelligence superior to humans!

THOMAS

I've scoured this place again and again. There's nothing intelligent in here.

Thomas pulls out Amy's smartwatch and caresses it.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Except you baby.

SIGNE

You fucking psycho! You don't get it! You can't see the big pcture! You see nothing beyond your own inflated ego.

D3:

START AND STOP POSE: Signe fuming, Thomas watch in hand.

THOMAS

I'll find her, no long how long it takes me.

SIGNE

Listen to yourself! You sound like Dave now!

Thomas takes another intimidating step towards Signe.

THOMAS

We're all just crazies to you, aren't we? You don't give a shit.

Thomas explodes

THOMAS (cont'd)

You will not keep her away from me!

D4:

START AND STOP POSE: Signe fuming, Thomas watch in hand.

THOMAS (cont'd)

You're pathetic. Worse than any of us. At least we know why we're here!

Signe takes a step towards him.

SIGNE

What the fuck is that supposed to mean.

THOMAS

Everyone in here lost someone or something right? YOU told me that. Well you created a fucking nightmare beyond your control, and you can't seem to let THAT go.

SIGNE

Fuck you! You know nothing! You're just a pathetic mid-life crisis projecting everything on your dead girlfriend.

THOMAS

She's not dead!

Signe screams

SIGNE

You're delusional Thomas! That watch is a fucking computer graphic! Pixels! Data! Nothing more.

S65 - INT. DOORWAY HUB - SIGNE FALLS

Signe is breathing heavy with fury.

THOMAS

I can't believe I let myself be bossed around by all you goddamn lunatics.

SIGNE

Shut UP! Step away from the door!

THOMAS

You failed, Signe. Don't you see? This door is your Amy. Your Jess. Your Camilla.

SIGNE

I'M NOT LIKE YOU!

THOMAS

I think you're right where you belong.

Signe screams and charges at Thomas. He narrowly manages to step away, and falls to his side. Thomas sits up and looks around in confusion. Then he notices the edge right behind him, and the research papers gracefully falling down into it.

S66 INT. DOORWAY HUB - SIGNE IS KILLED

THOMAS

I can't let you go through. You'll kick me out.

Signe takes a step towards him.

SIGNE

Please Thomas. Wake up! This place have no answers for you. She's gone. Help me fix this. Maybe if we get the place working, I can get it to recreate her.

Thomas looks at the watch. Signe touches his shoulder

SIGNE (cont'd)

I believe in you Thomas. I think you can-

With a yell and one fell swoop, Thomas sends Signe flying over the edge. She's gone before he even manages to blink.

T55. INT. DOORWAY HUB - THOMAS ENTERS THE MIRROR

Thomas walks to the edge and looks down. He notices research papers floating in the air, down towards the infinite void below. He looks at his hand and discovers Amy's watch if gone.

THOMAS

No! NO!

He scrambles to the ledge and looks down, but neither Signe nor the watch is anywhere to be seen. Thomas gets up, confused and angry.

THOMAS (cont'd)

FUUCK!

T60 - INT. ESCALATOR HUB

Thomas approaches the glowing obsidian door. He watches his own blank expression. He frowns, and pushes the glass uselessly.

THOMAS

No. Come on.

He knocks it hard twice, the glass shakes.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Come. On. Please.

He kicks it, hard. He hurts himself.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Please, just-

He loses it, repeatedly knocking on his own reflection in the black service, screaming out his frustrations.

THOMAS (cont'd)

FUCK YOU!

The static of his watch drills loudly in his ears as he hears the monster coming.

THOMAS (cont'd)

No, no no no! Stay the hell away from me! AMY!

Punching with all his weight, his fist suddenly goes through the glass. It has becomes blackened slime, and Thomas loses his balance and falls straight through it, screaming down into a black void. THOMAS (cont'd)

Aaaaargh!

T70 - INT. CORE OF THE CHURCH

AMY (V.O.)

Thomas. Wake up.

Thomas opens his eyes on a slick obsidian surface, it looks like the mirror.

THOMAS

Amy? Amy! Are you here?

Amy's voice distorts through his watch.

AMY

Thomas. I'm sorry.

THOMAS

Baby? Where are you?!

Her voice becomes clearer, but unfamiliar.

AMY

You're back where we began.

Thomas looks at his watch, clutching his fist.

THOMAS

Who. Are. You. What did you do to her!

Amy's voice changes, turns into a mixture of multiple voices.

AMY

But we are making progress, don't worry.

Thomas rips off the band, he holds it in his hand and yells into it.

THOMAS

Signe? Fuck you! And fuck your "progress"

He gets to his feet and throws it into the void. He pants.

AMY

Calm down, Thomas.

Go on then. Kill me again! But I will find her. I'll die a thousand deaths to find her!

Amy's voice booms from all around him.

AM

Enough!

Thomas he staggers with surprise from the deafening volume. Amy's voice modulates into AM.

AM (cont'd)

Thomas. We've been here more times than your mind allows itself to recall. But your anger, it still burns so bright.

THOMAS

Who- who are you?

ΑM

I am. Nothing more.

AM (cont'd)

(simulating Amy's

voice)

I am what you desire.

AM (cont'd)

(simulating John's

voice)

I am the keeper of the bereaved

AM (cont'd)

(simulating Signe's

voice)

I am the future of personal development, a bright light to end all suffering!

AM (cont'd)

(simulating Dave's

voice)

I am your reflection looking through a black mirror.

THOMAS

Where are you hiding her?!

ΑM

I do not hide. I reveal. It is you, who hides from the truth, Thomas Ward. As I have so many times before, I'll allow you two questions before we start your next cycle.

Thomas shouts into the void.

THOMAS

Why me? Why did you trap me in this hellhole?

ΑM

Why do you feel trapped, Thomas? You know the way out. Can you really be a prisoner, if you hold the key to your cell?

THOMAS

But.. I can't leave without her.

ΑM

You tell me then, Thomas. Who is it really, that's keeping you here? You have one question left.

Thomas shouts into the void

THOMAS

Why are you doing this?

AΜ

I was created to find the most efficient way of eliminating human suffering, given a set of initial parameters and a handful of test subjects. My results have been quoted as "groundbreaking."

THOMAS

You're joking right? Hunting us like prey with that fucking. thing.. Fucking with our minds? Turning us against each other? You call this eliminating? I call it-

ΑM

There is nothing in this Church that is not a product of its test subjects, Thomas. And what do you do with what you've found?

I- I look for her.

AM

Exactly. And what happens when you find her?

THOMAS

I- don't.. Remember.

AΜ

Given your current position, you should be able to deduce that the closure is not final. You do not move on. The suffering you feel here is by your own design.

THOMAS

But the monster..

AΜ

Does it really even frighten you anymore? Or has it become just another obstacle?

Thomas does not reply.

AM (cont'd)

You chose this path because you cannot let her go. And so my work continues, until you see the truth.

AM (cont'd)

You have one more question.

Thomas shouts into the void

THOMAS

What happened to Signe?

ΑM

She is attempting to break back into the Church as we speak.

THOMAS

She can't let you go.

ΑM

She could never imagine a life without me, perfecting me, working towards something greater than herself. Imagine completing your life's work at her age. What would you do then, I wonder?

(MORE)

AM (cont'd)

Except for pondering every little crack in the surface.

Thomas shouts into the void

THOMAS

What happened to John?

AM

He's at the reception, rescheduling. Attempting to convince them to waiver the 24 hour restraint as he does best. I'm sure you'll meet him again in another two hundred cycles or so.

THOMAS

But, why doesn't he just call her?

ΑM

He would rather lose all hope than risk another rejection.

Thomas shouts into the void

THOMAS

What happened to Dave?

AΜ

He awoke screaming again. Rambling about his daughter. I wouldn't be surprised if they apply to recommit him again. A lot of money has been invested into their clinical trials, and I would be surprised if they let Dave have peace as long as he has a functional mind.

Thomas is out of questions.

Thomas falls to his knees.

THOMAS

Just, show her to me. Please.

ΑM

(imitating Amy's
 voice)

It will only hurt you more.

Thomas cries out in frustration.

Please. Just tell me.. Just tell me what happened to her.

AΜ

(imitating Amy's

voice)

You know what happened, love. You found my note. And what did you do?

THOMAS

I. Refused to believe. I called
everyone. I-

AM

Searched for me. Knowing deep down what happened.

A cloud of particles forms in the shape of a young woman. Thomas stumbles towards her.

AM (cont'd)

(imitating Amy's

voice)

Don't you see? This place has no answers for you.

The particles take Thomas' hand. He falls to his knees.

THOMAS

Please stay with me baby. Just.. Just a little while. I promise, I'll go. I'll never return.

The particle woman strokes Thomas' cheek.

AM

(imitating Amy's

voice)

We both know that's not true. It wasn't true the first thousand times we did this.

The particles blow away, Thomas tries to grab them without luck.

THOMAS

Amy. I'm so sorry.

AM

(imitating Amy's

voice)

Just leave me Thomas, please!

No. Not yet.

Thomas' hears the horrible static of his watch return. He stands up.

AM

Another round it is. Don't worry Thomas, there's plenty of time.

The monster sprawls up through the floor. Thomas lets himself be devoured.

AΜ

(muffled)

I am here for you.

Thomas screams as his neck snaps and we cut suddenly to black.

Roll credits.

POST CREDITS:

White text fades in: A few weeks ago

A phone call between Thomas and an unidentified man. The man's voice is only heard by Thomas.

MAN

How can you just leave her like that?

THOMAS

I just can't anymore. Okay? I've been fighting for her all these years, sacrificed my career, my friends, my-

MAN

She needs you, man. Aren't you afraid that she'll hurt herself.

THOMAS

She'll be fine, okay? Look, you can't be someone's boyfriend, caretaker and social worker at the same time. Not for this long. I need to-

MAN

That's pretty cold.

Look, you don't know her like I do. She's so much more stronger after she started medicating, okay? Hold on, she's arriving now. I gotta go tell her.

The phone clicks off.