

DIGITAL LEGACY

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INT. JACK'S APARTMENT- DAY (MORNING).

Jack's asleep in bed, it's raining outside, connecting the times of the memory. His phone rings.

SAMUEL (O.S.)
I don't know what to do. Fuck!

JACK
What's wrong?

SAMUEL (O.S.)
They found Zen's car this morning, wrapped around a pole. Drunk driving they think.

Jack's visibly shook.

JACK
Not Zen... are you sure?

SAMUEL (O.S.)
Zen's family contacted me, I'm jumping on the train now to meet them and some lawyers. I need you to get on his accounts and make sure nobody finds out.

JACK
Why not?

SAMUEL (O.S.)
We need time, to clean the account.

Jack is startled, something about this feels wrong.

JACK
Clean it? What's that.

SAMUEL
I'll tell you in person, not over the phone. Can you handle this?

JACK
(Forced Hubris)
Come on man, I can do anything, just ask.

SAMUEL
That's the Jack I like. I'll see you when I get back.

JACK
No worries. See you man.

The call ends: the morning is gray, dull, and cold.

ROSE (O.S.)
(Unmotivated)
So, what is it that you do?

INT. SUBWAY CAR- DAY.

Jack enters a crowded subway car. Everyone on their phones.

JACK (V.O.)
Eight years after Facebook was put on the market, thirty-million of it's users passed away. Their accounts remained active afterwards, and no one knew what to do with them. We call these ghost accounts. Every second, another account goes ghost. The whole of someone's ghost accounts are what we call Digital Legacy.

INT. SUBWAY STATION- DAY.

Jack walks through large crowds, each person on their phone posting things, watching things, talking to others.

JACK (V.O.)
It surprises people, how important someone's Digital Legacy can be to them. A virtual I.D. is a secondary identity. I help maintain client's Digital Legacy's, to maintain their online life when they are no longer able to- because of vacation, illness, or death.

EXT. VIDEO GAME BAR- DAY.

Jack passes a gamer cafe, plastered with ads.

JACK (V.O.)
My partner, Samuel, is a lawyer. We started this company as a way to deal with digital property. This can be photos, blogs, memoirs, or journals. This content should be both protected and re-used appropriately.

(MORE)

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It can also mean that assets left
behind can be used as legal
evidence, therefore roles need to
be properly observed to avoid any
potential problems.

Jack passes through shadow as he says this.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. DRESSING ROOM- DAY.

Jack stands behind Rose, dressed in a stunning red dress, she wipes heavy makeup off.

ROSE

I'm curious, why'd you start such a
strange company?

JACK

Well...it seemed important,
something that would be big in the
future. No one else had even
thought of doing it, and, that's an
opportunity.

ROSE

To do what?

JACK

To help people.

INT. SAMUEL'S LAW FIRM- DAY.

A new law firm, neat and simple, but boring. Jack runs in
and boots up his computer. He opens a safe in the corner and
takes out a sealed envelope.

He holds the envelope there, it seems heavy and large in his
hand. He uses a nail file to cut it open, he struggles to do
so, it resists him, but finally, pandoras box, is opened.

He takes out a slip of paper, on it are a series of
passwords. He copies each one into a program on his
computer, the overhead title of the program reads Digital
Legacy.

He finishes, taking the paper over to a basin to burn it.

Back at the computer he logs into blogs and uses a program
called ZEN SIMULATOR to automate posts.

He clicks the automate button and a blog line is written.

Zen: "Hey everyone, big updates coming to Arena Online. Remember, keep on being a noob, because noobs can still have fun!"

He finds a message on Zen's Snapchat account, a picture of Zen's wrecked car. Jack goes to his program and clicks: respond.

Zen: "Nice car, the driver must be mad about losing it. Luckily, my car is okay."

The ZEN SIMULATOR program then posts a photo of Zen's car, still intact.

At last he opens up a game called: Arena. He logs in using his program. There he finds a message from BLOOD MARK, he listens to it.

BLOOD MARK (ROSE V.O.)

I hope you can forgive me enough to
listen to this message. Zen,
you're in more trouble than you
think, I have to see you again...I
need your help.

Jack is struck by her voice.

He back searches the name and finds a modeling profile online, a gorgeous Rose dressed in video game cosplay. Jack is smitten. He plays the message again.

BLOOD MARK (ROSE V.O.) (CONT'D)

I hope you can forgive me enough to
listen to this message. Zen,
you're in more trouble than you
think, I have to see you again...

EXT. DRESSING ROOM- NIGHT (DUSK)

Back to the last scene.

ROSE

I'm so glad you came, because, I
could really use some help.

INT. HOTEL ROOM- DAY.

Jack wakes up, the room is empty now. He gets up, groggy, he dresses, but can't find his phone. He searches, it is nowhere to be found.

His satchel is gone too. He checks his wallet, still has money, but nothing else.

At last he tries the phone, but it's dead. He leaves.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY- DAY.

He rushes down the hall, making sure the coast is clear.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY- DAY.

At the front desk are two girls, TALL & SHORT, who look exactly alike except one is tall and fat, one is short and thin- they call to him.

TALL & SHORT

Jack. We've been waiting for you
Please, follow us to the canteen.
Have a bite and wait, your friend
wanted to speak with you when you
awoke.

JACK

Friend?

TALL

Breakfast is still being served.

Tall escorts him to the Hotel's restaurant, while Short makes a call.

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT- DAY.

Jack is served a bowl of porridge and a hardboiled egg. He eats a bit, while Tall awkwardly watches.

JACK

My phone wasn't working this morning.

TALL

They are being repaired.

JACK

Your lobby phone is working...

Jack stands abruptly and takes out a business card in his pocket, it's for his rental car company.

JACK (CONT'D)

I rented a car to get here, but it
broke down in the desert.

TALL

How unfortunate.

JACK

Worse than you think, I almost
died.

Tall is shocked.

TALL

Do you need a doctor?

JACK

No, but I need you to call this
number and tell them what happened
since I can't. The license number
is on the card.

TALL

You may use our phone.

JACK

Oh no. I don't want to be a
bother. It's super easy, just call
them for me, real quick, and they
can come to fix it. Thank you.

Tall tries to refute, but Jack continues thanking her before he sits and starts slurping the porridge.

Tall hesitantly leaves him. Once she does leave, he picks the bowl up, keeps slurping, and runs across the room to a back door.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY.

Jack throws the bowl down and starts running down the street. He passes old, out of date cars covered in dust, street vendors and low income shopping options - it's a Podunk town.

He stops in front of a WOMAN who is speaking on her phone.

JACK

Excuse me, may I use your phone?

The Woman, annoyed, shooes him away.

JACK (CONT'D)
Once you're finished of course.
See, my phone was stolen and I
really need to borrow...

The Woman walks off, raising her voice to drown him out.

Jack turns around to find a smiling OLD MAN holding out an old Nokia brick phone.

JACK (CONT'D)
Very kind of you.

OLD MAN
Everyone in S-Town is kind. We are
kind people, this is a good place.
(Jack is stupefied) Where are you
from?

JACK
Beijing.

OLD MAN
(Shaking head)
A horrible place. Noisy, polluted,
people always busy: with what? You
should stay here, get a break from
the hard times.

JACK
Thank you...but I need to make the
call.

Jack turns away from the strange Old Man, who constantly
peaks over Jack's shoulder, watching him closely. Jack
reaches into his jacket's pocket and pulls out a number with
the name Rose signed.

He dials... the phone rings. Jack tenses up, excited... but
she's not answering.

Then, from the distance, he hears a ring tone, in sync with
his phone's ringing. He double checks, confirming they are
in sync.

He looks in the direction of the ringing and sees a woman in
a red dress, matching his memory of Rose. She is running
away, down an alley.

Jack loses it and starts chasing, shocking the Old Man as he
is seemingly stealing the phone.

EXT. ALLEY- DAY.

Jack runs through the alley, dodging bikers and vendors. The phone's ring driving him on madly.

EXT. MARKET- DAY.

Jack bursts out of the alley into a busy open market, across the expanse of it is the WOMAN IN THE RED DRESS, disappearing into the crowd. The phone in his hand stops ringing, he redials and moves through the crowd.

The operator tells him the number he has dialed is turned. Jack bounces crazily between the rush of people. He is lost, spinning around, trying to spot her.

From the swirling chaos comes the voice of RUPERT (60).

RUPERT

Jack?

Jack turns around to see this old magnate, dressed as if he came straight from 1980, full of smiles and carrying a steaming flat bread in hand.

JACK

Rupert... why are you here?

RUPERT

The exact question I had of you.
Did you come with Samuel?

JACK

Samuel's here?

RUPERT

I expect him to arrive this evening. How didn't you know?

JACK

I haven't spoken to him recently.
In fact, we aren't partners anymore.

RUPERT

Oh! I'm sorry. But still, it's fantastic luck I suppose, for I had wanted to see you. I have a quaint summer home here in S-Town, has a nice hot spring, if you care for a soak. I invite those whom I like out here to get away from it all.

(MORE)

RUPERT (CONT'D)

Please come tonight, Samuel is taking the long drive out here and staying a bit. Maybe you two can reconcile. The countryside tends to calm tempers.

JACK

Really?

Rupert digs through his pocket and pulls out a card with his address and a map on it, cordially handing it to Jack.

JACK (CONT'D)

Thank you.

RUPERT

It is quite a surprise to catch you here, pleasant, but a surprise. I'll be off now.

Rupert holds up his flat bread and noas.

RUPERT (CONT'D)

The local food here is fantastic, do try some.

Rupert slinks into the crowd and Jack is stoned, unable to piece the puzzle together.

His thoughts are shattered by the Old Man running up to him and beating him.

OLD MAN

Thief.

Jack hands the phone back.

JACK

Sorry...

Jack runs off.

EXT. S-TOWN STREETS- DAY.

Jack wanders the streets, his face knotted in thought.

He comes across a Police Station and decides to enter.

INT. POLICE STATION- DAY.

A small space, just room for a lone OFFICER who is nodding off.

JACK
I'd like to report a kidnapping.

The Officer startles awake, he seems a bit daft.

OFFICER
Who?

JACK
Rose....Zhang.

OFFICER
What's your relationship to her?

JACK
We are...Friends.

OFFICER
What makes you think she is missing?

JACK
Kidnapped!

OFFICER
Whichever, just tell me.

JACK
(Angry)
She called me, saying she was in trouble, and the call ended abruptly.

OFFICER
How long ago was this?

JACK
A day or so?

OFFICER
You don't remember? Let me listen to the message.

JACK
I don't have my phone.

OFFICER
(Becoming Irate)
Why not?

JACK
It was stolen.

OFFICER

Really? How inconvenient.

JACK

Not at all. All my things were taken. Are you going to write any of this down.

OFFICER

Show me your I.D. card.

Jack reaches into his wallet and finds it missing.

JACK

It's gone too.

Sullen, the officer prepares to write.

OFFICER

Tell it to me.

JACK

Jack Zhou.

Eight...Five...Six...Three...

OFFICER

Slow down.

JACK

...Four...

OFFICER

Go back.

JACK

To where?

OFFICER

I got Eight...Three...

Jack takes the pencil and writes down all his information.

JACK

How do I get out of this town?

OFFICER

There's only one way out if you don't have a car, the Captain. He's out there.

The officer points out the window at CAPTAIN, dressed in sailor clothes, sitting under an umbrella near an old bus.

OFFICER (CONT'D)
He can take you to the train depot,
about fifty kilometers from here.

JACK
Thank you.

EXT. CAPTAIN'S BUS STOP - DAY.

Jack approaches Captain.

JACK
When's the next time you're
leaving?

CAPTAIN
Where you headed?

JACK
Train station

CAPTAIN
Soon.

JACK
(Anger rises)
How soon?

CAPTAIN
Soon, soon.

Jack waits for elaboration, but none comes.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY.

Jack enters the hotel and tries to rush past Tall and Short.

TALL
Your friend just left.

JACK
Oh, how unfortunate.

SHORT
You can call him, he left his
number.

Jack goes to the counter to take the number.

JACK
Are the phones working now?