

ON SCREEN

Scene opens onto a laptops desktop page. The desktop is littered with files named with keyboard smashes, overlaying a bright pink wallpaper. Cursor opens the browser and types the word "facsimile" into the search bar. After searching, the cursor clicks the first result; a page simple titled FACSIMILE in all capital letters, with no description. The screen goes black, and a loading wheel appears.

DISSOLVE IN:

TITLE: FACSIMILE

A "pre-order" button appears on the screen. The cursor hovers over it for a moment before clicking. As the cursor release sounds,

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN - EVENING

It's dark and stormy in Toronto. Neon signs and advertisements shine bright against the rain and haze. As the shots pan down from the tops of buildings to the sidewalk, we see MAYALA, 19 years old, running up the street, the rustling of her raincoat drawing almost as much attention as the bright colours she's wearing. She ducks between people as she sprints with a grin on her face. We see her slow down outside of a store and enter.

CUT TO:

INT. X GAMES - EVENING

The store is packed and loud when Malaya enters; it seems like staff gave up on keeping order ages ago. Everyone is clearly there for the same reason. Malaya joins the line up. She looks around, tapping her foot impatiently, before taking out her phone. She quickly responds to a text while glancing around.

She puts the phone back in her pocket and continues looking around the store. People shuffle by her, excitement on their faces. She watches and smiles halfheartedly as they pass. In the back of the store, a demo of the game is running, and two customers are looking around in wonder in their headsets. Malaya notices them and stares, craning her neck to get a better view of the game. She is snapped out of her haze by the store clerk.

STORE CLERK

Next?

Malaya rushes to the counter eagerly.

MALAYA

Hi, um, I'm here to pick up a pre-order of Facsimile?

STORE CLERK

Can I get a name?

MALAYA

Malaya Reyes.

The store clerk nods and begins clicking buttons on her computer. Malaya stares intently.

STORE CLERK

Can I see some ID?

Malaya scrambles in her bag for her wallet. She pulls it out; it's a small coin purse covered in sticker. She fiddles with it before pulling out her ID and passing it to the store clerk. The clerk checks it over, and then hands it back. She turns a small screen with a stylus to face Malaya.

STORE CLERK

Can you sign here please?

Malaya signs quickly. The clerk waits a moment and stares at her computer, to Malaya's dismay, until she finally hands over the box. Malaya grabs it quickly and stares at it.

STORE CLERK

Is that everything for today?

MALAYA

Yes, thank you!

Malaya immediately turns and runs out of the store.

CUT TO:

INT. MALAYA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

BEGIN MONTAGE:

Malaya arrives at her house and begins getting ready to indulge herself in the game.

QUICK CUTS:

- Malaya unlocks her door
- She throws her bag on the couch
- She changes into comfy clothes; a t-shirt and sweatpants
- She brews a cup of coffee
- She places her coffee mug and some snacks on her coffee table

END MONTAGE

Malaya sits on a cushion in front of her tv. Her room is cluttered and colourful, filled with fairy lights and posters of various games and artists on the walls. Her shelves are filled with games and wires crowd her television. The cleanest part of the room is her PC, which sits pristinely organized on her desk. She studies the box once more before opening it. Inside, a small memory card lays cushioned between velvet. The card is black and matte, with the word FACSIMILE engraved in the centre. She pulls it out and looks over it, studying its minimal details. She rests the card on the coffee table and removes the velvet plush from the box to reveal a single, transparent slip underneath with black text on it.

It reads:

FACSIMILE

SIMULATION FOR LIFE

FIRST RELEASE

CARD NUMBER 113567

She reads the card over multiple times before placing it on the table and picking up the card again. She leans forward and places the card inside her game console. She powers it on, and glues her eyes to the tv as she removes the headset and gloves from her television stand. She puts on the gloves, while still staring, and hovers her hand in the air, guiding the on-screen cursor over the FACSIMILE icon. The cursor turns to a loading icon, and then the screen dissolves to black. Malaya hold her breath as she waits for something to happen.

Text begins to dissolve onto the black, stating "PLEASE PUT

ON YOUR ECCOI HEADSET NOW". Malaya snaps out of her stare and scrambles to get the headset on.

IN GAME - EVENING

Malaya stands in a black, empty space. She looks around, but she is completely alone. In front of her, the word FACSIMILE appears, with a "start" button below it. Malaya walks up to the button and holds out her hand, pressing it.

Malaya jumps as screen then shifts to present two square options in front of her. One square reads "FROM SCRATCH", while the other reads "FROM REFERENCE". Malaya reaches out to the "FROM REFERENCE" button, and the space around her changes.

In front of Malaya, a blank silhouette appears. She walks up to it hesitantly. A text box that reads "scanning" appears between her and the figure, and the figures face begins to morph into a clone of Malaya. She stumbles back, staring with terror in her eyes as the figure becomes her. She is prompted to do a 360 and she obliges, glancing over her own body as if it's part of the game as she does. When she turns back to face the silhouette, it is an exact clone of her.

Malaya approaches the figure and studies its features. She reaches out and touches the clones nose. When she pulls her finger off of its face, the nose follows, stretching out. Malaya panics and tries to put it back where it was, before slowing down, and pushing it inwards, making it smaller. She grins at her craftsmanship and begins to sculpt the rest of the face.

MEANWHILE:

INT. MALAYA'S COMPLEX - EVENING

DANIEL, a tall, unassuming young man, walks through the halls of Malaya's building, carrying a steaming bag of takeout. He scurries around the corner out of the shot

RETURN TO:

IN GAME - EVENING

Malaya steps away from the clone she just finished sculpting, admiring her masterpiece. The clone now looks like a reference of Malaya, only missing her most undesirable features. She finishes glancing over the clone and clicks a "SAVE" button that hovers above its head.

CUT TO:

INT. MALAYA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Daniel lets himself into Malaya's apartment, the noise startling her and causing her to scramble to get her headset off. Daniel, taken aback by the reaction, scoffs.

DANIEL

So you forgot I was coming huh?

MALAYA

You scared me.

DANIEL

I know.

Daniel sets the bag of food on Malaya's kitchen counter and Malaya joins him, throwing her headset on the bed as she walks.

MALAYA

What did you pick up?

DANIEL

Chinese. Is that okay?

MALAYA

Yeah...

Malaya trails off, staring back at her TV with the game on it.

DANIEL

So you already got it?

MALAYA

I've been playing it since I got home.
Here, come...

Malaya grabs Daniel's hand and drags him over to the television. Daniel furrows his brow at the screen.

MALAYA

I can't get over the realism.

DANIEL

Something looks off...

MALAYA

I edited it a bit. Thats not the

point.

Malaya's eyes light up suddenly and she turns to Daniel.

MALAYA

Can I make you??

DANIEL

I- I guess, how does it-

Before he can finish, Malaya puts the headset on Daniel, taking him by surprise.

DANIEL

I don't get how this works.

MALAYA

Be patient.

Malaya clicks some buttons on the screen using the gloves, which she then hurriedly places on Daniel's hands before the scan begins. She watches him glance around erratically as a new silhouette on the screen begins to morph into him

DANIEL

Oh- god... This is making me nauseous.

The silhouette finishes manifesting into Daniel and he pulls his headset off, both of them staring at the screen.

DANIEL

Thats creepy.

Malaya stares at Daniel's clone halfheartedly. The figure on the screen looks just like Daniel, yet some of his features, such as his already large nose, stick out even more.

Daniel chuckles and walks over to the kitchen. Malaya manages to unglue her eyes from the television and joins him.

DANIEL

So do you wanna watch a movie tonight?
I think they finally put the first
Bladerunner back on Netflix.

MALAYA

Actually, I was hoping that after we
eat I could just play the game
tonight?

Daniel turns to Malaya, and deflates.

DANIEL

Oh.

MALAYA

We can still have a nice dinner, but I've been waiting for this for so long, and I just-

DANIEL

No... It's fine. I get it.

Daniel turns back to the food and continues dishing it out, now sulking.

MALAYA

Daniel, please, you know its nothing against you, but I've been waiting for this game for a year. Please don't be weird about it.

DANIEL

I just feel like you're always putting your games above me.

MALAYA

Daniel, please stop. This isn't fair.

DANIEL

Whatever. Let's just eat.

Daniel picks up his plate and walks over to the dining table without saying another word. Malaya sighs.

MALAYA

Just let me save.

Malaya walks over to the tv and puts on the gloves. She hovers over the save button, before glancing one again at Game Daniel's large nose. She peaks around the corner to make sure Daniel isn't looking before shrinking the nose down. She quickly saves and walks back to the kitchen. Dishing herself out.

MALAYA

(calling out) I wont play.

Beat as Daniel looks up from his meal.

MALAYA

Let's watch that movie.

INT. MALAYA'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT MORNING

Malaya's eyes drift open and she finds herself in bed, with Daniel's arm draped over her. She glances around the room, which is bright with sunlight through her closed curtains, before carefully wriggling out from under Daniel's grasp.

Malaya brews herself a coffee in her kitchen. She wanders over to the television and sits in front of it, placing her mug on her cluttered coffee table. She turns the tv on, brushes her messy hair down and puts on the headset.

IN GAME - CHARACTER SELECTION SCREEN

Malaya is once again in the black void of the character creation screen. She turns around to see both her character and Game Daniel standing behind her. She walks up to Game Daniel, studying him with curiosity. She runs her hand over his and her breath hitches, realizing that she can feel the texture of his hand in the gloves. Flustered, she hurries over to her own character. She touches her clone and three buttons appear beside it; Delete, Customize, or Next. She selects the next button and the scene around her changes.

IN GAME - WORLD SELECTION SCREEN

Malaya is now standing in the middle of a suburban street. Takes in her surroundings while shielding her eyes from the harsh sunlight. It feels like late afternoon, and the golden hour sun hits makes the white houses, the green grass, and the blue sky all look bright and oversaturated. It's tranquil, but unnerving. Above the scene, a label floats in the sky that reads EVERGREEN SUBURBS. below the title card there are two arrows and a confirm button. Malaya clicks one of the arrows

Malaya now stands on a cobblestone path. Wildflowers grow freely around and through the stones and the path leads up to a quaint wooden cabin. Birds chirp loudly, singing songs through the rustling of the large green trees that surround the cabin. The title reads ELDERBERRY CABIN. Malaya smiles warmly at the scene, but clicks the arrow key again.

Malaya now stands in the middle of a futuristic city street that is bustling with life. Glass skyscrapers tower around her and cars fly overhead. The title reads ELBAITE CITY. Malaya looks around in awe. A couple of colourfully dressed businesspeople wave as they pass her. She shyly waves back. She hovers over the confirm button for a moment before selecting it. The scene around her changes again.

IN GAME - MALAYA'S LOFT - MORNING

Malaya stands in a brightly lit, modern loft. Windows stretch from the bottom of the floor all the way up to the high ceilings. The room is empty and it engulfs her. Malaya walks up to the windows and peers out over the technicolor city landscape below. When she turns back, a "Modify Household" button appears. She selects it, and then selects the option to add Game Daniel to her household.

Malaya hears Daniel's voice behind her and turns around to see him standing stiffly in the corner. Malaya walks up to him cautiously.

MALAYA

H-hello?

GAME DANIEL

(robotically) Hello Malaya.

His tone freezes Malaya in place.

MALAYA

(nervously laughing) Why do you sound like that...

GAME DANIEL

I don't have any Traits yet. Traits are what make me unique. I can gain traits by interacting with others, or by using the Personality Customization tool.

MALAYA

Okay...

GAME DANIEL

Would you like to add a trait now?

MALAYA

Uh, y-yes please...

A broad array of different text boxes appear around Game Daniel's head. Malaya walks closer and stares at them. Characteristics such as Lighthearted, Serious, Inattentive and Shy fill all of the boxes. Malaya studies the options before selecting one; "Calm".

Instantly after Malaya presses the button, Game Daniel's eyes soften and he grins at Malaya warmly.

GAME DANIEL
Thanks. That feels better.

Malaya blushes.

MALAYA
You're welcome.

DANIEL
(Outside of Game) Malaya!

Malaya looks around, startled by the booming voice

DANIEL
MALAYA!!

INT. MALAYA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Daniel stands next to Malaya, with messy hair and a concerned look on his face, as she struggles to get her headset off.

MALAYA
You scared me.

DANIEL
How long have you been playing for?

Malaya looks at the sunlight through the window, and then at the clock.

MALAYA
Longer than I thought.

Daniel kisses her cheek and walks to the kitchen. Malaya looks at the screen, where her and Game Daniel still stand facing each other

