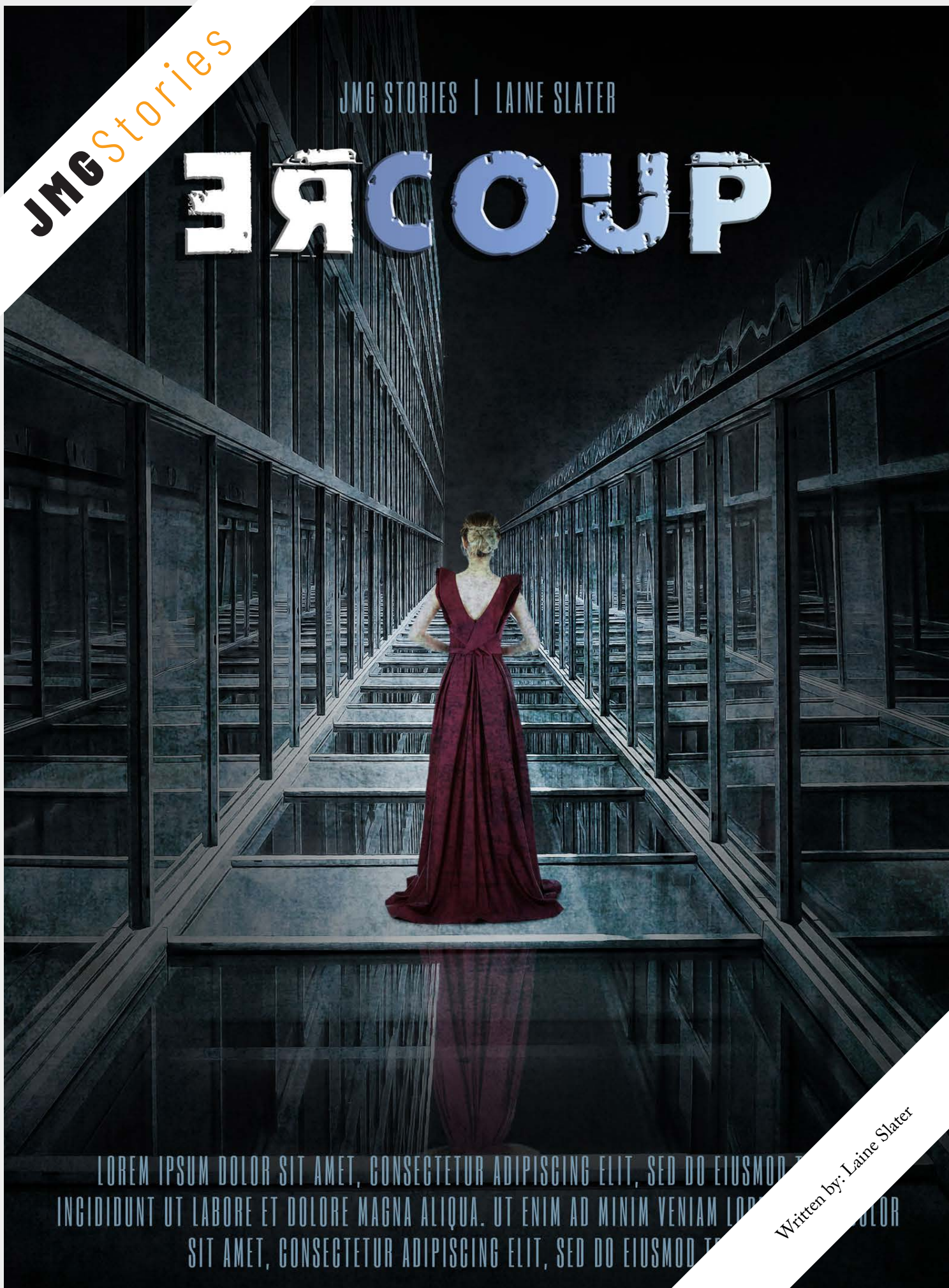


JMG Stories

JMG STORIES | LAINE SLATER

ERCOUP



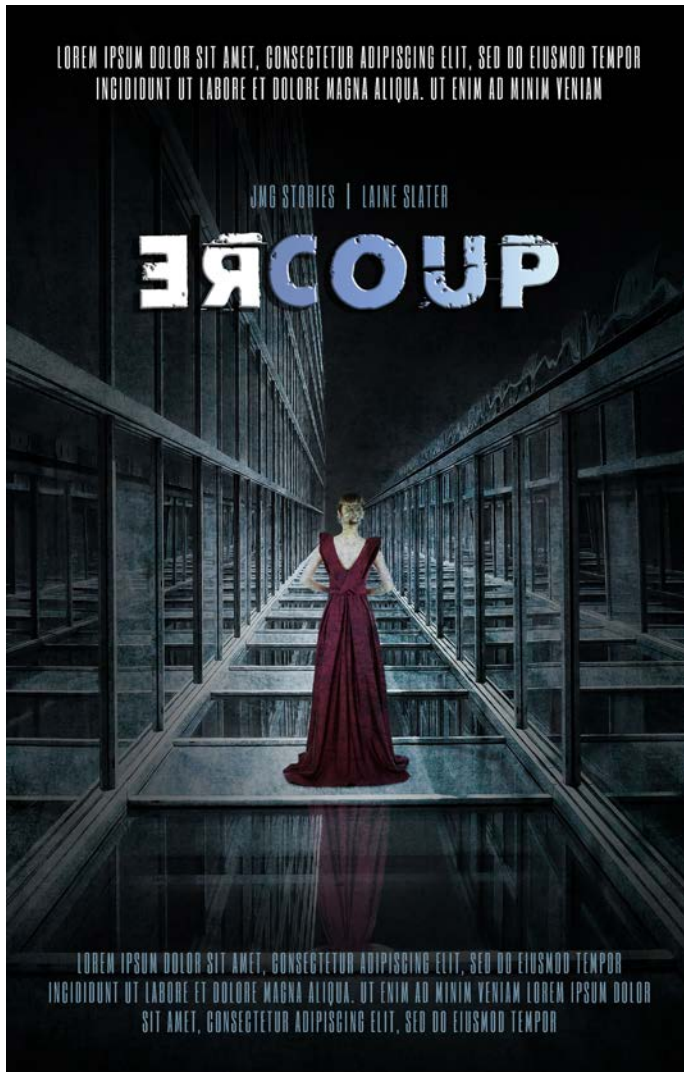
LOREM IPSUM DOLOR SIT AMET, CONSECTETUR ADIPISCING ELIT, SED DO EIUSMOD
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SIT AMET, CONSECTETUR ADIPISCING ELIT, SED DO EIUSMOD T

Written by: Laine Slater

RE-COUP

— Careful what you wish for —

Written by Laine Slater - Created by JMG Stories



THE WELL DRESSED MAN:
Your year is almost up.

ANTONY: *Wait, what?*

THE WELL DRESSED MAN:
I'm with ReCoup.

ANTONY: *So, you're not part-*

THE WELL DRESSED MAN:
*I'm not part of RCR, no. I'm from
True Reality.*

ANTONY: *Christ. I almost forgot.
This isn't real, is it?*

THE WELL DRESSED MAN:
It can be.

Genre: *Drama, Sci-Fi, Conspiracy*

Format: *6 episodes of 60 mins each or feature film*

Targetgroup: *15-60 years old*

Potential buyers: *Netflix, Amazon, HBO, various TV channels*

At Pitch-level end Q2 2021

Series concept: *Black Mirror meets the Matrix, a character focused science fiction series
that questions the morality of simulated reality and second chances in life.*

>>>

We all carry around a number of “what if” questions in life. Some more prominent than others. How much would it be worth for you to have these questions answered? ReCoup Corp combines predictive AI and virtual simulations to let you live the future you could have had. But careful what you wish for, as the consequences can be beyond your imagination...

Have you ever wondered what your life would be like, if you just had another chance?

In the not-so-distant future of 2042, the USA is in a bad shape. Companies and corporations are as powerful as ever, the global recession has hit hard, but only for the everyday person. People aren't happy with their lives. But there is an opportunity for people to reflect on their past and answer those “what if?” questions...

AI company ReCoup Corp offers the public a form of simulated reality that gives the user another chance to live in their own altered timeline, where the user can choose to change a point in their past. This is predicted and run by automatic algorithms, that have taken in information from everyone in this modern world.

This is called ReCoup Reality, or RCR.

After one year in RCR, the user is asked whether they want to end the simulation and return to true reality, or continue, sometimes indefinitely.

Some users manage to fight the temptation of staying in RCR, or simply cannot afford the exorbitant prices, and return to true reality.

If you choose to continue the experience indefinitely, the process can be very expensive. Some people have given away all their savings

and sold all they own for just a few more years in RCR. This can affect the user's True Reality family, leaving many people without homes or income.

Outside of RCR, the consequences of ReCoup Corp's actions become more and more visible in society. ReCoup Corp is quickly becoming one of the biggest companies in America. The States are still recouping from devastating weather patterns that began a decade beforehand.

The people that do leave RCR do not do much better. Often dissatisfied with true reality, they eventually fall on the outside of society, ending up unemployed, homeless and depressed.

And some, after finding out hard truths and revelations from the simulation, commit suicide, and sometimes kill others.

ReCoup begins as a seemingly anthological series all set around the company ReCoup Corp, it is not until later in the show where we find that the character introduced in the first half of the show have found each other and plan to take on ReCoup Corp.

But what they find is far more horrifying than what they could imagine.

Setting

Chicago, USA. 2042.

Despite what the endless sci-fi media tells us, the future isn't flying cars and holograms. Even in a jump of 20 years. What is different, is the little things.

Self driving cars are common place, but only public transport, as people still prefer having their hands on the wheel. Phones become sleeker and sleeker until they can fit inside watches. So they end up on your wrist.

But the biggest change for the future is the use of AI, and simulations. We have a quite sophisticated AI and VR system already in place. People regularly chat with their AI home ports already, and VR is the new hot way to play video games, or even train for high risk roles. So it is not hard to imagine that two decades later, we are ordering fast food from a AI person on a screen and plugging ourselves into machines for evermore realistic entertainment experiences.

So here are are, the new forties, and AI collects all the data that you willingly give to it. Much like how you can learn so much about a stranger through their social media.

AI knows all about you, it knows what films you like, what food you like, what you're most likely to buy. You can go to the shops and your usual shopping list will be right in front of you in an instant. The majority of service jobs will be AI, as will telephone marketing and complaints areas, and of course, ReCoup Reality.

RCR

What once began as a video game style company, with spot on Simulated Reality technology, quickly became a super computer with the ability to calculate almost infinite outcomes based on changing just one variable.

Using the incredible amounts of data on every human that was born after the 21st century, thanks to social media and the algorithms that tie it all together, AI is now able to correctly predict almost every human interaction from here throughout. Channel all that data into a television, and you can see the future. Channel that into an SR machine, and you can live the future.

Change one variable in the past, and you now have ReCoup Reality. The only way you can see how your life may have been, if you had the chance to change it.

Themes

The core idea of the series is what happens to the human psyche if you can, not only get answers to the big "what if" questions everyone carries around, but actually feel what it means to live the life that could have been.

Humans are obsessed with themselves, and would rather live in a world of their own selfish creation, rather than one determined by something as futile as luck. This is what makes ReCoup so unique: it gives the audience a literal new reality for them to delve into.

The possibility of living an alternative version of your life messes with people's heads and motivation for coping in the real world. It also leaves people vulnerable to corporations that only focus on the bottom line, keeping the customer coming back for more.

ReCoup comments on corporate greed, self reflection, and unhealthy obsession with your own past. The experience of suddenly thinking up great responses, hours after an argument has ended, is a common one. If a corporation were able to harness the technology to allow people to revisit the past and change their outcome in life, then it could be one of the most addictive things in the world.

The last theme that ReCoup explores is morality. The first episode follows four children who lost both parents, their mother to a car accident, and their father to ReCoup Reality. The father leaves them to instead live with his fantasy family, which acts exactly like his own, and where the mother is still alive. It feels so real, it might as well be. As long as you never leave, could you tell the difference?

Would it matter?

Format

This show will at first glance, seem like an anthology series — but also not.

With 6 episodes, the first half of the show will act as an anthology series, each episode following a different set of characters and showing how their lives have been affected by ReCoup. But by the end of the 4th episode, all the characters we have previously met start working together on the same mission: taking down ReCoup.

Each character will first be fully developed in their respective episode, allowing the series to then unite them in the face of the main threat in a satisfying manner, where the viewer already knows the protagonists and what they stand for. The idea of this style of show, is similar to how they created the MCU Universe. Focus an entire episode on each character to give them the needed development, then have them all come together later down the line in order to fight the main threat. This means when that time comes, we can get right into the the action of it, without getting bogged down in undeveloped characters and arcs. This also gives us a very satisfying pay off when we see each character over come their problems that was set up in their respective episodes.

RE-COUP

RE-COUP

Written by: Laine Slater – Created by: JMG Stories



INT. SARAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MORNING

Sarah's eyes flicker open. SARAH (34), blonde, pretty, and wearing delicate pretty pyjamas, stretches lightly and pushes herself up off the bed.

Strong sunlight shines through the windows and we hear the SOUNDS OF CHILDREN chatting away downstairs. Sarah breathes in deep and smells breakfast cooking away. She smiles.

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Sarah, now wearing a dressing gown, enters the kitchen. The entire house is very apple pie American, dainty ornaments on sides, kid drawn pictures stuck to the fridge, the window open has a light summer breeze rolling in.

ANDREW (40), tall, handsome, dressed in a loose t-shirt and shorts, stands by the stove, bacon sizzling in a frying pan. The breakfast table has toast, scrambled eggs, coffee and juice already laid out.

Sitting At the table, are their two twin girls, ALICE and MARIA (8), adorable and beaming. They look up at Sarah as she walks in.

ALICE

Mom, we're having bacon for breakfast!

SARAH

I can smell it!

Sarah kisses both kids on the head and hugs her husband from behind.

ANDREW

Morning sleeping beauty.

SARAH

(laughs)

Oh shh. Why did you let me sleep in so late?

ANDREW

Because you look beautiful when you're asleep.

Sarah laughs again.

SARAH

God, I'm starving.

ANDREW
Well luckily for you...

Andrew turns around with the frying pan.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
(announcing)
Breakfast is served!

The kids cheer, and Sarah grins as she settles down next to them. Andrew gives each plate a helping of bacon, and everyone starts to eat.

Mid mouthful, Sarah looks up at her perfect family and smiles.

MARIA
Mom, can we go to the mall today?

SARAH
Sure we can.
(to Andrew)
You wanna join?

ANDREW
Sure!
(to the kids)
We can go shoe shopping and talk about boys!

The kids laugh at Andrew's dad joke. Sarah once more looks at her family. For the last time.

Ding dong. The doorbell rings. Sarah stands up.

SARAH
I'll get it.

ANDREW
Get what?

SARAH
The door.

ANDREW
Did it ring? I didn't hear it.

Andrew continues eating. The kids don't even acknowledge it. Sarah, unperturbed, goes to answer it.

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Sarah walks to the door just as the doorbell rings again.

Ding dong.

Sarah peeks through the peep hole. There's no one. Sarah frowns.

DING DONG.

Sarah jumps back, startled. Cautiously, she opens the door.

On the front door step, despite him not being there moments before, stands A WELL DRESSED MAN.

Sarah gapes for a moment, then composes herself.

SARAH
Can I help you?

WELL DRESSED MAN
Sarah Cooper?

SARAH
Yes.

WELL DRESSED MAN
Your time is up. 5 years have passed. And you have insufficient funds to continue with your RCR at the ReCoup Corporation.

SARAH
What? I don't understand.

WELL DRESSED MAN
It's time to leave.

SARAH
Leave what? What are you talking about?

A plate SHATTERS in the kitchen. Sarah turns around.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Andrew?

No answer.

Sarah runs back to the kitchen.

SARAH (CONT'D)
(panicked)
Andrew!

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Sarah reaches the kitchen. Pieces of broken plate lay scattered across the floor, and Sarah's family?

Gone. Vanished into thin air.

Sarah holds her hands to her mouth, horrified. She can't speak. Behind her, the Well Dressed Man steps into view.

WELL DRESSED MAN
Ms Cooper. It's time to leave. You have insufficient funds to continue with your RCR.

Sarah turns.

SARAH
Where are they? What have you done with my kids? Where's Andrew?

WELL DRESSED MAN
All questions will be answered when you return to TR.

SARAH
(stammering)
I don't know what that means, I don't understand what-

Like the flick of a light switch, Sarah opens her eyes again.

INT. RECOUP RCR HOLDING BAY - NIGHT

Sarah is laying down again, but is no longer wearing pyjamas. She is almost naked, apart from a long dirty grey gown that hangs off her almost skeletal frame.

Sarah is encased in a claustrophobic coffin like machine. PURPLE LIGHTS illuminate her. A long tube is threaded into her mouth.

Instinctively she pulls at it, and GAGS as about half a metre of tube is removed from her THROAT. She starts to SCREAM.

The door of her casket swings open, and she sits up. She is in a LONG HALLWAY with identical RCR caskets all in rows that stretch far away until darkness consumes them.

Sarah feels the back of her neck, and to her horror, finds a large cable threaded into the base of her spinal cord. She screams harder and attempts to pull it out.

A *hiss* of steam and the cable reattaches itself.

4 RCR OFFICERS march towards her, and behind them, a bored looking FEMALE RCR OFFICAL.

Sarah cowers as the RCR Officers roughly lift her up out of the casket and on to her feet. Her legs buckle and she almost collapses, but stays upright thanks to the RCR Officers holding her.

FEMALE RCR OFFICAL

Sarah Cooper, your RCR has been finished due to insufficient funds in your account. As you are unable to continue paying for RCR you will have to leave until you can pay for at least another 3 years.

SARAH

(terrified)

I don't understand. Where am I?
What is this? Where's my family?

The RCR Official checks a tablet briefly.

FEMALE RCR OFFICAL

We searched for any next of kin who may have been able to pay, but it was found that your husband, Andrew Cooper and your children, Alice and Maria Cooper died 6 years ago.

SARAH

Oh my god. No.

FEMALE RCR OFFICAL

Records show they died in a house fire, brought on by an oil fire that got out of control. You were acquitted of manslaughter and served no jail time.

SARAH

No. NO!

FEMALE RCR OFFICAL

As no next of kin were unable to help fund your RCR, we have been forced to pull you out.

(MORE)

FEMALE RCR OFFICAL (CONT'D)

I hope your experience with RCR was a pleasant one, and we hope to have you back again when you are financially viable to.

The RCR Official starts walking, and Sarah is dragged along behind her by the Officers.

FEMALE RCR OFFICAL (CONT'D)

You may find it hard to distinguish what was RCR and what is TR for the next few weeks. We recommend finding old friends and family to reconnect with to make the process easier. You may also notice you are feeling a lot weaker than when you first started RCR, this is due to your body not being exercised. We recommend plenty of exercise and healthy eating to regain your muscle tissue.

SARAH

Stop, stop! I don't understand what's happening!

The RCR Official stops, so do the RCR Officers. The Official turns to Sarah.

FEMALE RCR OFFICAL

You have spend the past 5 years in RCR.

SARAH

What's RCR?

FEMALE RCR OFFICAL

ReCoup Reality. And now you're in TR. Any belongings you brought with you here will be returned on your way out.

The Official turns back and keeps walking. Sarah is dragged a different direction.

SARAH

(screaming)

Wait! WAIT! Where am I? What's TR?

FEMALE RCR OFFICAL

(calling back)

True Reality.

CUT TO:

EXT. RECOUP BUILDING - OUTSIDE - LATER

Sarah is led outside, now clothed in a simple but worn outfit. The RCR building looms overhead, impossibly tall. Endless rain cascades down. It is morning but it might as well be night.

Sarah takes a few steps outside then staggers and falls to her knees. The rain drenches her instantly. She wails in sorrow.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

recoup

verb

an attempt to regain (something lost or expended)

to make up for something

All words fade away, apart from recoup. Then the R and C change to capitals. Leaving the word:

ReCoup

FADE IN:

INT. DINER - EVENING

LANA (20), Dominican, pixie cut, dirty apron around her waist, wipes down yet another dirty table. The diner is next to empty, with just a lone trucker drinking a coffee.

LANA

Tony, we're closing up soon.

TONY, the trucker, nods and stands up.

TONY

No problem, Lana.

He stretches and yawns.

TONY (CONT'D)

Back on the road for me. Send my love to your family.

LANA

Will do. See ya.

Tony raises a hand as he leaves the diner. As the door swings back closed, Lana watches the rain bucket down. Lana sighs and picks up Tony's empty cup. She places it into the dishwasher and walks into the owner's office round back.

INT. DINER - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Lana knocks on the already open door of the office. Inside, sits CAROL (50), watching a television show on a curved screen. She doesn't look up. Lana knocks again.

CAROL

Pause.

The show pauses. Carol looks up.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Hey. All closed up?

LANA

Yeah. Just needs locking up.

CAROL

I'll do that, see you tomorrow.

Carol looks back at the TV. Lana doesn't move. Carol looks back at her.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Problem?

LANA

It's the 5th.

Carol does a poor job of feigning surprise.

CAROL

Ah yes, payday.

Carol motions for Lana to come into the room. On both their wrists, are large, sleek, watches with plain black screens. Carol holds her one up, and it reads her face and unlocks.

She taps it a few times and then holds it up to Lana. Lana holds her watch close to Carol's. Lana's watch lights up and chimes. Lana looks at it. The watch reads:

\$674.39 ADDED.

Lana nods in thanks.

CAROL (CONT'D)
See you tomorrow.

LANA
Yup.

Lana leaves.

CAROL
Play.

The TV show starts to play again.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS STOP - LATER

Lana, now in a coat, stands alone against the chilly wind that blows through the streets of Chicago.

A DANGEROUS LOOKING GROUP OF YOUTHS pass her and give her the stink eye. She ignores them. She's safe where it's lit up and many, many cameras are watching.

The bus stop screen flashes commercials for a new hand cream, a new sitcom, then as she approaches closer, it reads her face, and the words "HI LANA" pops up. Then an advert plays, something that catches Lana's eye.

The screen reads:

EVER WONDERED WHAT LIFE WOULD BE LIKE, IF YOU HAD ANOTHER CHANCE?

The words fade, and are replaced with:

ReCoup

BOOK NOW

Lana watches the advert, she's seen it countless times before, but still, she reads each word.

The bus pulls up and the doors pull open. No driver, just a screen, a camera, and a speaker.

BUS SPEAKER
Please get on the bus.

Lana continues to watch the advert. The ReCoup ad holds for a few moments, before the advert loop restarts. Back to hand cream.

BUS SPEAKER (CONT'D)
Please get on the bus.

Lana climbs on the bus. The screen shows the bus line, with each spot labelled. Above this, reads the words:

DOWNTOWN CHICAGO BUS LINE A

Lana taps on her stop, and holds her watch to the screen, it takes out the money and she sits down. Around her are a few people, mostly rough looking and downtrodden. She ignores them, and puts in some wireless earphones. The bus drives on through the rain.

CUT TO:

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Lana flits from stove to fridge to table to cupboards, making a 4 person breakfast all by herself. The kitchen is in a bit of a state, but it is homely. It's an open plan kitchen, so we can also see two younger girls sitting on the sofa, watching TV. The show they're watching goes to commercials. A familiar, sterile white ad comes on.

RECOUP AD VOICE
Ever wondered what life would be
like, if you just had another
chance?

On the TV, a WOMAN looks wistfully at an old prom photo of her and what we can assume to be an old flame.

RECOUP AD VOICE (CONT'D)
Here at ReCoup Corp, we have
groundbreaking AI and SR
technology, something we have
dubbed. RCR. ReCoup Reality.

Outside a ReCoup building, the woman confidently walks inside. She's met warmly by good looking RCR staff.

RECOUP AD VOICE (CONT'D)
Here at RCR, we find that one point
in your life that you wished went
differently, and give you another
chance to do it right.

The woman sits down in a comfortable office and speaks to an RCR representative.

RECOUP AD VOICE (CONT'D)
 With our highly sophisticated AI,
 we can recreate your life as if you
 made that choice with 99% accuracy.
 With just a few short weeks in RCR,
 you can find closure, confidence,
 and happiness in knowing your
 choices, were the best choices.

The woman leaves the ReCoup building and breathes in deep, clearly much happier. She walks down the street. The scene changes to-

MICHAEL GOLDING (37), plain t-shirt, short beard, that classic silicon valley billionaire look. He smiles at the camera.

MICHAEL GOLDING
 ReCoup Corp. Practises in New York,
 Los Angeles, Washington and
 Chicago. Book n-

Lana changes the channel, (using her watch) to a cartoon show.

LANA
 Ti, go wake up Gil for me please?

TIANA (16), piercings and punk rock style clothing, stands up and goes to wake up her brother. SOFIA (11), still dressed in PJs, hardly notices Tiana stand up, eyes still glued to the TV. Lana notices this.

LANA (CONT'D)
 Sofia, get dressed please.

SOFIA
 Sure.

Sofia doesn't move. Lana glances at her. She sneaks up behind her and tickles her. Sofia squeals in laughter.

LANA
 Now you little monkey!

SOFIA
 Okay, okay!

Sofia hops off the sofa and runs off. Lana goes back to cooking, just as there's a knock on the back door.

Lana opens it, and lets in ZACH (21), good looking, well meaning, and obviously very into our protagonist.

ZACH
Morning.

LANA
Morning, you want breakfast?

ZACH
Sure. Can I help?

LANA
Uh, sure. Lay out the table?

ZACH
You got it.

Zach starts laying the table, as GIL (5), innocent and adorable, wanders in, bleary eyes and yawning.

LANA
Buenos dias pequeño! Sleep well?

Gil nods and climbs up on the sofa. Tiana walks in, and smirks at Zach.

TIANA
(with a hint of amusement)
Morning Zach! Lana's been talking about you all morning.

Lana scowls at her.

LANA
No I haven't.

Zach is used to this friendly ribbing and plays along.

ZACH
I know, I know, she can't keep my name out her mouth can she?

Tiana sits with Gil and watches TV with him.

LANA
(to Zach)
Stop encouraging her.

Zach shrugs, clearly enjoying it. Lana gives Zach a little smile. There may be something between these two, but Lana is clearly holding back for some reason.

LANA (CONT'D)
(to Zach)
How's work?

ZACH
As interesting as ever.

TIANA
Do you think you could get me a
job?

ZACH
Are you passionate about buying,
selling and repairing cars?

Tiana thinks for a moment.

TIANA
Yes, very.

ZACH
Then no. They only hire people that
are miserable and hate themselves.

TIANA
Fair enough.

Lana's watch dings.

SOFIA
Lana, look at my homework!

LANA
Put it on the table, come eat
breakfast.
(to Tiana and Gil)
You two as well, c'mon!

Lana dishes up breakfast for the kids and Zach. They start
eating, and Lana gets a chance to sit down.

SOFIA
Amo el tocino.

LANA
English, Sofia, you need to pass
that test next week.

Sofia rolls her eyes.

SOFIA
I love bacon!

Zach laughs. So does Lana.

LANA
Good girl.

ZACH
(in broken Spanish)
También me gusta el tocino.

I also like bacon.

Lana nods approvingly.

LANA
Not bad.

SOFIA
(under her breath)
Te gusta más Lana ...

You like Lana more...

The kids laugh, Lana shoots a look at Sofia. Sofia pokes her tongue out.

ZACH
What? What did she say?

They all continue eating. Lana checks her watch, and starts to search through her morning emails. Mostly bills, some decorated with worryingly red colours, and something else.

Lana frowns, and opens it. It's an email with the ReCoup logo on top of it.

As Lana reads, her face is a mixture of emotion. Happiness, worry, and fear. Tiana notices.

TIANA
What is it?

LANA
Dad's coming home.

Hushed silence falls across the table. Zach and the kids looks up at Lana.

GIL
¿Papi?

SOFIA
Dad? When?

LANA

Next week. His trial year finishes soon. It says if we can't pay for it, he will be released.

ZACH

Jesus.

SOFIA

Does that mean he'll be coming home?

Lana smiles, unable to stop the tears from forming in her eyes. She nods.

LANA

Yes.

CUT TO:

EXT. LANA'S HOUSE - FRONT GARDEN - AFTERNOON

Today's the day. Zach stands in the doorway, the sound of the kids can be heard behind him. Lana and Tiana are leaving.

LANA

Thanks for looking after the kids.

ZACH

Not a problem, they love me.
(calling back)
Don't you guys?

Gil runs into the hallway and points at Zach.

GIL

Caca caca!

Gil runs on, chanting the word caca. Zach looks at Lana.

ZACH

I understand that one.

Lana laughs.

ZACH (CONT'D)

You sure you don't want me to come?

Lana shakes her head.

LANA

No, it should be just us.

Zach blows out air in a low whistle.

ZACH
Gonna be weird, him coming back. I
look forward to meeting him.

Lana gives him a dark look.

LANA
You shouldn't...

CUT TO:

EXT. RECOUP BUILDING - OUTSIDE - AFTERNOON

Lana and Tiana stand outside the ReCoup building. The streets in this area are near on deserted, save for a few thin, miserable looking people dragging their feet along. No doubt ex-RCR customers. Chicago no longer has drug addicts. They have ReCoup Reality addicts.

The weather is cloudy, but no rain. Tiana glances upwards.

TIANA
Weather's holding up. Might be a
good sign.

LANA
Rain is forecast tomorrow until
next week.

TIANA
Dios mío. I'm sick of being soaking
wet all the time.

Lana stands up a little straighter.

LANA
There he is.

Through the doors walk two people, a RCR OFFICER, and GODOFREDO (48), sullen faced, greying hair, and wearing very scruffy clothes. He looks dazed, tired, but most notably, very depressed.

Tiana is the first to run over to him, Lana follows, but much more relaxed at seeing her father for the first time in a year.

Tiana takes his belongings from the officer, and then stands in front of Godofredo. She speaks to him softly.

TIANA

¿Papi? ¿Como te sientes?

Daddy? Are you okay?

Godofredo merely looks at Tiana. What we see here is a broken man.

RCR OFFICER

Here is a pack to help accustom him
back to TR.

(to Godofredo)

We would like to thank you for
spending your time with us at
Recoup Corp and hope to see you
again.

Lana shoots him a withering look that makes the Officer look away, uncomfortable. Tiana takes the pack from the Officer and Lana takes her father by the elbow.

As they go to leave, an old, weather beaten WOMAN runs over to the Officer and grabs at him.

OLD WOMAN

Please! My son, he's inside, I need
to see him! He has to come back to
us!

The Officer looks at her like a filthy animal. He brushes her off and goes back inside. The Old Woman sobs and staggers away.

Lana and Tiana start to lead Godofredo on the long walk home.

CUT TO:

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Godofredo sits in an armchair, seemingly the armchair he would have always sat in. He sits in silence, looking straight ahead.

The TV is on, and Lana and the kids sit on the sofa watching a sitcom. Lana keeps glancing over at Godofredo. Godofredo doesn't seem to notice.

Suddenly, he stands.

GODOFREDO

Me voy a dormir.

I'm going to sleep.

Lana nods.

LANA

That's fine. Do you need anything?

Godofredo shakes his head. As he walks back to his room, he ruffles little Gil on his head. Gil giggles.

Lana and Tiana share a concerned look.

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Lana stands, washing up dishes. Tiana sits at the dining table, head in hands.

LANA

He's going to have to get a job.

TIANA

Doing what?

LANA

(laughing)

I don't care what. But if he wants to stay here, he's going to pay his way.

TIANA

This is his house!

Lana spins around to face Tiana.

LANA

(raised voice)

No it's not!

Lana pauses to make sure she hasn't woken anyone up.

LANA (CONT'D)

(hushed voice)

This is not his house. It became our house the moment he left through that door and abandoned us!

TIANA

(hushed voice)

But he's back now!

LANA

Yeah but why is he back? He's back because he couldn't afford his RCR anymore, and we're supposed to just let him back here?

(MORE)

LANA (CONT'D)

The reason we're so screwed with the bills is because of him! Mom left *us* that money. It was for you and Sofia and Gil! He had no right to take it, and for what? A year of living out a fantasy?

TIANA

Have you not seen him? He's like a zombie!

LANA

A Resister.

TIANA

What?

LANA

That's what they're called, the ones who leave. Resisters.

TIANA

Either way, he's in bad shape. And you want to just throw him out onto the streets?

LANA

I didn't say that.

TIANA

But that's what you want! You can't blame him for how he reacted after mom died! You kept strong, he didn't. He was in a delicate place then, and he's in a worse place now. At least give him time.

A pause. They both look emotionally exhausted. Lana sits down, opposite Tiana. They look at each other.

LANA

(low controlled voice)

He's been gone for a whole year. He been missing for a fifth of Gil's life. He left me to look after 3 kids, while I was still a kid myself. He's had enough time.

Tiana looks away. She stands up and leaves. Lana stands and starts to wash up again. She quietly weeps.

CUT TO:

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - LANA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Lana is sleeping in her bed. Her room isn't much to look at. Simple furniture, lumpy mattress.

Her watch lights up. An alarm tone sounds. Lana stretches slightly, opens her eyes, and checks it.

WORK AT 12.00PM

Lana sighs and climbs out of bed.

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Like the week before, Lana is running about the kitchen, preparing breakfast. Tiana comes in carrying Gil, and gives Lana a tight smile. She returns it.

LANA
(to Gil)
¿Tienes hambre, pequeño?

Tiana sits Gil down, then sits herself. Sofia enters, with Godofredo.

SOFIA
(to Godofredo)
Y lo estoy haciendo muy bien en la escuela, mis maestros siempre dicen lo bien que lo estoy haciendo, ¡y tengo muchos amigos!

And I'm doing really well at school, my teacher always say how good I'm doing, and I have lots of friends!

Lana glances up at Sofia.

LANA
English, Sophia. Your test is today.

SOFIA
Pero a papá no le gusta hablar inglés.

But daddy doesn't like speaking English.

LANA
Doesn't matter. English at breakfast time. Plus, Dad can still understand you.

Sofia looks up at Godofredo. He smiles and nods to Sofia. They both sit at the table.

SOFIA

I've got an English speaking test today. I think I can speak it really well anyway but Lana always makes us speak in English so we can help Gil understand it better.

GODOFREDO

(slow deliberate English)

That is a very good idea.

SOFIA

There's a girl called Ella who's always horrible to me. She says I can't speak English good, but I always get better grades than her.

TIANA

Gil started preschool a couple of months ago.

GIL

School!

TIANA

He's doing well.

GODOFREDO

That is good.

SOFIA

And Lana is working at the same diner mom worked at!

The mentioning of their mom causes an awkward silence to come across the table. The silence is broken by:

SOFIA (CONT'D)

Did you see mom when you was away?

A pause.

GODOFREDO

Yes.

SOFIA

Is she okay?

Godofredo doesn't reply. Lana serves breakfast. The kids start eating. Godofredo doesn't.

LANA
 (to Godofredo)
 Eat.

Godofredo looks up at Lana, they hold their stare for a while. Then, reluctantly, Godofredo starts to eat.

CUT TO:

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - FRONT GARDEN - LATER

Tiana, while holding hands with Gil and Sofia, walks out the house and off down the path. Lana stands by the front door, and waves them off.

LANA
 Be good today, okay?

GIL
 Be good!

TIANA
 We'll be fine. See you tonight!

LANA
 See you tonight.

Lana leans against the door frame and watches them leave. Godofredo appears behind her.

GODOFREDO
Lo has hecho muy bien con ellos.

You have done very well with them.

Lana turns around. She scoffs and brushes past him.

LANA
Nadie más iba a hacerlo.

No one else was going to.

Lana disappears for a moment then returns with her bag and coat. She walks past Godofredo without a glance back. She steps out the house and walks down the path.

LANA (CONT'D)
Conseguir un trabajo, necesitamos el dinero.

Get a job, we need the money.

Lana walks down the path, the opposite way from where the kids went. She walks past a MailBot, a truck shaped machine, about waist height, as it places mail in each of the houses' mailbox.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - AFTERNOON

Lana is back in her apron, and serving coffee to a few OLDER MEN, tired from a long night's trucking.

TRUCKER 1
(to Trucker 2)
Been trucking back and forth to
Maine for the past two months.

TRUCKER 2
Taking what?

TRUCKER 1
Food mostly. Having a lot of
trouble with the farms down south,
weather and that crap. It's a long
trip, but it pays good.

Carol pops her head out of the hallway that leads to the staff room.

CAROL
Lana? Can we have a quick talk?

Lana follows her into the staff room.

INT. DINER - STAFF ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Carol is standing by one of the lockers that line the wall.

CAROL
Hey, I was just wondering, do you
have the key for this locker?

Lana shakes her head.

LANA
It's not my locker.

CAROL

No, but this one was your mom's. We have a new waitress starting in a couple of days, and I want to open this up and empty it out, I can't find the key for it.

Lana shrugs.

LANA

Sorry.

Carol rolls her eyes and bends down to face the locker.

CAROL

Okay, never mind.

Lana goes back to the diner.

INT. DINER - CONTINUOUS

As Lana reenters the diner, the TV in the corner catches her eye. Another ReCoup commercial.

TV VOICE

Don't spend your life thinking about what could have happened. Go back, change your future. ReCoup. Book now.

The two truckers are also watching the TV. One of them snorts and goes back to his coffee.

TRUCKER 1

What a load of shit.

TRUCKER 2

Pay out the nose for a make believe simulation? Some people will do anything to get away from reality.

TRUCKER 1

Can't stay in the past. Gotta keep trucking on.

The truckers laugh at the joke. Lana listens to them, then goes back to waiting tables.

CUT TO:

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - THE NEXT DAY

Lana places the results to Sofia's English test on the fridge. It has a big red A+ stamped on it. She beams at it, then sits with the rest of the family, and Zach, as they eat. Godofredo's chair is empty.

LANA
Where's Dad?

TIANA
He was in his room when I got back yesterday. Haven't seen him.

Lana sighs. She picks up his plate

ZACH
Want me to go?

Lana shakes her head and leaves the kitchen.

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - GODOFREDO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lana gets to the closed door of Godofredo's bedroom. She knocks. No answer. Lana shakes her head and opens the door.

The room seems to have been left as it is after her father's leaving a year before, perhaps even before her mother's death. Some of her mother's clothes still hung on the back of a chair, the curtains drawn closed, pictures of the family on a side table. At the foot of the bed, facing the TV, sits Godofredo. He seems to be holding an old pink hooded sweater.

Lana steps into the room. Godofredo doesn't react. She spies something on the floor. Another dark blue envelope, and a letter on the bed. She picks it up. The ReCoup logo again.

Part of the letter reads:

Relive your RCR experience! We have the best bits recorded so you can look back on your times with ReCoup!

Lana looks up at Godofredo. He's watching something on the TV. She can see the still fresh scar of where the cable was inside his brain stem. She walks over and watches the TV over his shoulder.

On the TV, is Godofredo, and her MOTHER.

Happy, laughing, alive. Lana gapes at it.

LANA
What the fuck is this?

They are eating breakfast, in the same kitchen that Lana just left. In fact, there is Lana herself, and the other kids. Her mother seems to be wearing the same pink sweater that Godofredo is holding.

Godofredo is watching a sick sitcom version of his life if their mother had not died.

LANA (CONT'D)

Dad, what is this? Are you seriously watching a fucking video of you and your kids eating breakfast, and ignoring your *real* kids, who are doing the *exact* same thing just out there?

Godofredo ignores her.

LANA (CONT'D)

This is sick. You're sick. You're obsessed with watching a fake life, with a fake family, and you can barely look your real family in the eye!

He ignores her.

LANA (CONT'D)

(shouting)

Look at me!

Godofredo looks at her, he's crying.

LANA (CONT'D)

(normal voice)

You abandoned us. You took money your children needed to live and abandoned us. For what? To live out a year where mom was still alive?

(shouting)

Well she wasn't for us! We've spent a year without you *and* her! We're your kids! We needed you! We needed you!

A noise from the doorway. Lana turns to see Zach, Tiana and Sofia. Sofia is crying. Lana runs over to her.

LANA (CONT'D)

Lo siento mucho pequeño mono. Let's get ready for school, huh? C'mon. Go with Tiana.

Zach takes Sofia's hand and leads her away. Tiana hesitates and watches Lana, tears in her eyes too. Eventually she leaves as well. Lana turns back around to Godofredo.

LANA (CONT'D)

Figure your shit out and come back to the real world. Mom is dead. We've had a year to accept it. You would have too if you stayed.

Lana stalks out the room.

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lana and Zach sit on the sofa, a beer in their hands. Lana looks into space as she speaks.

LANA

Mom and Dad were in a bad way. Always arguing. Mom would always be working. Dad never working enough. They had a big argument one night. Mom took off, who knows where she was going. She didn't get far before some car T boned her. It was her fault apparently. Wasn't looking.

ZACH

I'm sorry.

Lana shakes her head, and takes a gulp from her beer.

LANA

After she died, Dad stopped functioning. Didn't leave their room. Didn't eat. After the funeral, we were told that Mom had savings, and she wanted us to have it. Enough to keep us going until I found a job. A nest egg, for the kids. Then one day it was gone. And so was Dad. Was weeks after before we found out what he did. Bastard.

ZACH

Leaving you to bring up three kids.

LANA

The thing is, I would have done it too. I would have.

(MORE)

LANA (CONT'D)

If I had the chance, I would have plugged myself into the sim and seen my Mom again. So can I blame him?

ZACH

(pause)

I don't know, Lana.

Lana finishes her beer and stands up.

LANA

I'm tired.

ZACH

I'll let myself out.

LANA

Thanks.

Zach stands and they hug. A long, much needed hug.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - NIGHT

It's raining again. Lana watches it out the window as she collects the last of the dirty cups. Carol steps out and looks around.

CAROL

Almost done?

LANA

Yup.

CAROL

Right, do you mind locking up? I'm going out.

LANA

Sure.

(pause)

Hey.

CAROL

Yeah?

LANA

I was wondering, can I get a advance on next months wages? I kind of need the money.

Carol looks a bit awkward. She doesn't like being parted by her money.

LANA (CONT'D)
It's just my dad is back in the picture, and things are getting difficult.

CAROL
Your dad? Wasn't he in that simulation?

LANA
Yeah.

CAROL
Did he have fun?

Lana doesn't answer. Carol pauses.

CAROL (CONT'D)
I mean, I can give you half now.

Lana looks relieved.

LANA
That would be awesome. Thanks.

Carol taps on her watch, and holds it to Lana's. It chimes.

LANA (CONT'D)
Thank you. I really owe you.

CAROL
It's fine, it's fine.

Lana goes to leave.

CAROL (CONT'D)
Your mom was a great person. Really hard working, and she loved you, and your brothers and sisters. I was really upset when she died.

Lana looks at her. This is the first time she's had anything close to empathy from Carol.

LANA
Thanks. Bye.

Lana leaves.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREETS - LATER

Lana makes her way to her regular bus stop. It's in sight, but as she walks towards it, she's intercepted by a crew of DANGEROUS LOOKING YOUTHS.

There's four of them. They can't be much younger than her, but they're armed with large blades.

MUGGER 1

Watch.

Lana hesitates. She looks more wary than scared.

MUGGER 2

He said give him the watch!

LANA

(stammering)

I can't. I need this money, please
don't, I really need this money,
please.

The first Mugger grabs her wrist, Lana tries to pull away but he's too strong. He slides his blade through the watch's band and it comes off. Lana yells out as the knife also cuts her on the back of the hand. It starts bleeding profusely.

The Mugger holds the watch to his. The Mugger's watch looks different to any we've seen previously. Some add ons, a few wires pointing out. He holds Lana's watch to it and his watch chimes.

The Mugger throws Lana's watch on the floor. They jog off into the night. It's not until they leave that Lana starts to cry. The rain pours, and mixes in with the blood that drips to the ground from her hand.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION - OFFICE - LATER

Lana sits in a sterile office. A DOCTOR sits next to her and she opens up a small tube of gel. She rubs the tiniest amount at the tip of the gash on Lana's hand. Incredibly, the gel instantly sinks into the skin, and slowly, but very surely, the cut starts to close itself up.

LANA

That's so weird.

DOCTOR

That's NanoTech. This is gonna be the future soon enough. Will help with transplants, removing cancer cells. It can even eat up stem cells, and take them to areas that need rebuilding.

LANA

The future is scary.

DOCTOR

Yes, it is.

A LARGE POLICE OFFICER walks through the door, followed by Zach. Lana looks uncharacteristically relieved when she sees Zach's face.

ZACH

How you doing?

LANA

Fine. Are the kids okay?

ZACH

Yeah, your Dad's watching them.

Lana goes to reply but is interrupted.

POLICE OFFICER

The muggers that attacked you were using altered watch tech. Untraceable money transfers. As soon as your money was paid into their watch, it was then sent to another, then another, and so on.

LANA

So, I'm not getting it back.

POLICE OFFICER

One of the few downfalls to only using credit instead of cash nowadays. I never understood why we stopped. Anyway, even if we catch this group, and we are working on it, it's very unlikely you will be able to get your money back.

LANA

So what can I do?

POLICE OFFICER
(awkwardly)
Well, do you have insurance?

Lana sighs and shakes her head. The Doctor sees this and looks awkward too.

LANA
Great.

ZACH
It'll be fine, Lana.
(to the Police Officer)
Thank you.
(to the Doctor)
Thanks.

Lana stands and looks at the Officer and the Doctor. They leave.

EXT. POLICE STATION - OUTSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

Lana stamps out of the station, hands grabbing at her hair. Zach follows close behind.

LANA
What am I going to do?

ZACH
We'll work it out.

Lana spins around to face him, she's focusing her anger at Zach now.

LANA
How? We have no money Zach! I'm looking after 3 kids and an old man who's stuck in a fantasy world! We're going to lose the house, I'm going to lose custody of the kids, what am I going to do?

ZACH
Look. I have money, I have enough to help you out.

LANA
I'm not taking charity.

ZACH
It's not charity. It's a loan. You can pay me back when you can.
(MORE)

ZACH (CONT'D)

I'm not letting you guys end up on the streets.

Lana goes to reply, but she's too tired.

LANA

Zach. I don't want you to have to do this.

ZACH

I want to do this. I care about you, Lana. I care about the kids.

Lana sighs, smiles slightly, and hugs him.

LANA

Thank you.

CUT TO:

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Tiana grins at Lana and her family, and Zach. Lana's hair is a little bit longer, and some things are moved around the living room, it's clear that some time has passed, maybe a couple of months.

TIANA

I've got a job!

GIL

Job!

LANA

A job? Seriously?

Tiana nods furiously, unable to contain her excitement.

TIANA

Yeah, it's just a cleaning gig, at the NanoTech labs downtown, but it's in the evenings so it won't affect school or anything.

Lana is over the moon. She hugs Tiana tight.

LANA

Oh sweetie, that's fantastic.

Godofredo smiles and takes Tiana's hand.

GODOFREDO

I'm so proud of you *mi querida*.

ZACH
This is cause for celebration!
(to Lana)
Right?

LANA
Right.

Lana and Zach stands up.

LANA (CONT'D)
Beers for the grown ups, ice cream
for the kids.

TIANA
I'm having beer though, Lana?

LANA
Sure, if they do a beer flavoured
ice cream.

Lana and Zach leave. Sofia laughs and is instantly tickled by her sister.

MONTAGE:

Lana and Zach enter holding bags. Everyone cheers.

Lana chats with Tiana. Zach and Godofredo laugh at Gil, his face messy with chocolate ice cream.

Godofredo picks up Sofia and spins her around, she screams and laughs.

Lana, Godofredo, Zach and Tiana play cards and talk. Sofia tries her best to play too, and Gil just chews on them.

Zach swaps his beer with Tiana's ice cream and gives her a goodhearted wink.

Godofredo says something that makes Lana laugh. It seems like things are starting to get better between them. Zach notices this.

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The kids are in bed, the TV is on, and the party is winding down. All that remains is Lana, Zach and Godofredo. Zach stands and stretches.

ZACH
Better get going.

LANA
Okay, see ya.

ZACH
Bye.

Zach quickly looks from Lana to Godofredo and smiles. He leaves. A long pause.

GODOFREDO
I like him.

LANA
I like him too.

GODOFREDO
Is it serious?

LANA
We're not exactly dating.

GODOFREDO
Why not?

LANA
I don't exactly need a boyfriend right now. I don't need anyone.

GODOFREDO
No, you don't. You have become a strong young woman Lana.

LANA
Thanks.

GODOFREDO
You have become far stronger than me.

Lana looks at him hard in the eyes.

LANA
I know.

GODOFREDO

I know you can't forgive me. I can't forgive myself. But I want to do better. I want to find work, and help the kids.

LANA

The best way you can help them is to be a father to them.

GODOFREDO

And to help you?

LANA

I don't need your help. Not anymore.

Godofredo nods. Another long pause.

LANA (CONT'D)

Dad?

GODOFREDO

Yes?

LANA

I want to see mom.

Godofredo stares at her.

CUT TO:

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

The TV is playing the ReCoup memories video.

RCR Godofredo and RCR Mom are sending the kids to school, much like in real life. RCR Gil is being carried by RCR Tiana, and RCR Sofia has a slightly different hair cut.

Then RCR Lana leaves out the door. She kisses her mom and her dad, and she walks off too.

TR Lana and Godofredo are slightly leaned in, watching the TV closely.

LANA

And we're happy?

GODOFREDO

Yes. We're very happy.

LANA
Where am I going?

GODOFREDO
To work. You work at the diner.

LANA
(laughs)
Very realistic.

Godofredo laughs too. Lana looks at him.

LANA (CONT'D)
(gesturing to the TV)
Am I a better Lana than that one?

Godofredo looks at her.

GODOFREDO
So much better.

Lana smiles and nods, but that quickly turns to tears.

On the TV, RCR Mom and RCR Godofredo kiss and embrace.

LANA
(weeping)
La extraño mucho papá.

GODOFREDO
(weeping)
Yo también mi amor, yo también.

Lana and Godofredo lean on each other and grieve. The TV shows RCR Mom chatting away, blissfully unaware that she's been dead for over a year.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - AFTERNOON

The diner is bustling, most tables are taken, there's several waiters and waitresses serving and refilling coffees. Lana is taking a order for a table, when Carol pokes her head out the door.

CAROL
Lana? When you've got a second.

Lana nods and continues with the order.

INT. DINER - OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Lana steps into the office. Carol is writing out some paperwork.

LANA
What's up?

Carol looks at her, and smiles.

CAROL
Hey.

LANA
Hey?

CAROL
So, I'm deciding to take a few months off, I need to look after my mom.

LANA
Is she okay?

CAROL
Yeah, yeah, she's just getting old. I wanna be with her before it's too late.

LANA
Okay.

CAROL
And, well, I need someone to take care of this place while I'm gone. I was wondering if you wanted to take the role of manager.

LANA
(shocked)
Really?

CAROL
You've worked here for a long while, and you're always a favourite with the regulars. So yeah. Do you want to?

LANA
Well, yeah, I mean, of course!

CAROL

Great. This comes with a load more responsibilities, but also with a large raise. I'm leaving in a few weeks.

LANA

This is, brilliant. Thank you.

CAROL

Hey. You deserve it.

Lana can hardly contain it, she suddenly hugs Carol. Carol is caught off guard, but allows the hug to happen. Lana lets go, suddenly embarrassed.

LANA

I'll get back to work.

CAROL

Sure.

INT. DINER - CONTINUOUS

Lana walks back out and starts working the register. As she speaks to customers, she's clearly in a much better mood. Behind her, on the TV, a news bulletin plays.

NEWS REPORTER

In business news, ReCoup Corp have made a change to their policy, something that has become a massive revelation to former customers and has brought on much criticism and scrutiny-

The reporters voice is eventually drowned out by the hustle and bustle of the diner, and Lana doesn't notice the groundbreaking news that will change her life forever.

CUT TO:

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - FRONT GARDEN - EVENING

Lana opens the front door, and standing outside, dressed in a suit and tie, is Zach. He holds up some flowers. Lana laughs.

ZACH

Would you like to have dinner with me tonight?

LANA
I would love to.

SOFIA
(O.S.)
Ooooh! Romantic dinner!

Lana turns around to see Sofia and Tiana giggling in the hallway. She rolls her eyes.

LANA
(to Zach)
Let me get dressed.

Lana turns and starts to chase off Sofia, who keeps making kissing noises.

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lana chases Sofia into the living room, then makes her way to her bedroom. She stops and looks at Godofredo.

LANA
Dad, can you look after the kids tonight?

GODOFREDO
Yes.

Godofredo sits in his armchair, a dark blue letter in his hands. Lana doesn't see this. He stares at the TV, but it's turned off.

LANA
You okay?

GODOFREDO
Yes, *mi querido*. Perfectly fine.

Lana kisses him on the head. She goes to get changed. Godofredo looks down at the letter, and suddenly, he looks very tired.

INT. RESTURANT - LATER

Lana, now wearing a rather striking dress, and make up that clearly took a lot of time and effort, sits with Zach on a small table. Light piano music is playing in the background. They each hold a glass of sparkling alcohol.

ZACH
To your new promotion!

The tap their glasses together and take a sip.

ZACH (CONT'D)
So how's it been going?

LANA
Great actually! It's not as hard as
I thought it would be.

ZACH
You must be made for it.

LANA
I hope that being the manager of a
diner isn't the most important
thing I do with my life.

A WAITER appears and gives them a tablet each. Lana's tablet lights up to show a huge menu of food and drinks. She taps on a meal and more information appears, nutritional value, allergy information, extras that can be added etc.

There are also personal picks, things you've enjoyed before in other restaurants, meals similar to what you usually order.

Lana chooses her meal, as does Zach. The waiter takes the tablets away and leaves.

ZACH
So. How's things at home?

LANA
Well, Tiana is super happy at work.
She's even been offered more hours.

ZACH
Great!

LANA
Everyone's doing well at school,
and we've started a savings account
for Sofia to go to college.

ZACH
Jesus. That's great Lana. Really.

Lana nods, but she's holding something back.

ZACH (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

LANA

Nothing. Nothing at all, actually.
That's what's weird. Things don't
go well for me, as a rule.

ZACH

I've said this. You need to stop
thinking you don't deserve to be
happy. Being happy looks good on
you.

LANA

It just doesn't feel right.

Zach takes her hands in his.

ZACH

Does this feel right?

Lana looks into his eyes. Zach goes to move in for a kiss,
but Lana beats him to it. They kiss, a long one. When they
break, Lana blushes. Zach seems almost dazed.

ZACH (CONT'D)

Wow.

LANA

Yeah. Wow.

Zach's watch *pings*. The screen reads the words "Feeling
lucky? Here are some hotels near here..."

Zach shows Lana.

ZACH

These watches are getting way too
clever.

They both laugh. From now on, the rest of the dinner is a lot
more intimate.

FADE OUT.

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - LANA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Lana wakes up, rolls over, and finds Zach, fast asleep next
to her. She sniggers. Zach's eyes open.

ZACH

Hey.

LANA

Hey.

Lana grins.

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Gil and Sofia are watching TV. Tiana is playing on what seems to be a brand new watch. Lana and Zach walk in as nonchalantly as possible. Immediately Sofia turns around.

SOFIA

Zach stayed over last night didn't he?

TIANA

Yes.

No.

LANA

Sofia laughs and makes kissing noises.

SOFIA

¡Estás enamorado! ¡Oh, pájaros del amor!

You're in love! Oooh love birds!

Lana starts to chase Sofia around the couch. Gil laughs and claps as they chase.

LANA

¡Solo porque soy tu tutor legal, no significa que no esté legalmente autorizado a patearte el trasero!

Just because I'm your legal guardian, it doesn't mean I'm not legally allowed to kick your butt!

As Lana catches Sofia and picks her up over her head, Tiana proudly shows off her new watch to Zach.

TIANA

Check this out. The new model. I've just been putting all my info into it.

ZACH

Not bad. You get that with your first pay check?

TIANA

Yep. And the rest is going into our savings.

Lana hears this.

LANA
What? No, Tiana honey, you don't
have to do that.

TIANA
I want to. We're a team.

Lana and Zach's eyes meet.

LANA
Yeah. A team.

Tiana rolls her eyes.

TIANA
Oh my god, there's kids in the
room.

SOFIA
Love birds, love birds!

Lana claps her hand over Sofia's mouth.

LANA
Okay! Breakfast!

INT. SOFIA'S SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

This classroom is bright and friendly, lots of drawings and fun looking stuff scattered about.

While not focused on, we see a THIS WEEK board, detailing some of the things the kids will be doing over the course of the school week. One of these things says: **Make your first NETWORK account!**

Lana sits on a chair in front of the teacher's desk. The AI TEACHER is actually on a screen, a screen that doubles up as a white board that covers the entire one side of the room. This AI teacher is a young woman in very modest clothing.

AI TEACHER
Sofia is doing very well. Her
grades are up 48% which puts her
grade average at over the predicted
level. You must be very proud.

LANA
I am, completely. She's a very
bright girl.

AI TEACHER

It's clear she has a very happy home life as well. She has mentioned her father is back at home.

LANA

Uh, yeah, yeah he's back in the picture.

AI TEACHER

She always speaks about her father, this has definitely been a great help in her school work and her general mood towards school.

LANA

Good, I'm glad.

AI TEACHER

Given the circumstances of his return, it is advised that you keep family matters that possibly could be damaging to her development at a minimum.

LANA

Well, yeah of course, I always make sure she's not involved in stuff like that.

AI TEACHER

If you would like some literature on domestic problems and abusive family home life I will happily print them off for you.

LANA

(agitated)

No. Thank you.

AI TEACHER

It's just families from a Latino background are 14 times more likely to-

Lana stands.

LANA

Okay, I'm leaving now, thank you.

The AI teacher keeps relaying the information even as Lana walks out the door.

INT. SOFIA'S SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Lana meets up with Sofia and Zach. She takes Sofia's hand as they walk down the hall.

ZACH
How did it go?

LANA
The teaching AI is racist, but
other than that-
(to Sofia)
-you are a little genius!

SOFIA
I'm in the top 3 in my class now!
Can I show you my poster? It's way
better than Ella's. Ms Harris said
so!

LANA
Yeah sure you can, where is it?

SOFIA
Down here!

Sofia runs off down the hall.

ZACH
Why didn't your dad come?

LANA
He's been down recently. It said in
the care package that this would
happen, just gonna give him some
time.

ZACH
Maybe I can take him out one night.

LANA
He's not exactly the "going out"
type of guy.

ZACH
Ah, well I suppose I'll have to
take you out then.

Lana smirks.

LANA
Smooth.

ZACH

I know.

Lana's hand finds Zach's, and they stroll down the corridor, together.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - AFTERNOON

Lana proudly walks out of the back room into the diner. She no longer wears a filthy apron, but instead smart managerial clothes. Tony whistles.

TONY

Check out the new manager!

Lana laughs, embarrassed, but we can tell how happy she is.

LANA

It's not a big deal. How's the road treating you?

TONY

(shrugs)

Been trucking sand down south to deal with the flooding in Florida, honestly, feels like the world's ending.

LANA

It's been ending for the past 50 years. It should hurry up.

Tony laughs and gets back to his newspaper. Lana starts loading cups into the dishwasher as Zach comes through the door.

ZACH

Fancy going out for lunch?

LANA

Yeah sure! But I'm buying.

ZACH

Sounds great!

LANA

(to Co-Worker)

I'm gonna take my break now, that cool?

The Co-Worker nods and Lana leaves the diner with Zach.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOOD MARKET - AFTERNOON

Lana and Zach walk through a large colourful street filled with food vans. At a closer look, these food vans aren't filled with people. Again, they're just screens with AI people on them.

Up above, are small white drones, carrying takeaway bags. Some hover over to waiting cars, where eager customers grab them before driving away.

Lana and Zach wander over to a food van that's selling Syrian food. A SYRIAN AI FOOD VENDOR smiles as they approach.

AI FOOD VENDOR
Ahh! Good afternoon-

The AI pauses for a moment while it scans their faces.

AI FOOD VENDOR (CONT'D)
Lana and Zach! What would you like to eat? I know you, Zach, very much enjoyed the hummus and falafel when you ate here recently.

ZACH
(to Lana)
I hate that they do this.
(to AI)
Uh, yes please one of those.

LANA
Yes, and I'll have the same.

AI FOOD VENDOR
Fantastic! I shall start making it for you now. That is \$6.49 please.

Lana taps her watch on the food van screen. The AI looks into space for a moment.

AI FOOD VENDOR (CONT'D)
I am very sorry, but your account seems to lack the funds for this transaction, please pay another way.

LANA
But, I have money on this.

Lana tries again.

AI FOOD VENDOR

I am very sorry, but your account seems to lack the funds for this transaction, please pay another way.

LANA

Ah, it's because the money is in my savings account.

Lana taps a few times on her watch.

LANA (CONT'D)

What the-

(pause)

The account is empty.

ZACH

What?

LANA

It's empty! It's been cleaned out!

ZACH

Who had access to it?

LANA

Just me, and

(pause)

Oh christ. I need to get home.

ZACH

What's wrong?

LANA

I need to get home!

Lana runs off down the street, Zach close behind her.

EXT. TAXI RANK - CONTINUOUS

Lana hails a cab, that smoothly pulls in right next to her. She climbs in as Zach catches up with her, he climbs in too. The driving seat of the cab is covered by a metal wall, similar to the buses.

CAB SPEAKER

Please enter house code.

LANA

4-2-7-8-8-9

CAB SPEAKER
Doors closing.

The cab doors swing closed, and the cab starts to drive.

CUT TO:

EXT. LANA'S HOUSE - FRONT GARDEN - EVENING

The cab pulls into Lana's driveway, and Lana tries to open the door, it's locked.

CAB SPEAKER
Your fare is \$9.50. Please pay
before exiting.

ZACH
I got it.

Zach taps his watch on the cab's screen and the door unlock. Lana bounds out the cab and into the house.

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lana enters the living room. Tiana and Sofia are sitting on the couch, Sofia is laying down and crying silently on her lap. Tiana looks up at Lana. She's crying.

LANA
Where is he?

Tiana just starts sobbing. Lana runs to Godofredo's bedroom.

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - GODOFREDO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is empty. The TV is on. The RCR video again. A dark blue envelope lays on the bed. Lana picks it up. Inside, is a letter.

It reads:

Visit us again!

Come pick up where you left off! ReCoup Corp has changed their policy. For a one off payment of \$4000, you can join RCR again, but this time, forever!

Lana drops the letter. It flutters to the floor. She falls on her knees and starts to sob. Zach runs in and sees her. He puts his hands on her shoulders, and silently watches the TV.

On the TV, RCR Mom and RCR Lana hug.

RCR MOM
Te amo cariño, te amo tanto.

I love you my darling, I love you so much.

CUT TO:

INT. RECOUP BUILDING - OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY

Lana sits with Zach in front of a desk. Behind the desk is a large human sized screen, and on that screen, is an AI.

This AI is in the form of a older BLACK WOMAN with a pleasant face.

RCR AI WOMAN
What is the customers name?

LANA
Godofredo Peña.

The AI looks into space for a brief second then back to Lana.

RCR AI WOMAN
Date and place of birth?

LANA
April 1st, 1994. Dominican Republic, now the United Republic of the Caribbean.

The AI looks into space again and then smiles.

RCR AI WOMAN
Ah, there he is. Yes, he rejoined ReCoup yesterday to continue his previous ReCoup Reality from 6 months and 14 days ago. He is currently on our new RCR package: RCR Infinite. He has paid his one off payment of \$4000 and will now live in RCR until he passes away.

LANA
But that was my money! He stole it from me!

RCR AI WOMAN

I'm sorry, but he paid out of an account that was in his name, and one Ana Peña, who my files tell me is deceased.

LANA

It's my mom's account! She gave it to me, he stole my fucking money!

The AI suddenly becomes very robotic, not looking at Lana anymore but straight ahead.

RCR AI WOMAN

(flat tone voice)

Please refrain from abusive language or I will have to call security.

LANA

Let me talk to a human. This is ridiculous, he took my money, money that was for my family!

The AI returns to it's sweet and very realistic personality.

RCR AI WOMAN

I shall call for a human member of staff. Please wait.

The screen suddenly turns white. The words "PLEASE WAIT" appear. An MALE RCR STAFF MEMBER enters, he's referring to a tablet.

LANA

Pull him out. Take out my dad and give me back my money.

RCR STAFF MEMBER

I'm sorry Ms Peña. But he cannot be pulled out, he is part of the system now. The package your father took is a one way ticket.

LANA

So, he's just gone? How is this legal?

RCR STAFF MEMBER

There is a large amount of paperwork that must be signed, but as long as the customer is in sound body and mind, they are allowed to enter RCR if they so choose.

Lana buries her head in her hands.

LANA
How could he do this?

RCR STAFF MEMBER
I apologise Ms Peña, but there is nothing we can do. He's a remainer now.

(pause)
All I can think of to say that may comfort you, is that to join RCR after such a short amount of time without it, he must be very happy to be back.

Lana looks at him with dagger eyes.

LANA
And we're back where we started.

Lana and Zach stand and go for the door.

RCR STAFF MEMBER
Would you be interested in some brochures on dealing with a person who chooses to go to ReCoup Reality?

He holds out a brochure.

On the cover it reads: **"How to Deal When your Loved One is a ReTaker"**

Lana slaps it out of his hand and storms out. Zach picks it up and hands it back to the shocked Staff Member, then follows Lana out the building.

FADE IN:

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lana sits with Gil, who's sleeping on her lap. Tiana enters. Lana looks over.

LANA
How was work?

TIANA
Fine. There any food?

LANA
Leftovers in the fridge.

TIANA

Thanks.

As Tiana gets out the leftovers and starts eating, Lana motions to a package on the kitchen table.

LANA

Package for you.

TIANA

Oh. Yeah, I need to send that back.

LANA

Why?

TIANA

It's... I bought a new watch for dad. Cause all his mail came in paper form. Thought he'd like it.

LANA

Oh. Yeah, should send it back.

TIANA

Yeah.

(pause)

I'm gonna eat this in my room.

LANA

Okay. *Buenas noches.*

TIANA

Buenas noches.

Tiana leaves Lana, not watching the TV. Just staring into space.

FADE OUT.

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Lana picks up a sleeping Gil, and carries him to his room.

GIL

(in his sleep)

Papá...

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Lana quietly shuts Gil's door, then makes for her own room. She stops at the door and looks at her parent's room. After a moment, she walks towards it.

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - GODOFREDO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is silent. Her mother's pink sweater is still sitting on the bed. Lana walks over and sits on the bed. She picks up the sweater and holds it to her face.

A small key falls out one of the pockets. She frowns at it and picks it up. This is the key to her mother's work locker.

CUT TO:

EXT. DINER - OUTSIDE - NIGHT

Lana opens up the diner's doors with her managerial keys. She steps inside.

INT. DINER - OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Lana walks into the office and turns on the lights. The office is a lot cleaner now Carol isn't in there all the time. But the locker that Lana's mother owned is still the same, locked.

Lana kneels down and unlocks it. Inside, are some spare aprons, some paperwork, and a large photo stuck to the door. It's of her mother and the kids. Lana takes the photo off and looks at it. She starts to cry.

As she weeps, she notices something else, a sealed envelope. She picks it up. It's addressed to Godofredo.

Lana opens it and starts reading. After a moment, she stop crying. In fact, she looks shocked. She reads the whole things then drops it.

LANA
(whisper)
Ay Dios mío.

CUT TO:

INT. LANA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Lana sits with Zach on the foot of the bed. She hands him the letter. He reads it, every now and again glancing up at Lana.

ZACH
You found this in your mom's old
locker?

Lana nods. Zach blows out a low whistle.

ZACH (CONT'D)

Jesus.

LANA

She was planning on leaving him.
Leaving my dad.

ZACH

But. They're together in RCR right?

LANA

Exactly. This doesn't make sense
right?

ZACH

No. So what does this mean?

LANA

I don't know. But I'm going to find
out.

A knock at the door. Lana and Zach stand.

EXT. LANA'S HOUSE - FRONT GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

Lana opens the door, where TWO COPS stand, as well as an
official looking GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL.

JAMES DEPP

Ms Peena?

LANA

Peña.

JAMES DEPP

Yes. My name is James Depp. I work
at the Chicago Department of Social
Services. We are here to take one
Gil...

(pause)

Peña... and Sofia Peña.

LANA

What? No!

JAMES DEPP

Your father Mr Peña has returned to
ReCoup's ReCoup Reality and due to
his absence and your handling as a
parental guardian, the state has
decided that you are unfit as a
guardian and therefore will hand
over both children to us.

(MORE)

JAMES DEPP (CONT'D)
(to the Cops)
Let's get them.

The Cops barge past Lana and Zach. Zach chases them inside.

LANA
You can't do this! They're safe
here!

JAMES DEPP
According to our Social Services
AI, the likelihood of the children
being subjected to abuse and/or
neglect is too high a risk.

Screams and cries from inside the house. The Cops walk out
with Gil and Sofia in each of their arms. Gil is bawling, and
Sofia is screaming and trying to reach for Zach.

ZACH
(to Sofia)
It's okay, calm down, it's going to
be fine.

Lana tries to take Gil away from the Cop. The Cop, with no
hesitation or thought for the child he is carrying, pushes
Lana to the ground. Zach makes towards him, but the cop pulls
out a taser.

COP
(shouting)
STEP DOWN SON! STEP DOWN!

Zach helps Lana up, and they watch, helpless, as the children
are taken away.

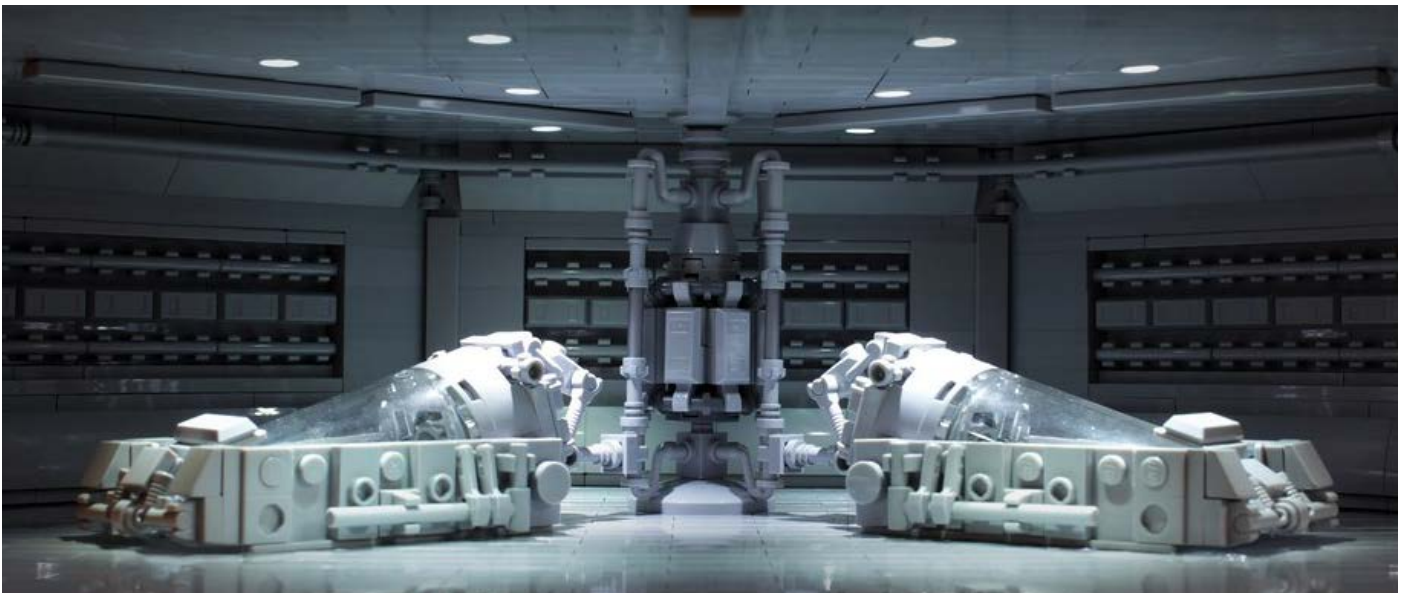
JAMES DEPP
(to Lana)
You'll get the relevant documents
posted to you in the next 3 days.

James Depp walks away and gets into the police car with the
Cops. The car starts to drive away, as the kids silently
scream for their sister. Lana falls to her knees, much like
how Sarah did at the beginning of her story. She sobs.

END OF EPISODE ONE

– *Re-Coup* –

CHARACTER BIOS



RE-COUP

Lana Peña

Age: 20 (22 by episode 5)

Experience with RCR: Already lost her father and a lot of money, later loses custody of her siblings for the same reason.

Strong, responsible, wary, sharp.

Lana is a strong willed, hard headed and brave young woman. Responsible for her three siblings since she was just 19, she has grown up the hard way, and this will help her throughout this story. Her reluctance to get emotionally close with many people is due to her abandonment issues and the death of her mother, who was the closest person to her.

Lana is the hero of this story, and throughout this show, will lose the most, and suffer the worst. But she can take it, and deal it back tenfold.

Antony Hawkins

Age: 30 (31 by episode 5)

Experience with RCR: Joined RCR for several years, lost his mother in TR, and father — again in RCR. Was not informed of his mother's death.

Sweet, friendly, lonely, quiet.

Antony is quite an unconfident character. A mild-mannered chef, who never had the opportunity to do what he wanted in life because of his controlling father. When he dies, Antony joins RCR to live the life that he always wanted but could never

have — until his father dies again in RCR. This makes it all the more tragic, when he returns to TR, to find his real mother has died. After losing his father twice and his mother once, the only parent he now has is his fake RCR mother. This is what breaks down his meek character and builds up something more.

Antony becomes more confident after deciding to campaign against ReCouP, and eventually falling in love with Sarah. He learns that the best way to live life is with no regrets, and no looking back.

Harry Bell

Age: 40

Experience with RCR: Joins RCR for a few months, ruins his marriage.

Naïve, lost, passionate, foolish.

Harry is always looking at the greener grass, despite having a great life. We can empathise with him though, as he is a classic victim of ReCouP's advertisement schemes. The promises of a better life where anything can happen would be tempting to anyone. Even the man who seems to have it all.

This ends badly, leaving Harry alone and bitterly angry with ReCouP. This anger is what fuels him in his fight against the corporation.

RE-COUP

Sarah Cooper

Age: 36

Experience with RCR:

Kicked out of RCR after 5 years

Depressed, bitter, timid, loving.

Sarah is the first person we meet in episode 1. After spending 5 years in RCR, she forgets she's even in there, until she is brutally and horrifically torn from her family and sent back into the grim reality of TR. This traumatic experience greatly affects Sarah, and she becomes a jittery and nervous person. Despite this, she is very intelligent and is willing to do anything to get back to RCR.

When Sarah meets Antony, who has had a similar experience with RCR, she learns the importance of changing her life, rather than trying to stay in the past.

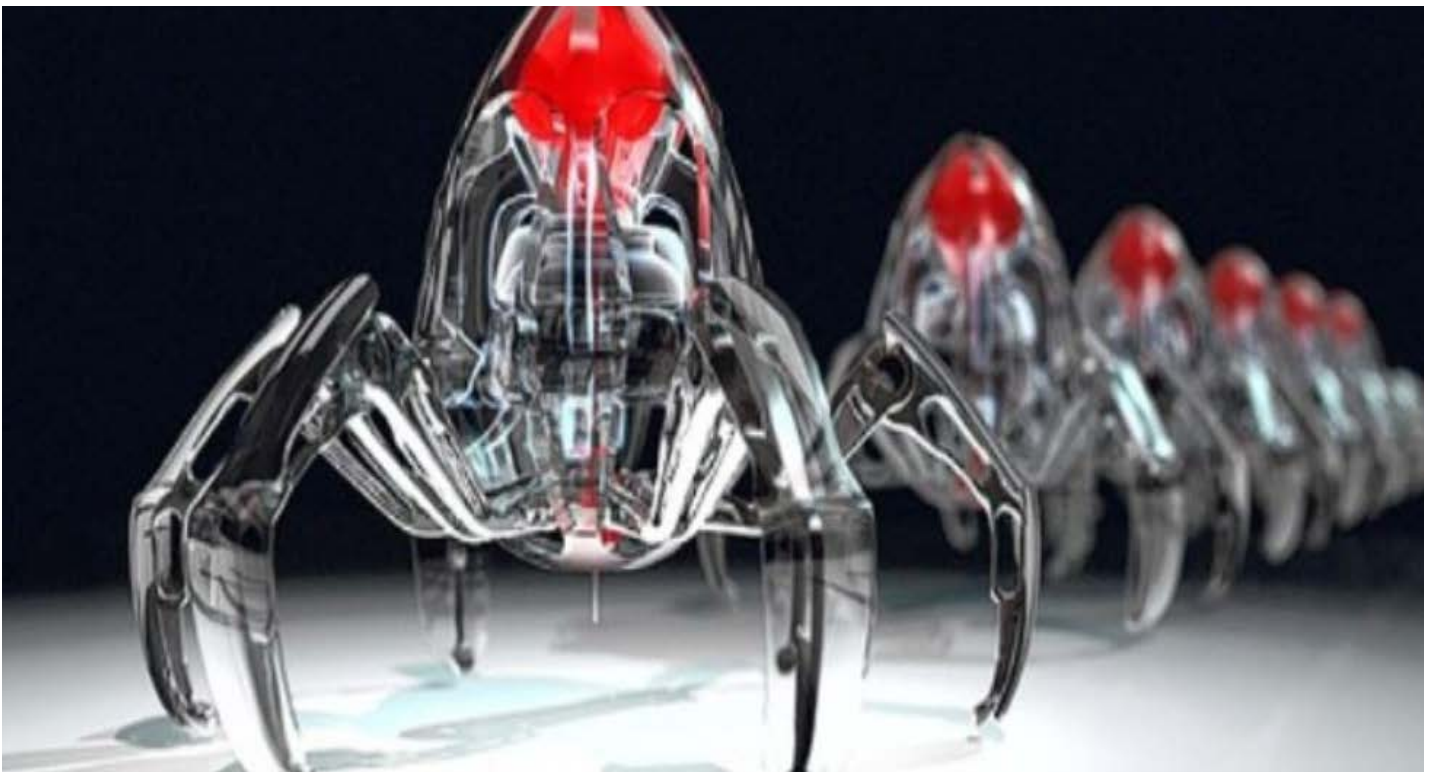
Michael Golding

Age: 37

Quick, cold, ambitious, driven.

Michael Golding is the Zuckerberg type billionaire whom our heroes have to defeat in a battle of wit and nerve. Intelligent, rich, and practically untouchable, Golding is an example of what corporate greed can do to someone so young and so ambitious.

We learn about his younger years in season 2, and how the obsession with progress and technology can warp a person's mind, just as his creation warps the mind of society.



– *Re-Coup* –

EPISODE OUTLINES

*These episodes, despite being anthological, slowly build the overarching story of ReCoup's stranglehold on society. This is shown through dialogue between characters, news on television and online, and the general perspective on ReCoup. We will also see the founder, in mentioning or on TV, as well as mentions of how ReCoup came to be. Perhaps an in-universe movie will be released, much like *The Social Network*.*



RE-COUP

Episode 1 – Addiction

See pilot script.

Episode 2 – Resent

Antony, a successful but unhappy restaurant owner, joins ReCoup Reality after his father dies. Antony had a very bad relationship with his father, and had not spoken to him for years before his death. It is revealed that his father forced him into the family business, but he wanted to go to university and pick a more artistic, fulfilling life instead. By joining RCR, Antony goes back to 2032 and rejects his dad's plans. He becomes a student, finds love, and becomes the artist he always wanted to be. Antony spends several years in RCR, completely forgetting his previous, real life.

A few years into ReCoup Reality, his father dies much earlier than he did in True Reality. It is revealed by his RCR mother that his father had cancer, and wanted to spend as much time with him as possible before he died. After he left for university, his father didn't have much else to live for, hence his untimely passing. Antony is devastated that he had ignored his father in RCR, and resented him in real life. He decides he owes it to his father to return to TR and spend time with his mother and continue to work in the restaurant his father loved so much.

After a tearful farewell to his RCR wife, Antony returns to TR to find that his mother has also passed away while he was in RCR, and his business partner has taken over the company and run it into the ground. His mother had been in hospital for months before her death, hoping that her son would return to say goodbye. ReCoup did

not inform him of her death, nor of his financial situation. Antony now has nothing left. He joins a support group for people that have lost everything due to ReCoup, and describes how much hatred he has for the company that took everything away from him. It seems a movement against ReCoup is forming.

Episode 3 – Adultery

Harry is in a happy marriage with his wife of 10 years. But after a chance meeting with his ex-girlfriend, something starts to eat away at him. He reminisces back to when he had to choose between his ex and his current wife, and after constantly seeing commercials for ReCoup, he decides to spend a couple of weeks in ReCoup Reality to see how his life could have been. When in RCR, he chooses his ex girlfriend to spend his life with.

Harry spends way longer in RCR than intended, and his wife discovers what he did. After he comes out, he decides to divorce her. His wife is distraught, and tries to kill herself. Harry then speaks to his ex-girlfriend, who said that she has no intention of getting back together with Harry. Harry is alone. He considers going back to RCR. But then learns of a ReCoup Reality Survivors Group.

Episode 4 – Regret

Sarah has spent 2 years saving up for RC, after being thrown out, something we saw in episode 1. While setting up a date to start RCR, she meets a man who has just left it. This is Antony, from episode 2. They strike up a friendship that slowly develops into more. She starts going to ReCoup

RE-COUP

Reality Survivors Meetings with him, and she realises how damaging RCR is to the psyche.

Over the course of the episode, we discover why Sarah first joined RCR. Sarah was an alcoholic, and accidentally burned down her house, killing her family. Throughout this episode, Sarah has flashbacks of her life before RCR, her life during RCR, and her life just afterwards.

Sarah and Antony fall in love, and she decides to stay in TR and campaign against ReCoup Corp. We learn that Sarah has been telling her story to the others at the support group.

And who else is sitting there, listening to her? Lana and Harry. At the end of the meeting, they all introduce themselves, and decide that they should bring ReCoup Corp down, by any means possible.

Episode 5 – Revenge

We learn about Lana, Antony and Harry's lives since we last saw them.

Lana's two youngest siblings were taken away by a racially biased, AI-controlled Child Protection Service due her lack of money to support them (although Tiana is of age and now works at the company that manufactures nanobots). She has been depressed and bitter at how ReCoup has ruined her life. She hopes that exposing ReCoup for preying on her father's grief may give her enough compensation to get her brother and sister back. Tiana and Zach join the group.

Antony lost his parents — twice — because of RCR, and has since been campaigning to bring the company down.

Harry lost his wife and his friends, and although

he feels like what happened was his fault, he thinks that ReCoup should be brought to justice.

Sarah, Lana, Antony and Harry, all throughout their experiences with RCR, have noticed details that may point to ReCoup's AI not being as close to real life as advertised.

For example, Lana discovered that, before dying, her mother was planning on leaving her father. His dream family in RCR therefore cannot be right.

The group, along with Zach and Tiana, need to learn more about ReCoup to get enough evidence to put a stop to the company.

Lana and Sarah volunteer to go undercover, Sarah by getting a job at ReCoup, and Lana as a customer, with a plan to take ReCoup down if nothing else works. Antony, Harry, Zach and Tiana then work from the outside, riling up the protesters. It has now become quite well known that the public aren't happy with ReCoup. Studies being released has shown the damage it can do to people's mental health, and the addictive concerns around it.

Throughout the other episodes, we have learnt that global warming has taken its toll on the world, and humans are unhealthy as ever, as most decent crops cannot be grown anymore. The need for blood, organs, and other such things are now in high demand.

Sarah, while sneaking around out of bounds areas, discovers a large room, filled with people in RCR, but on operating tables, many of them missing organs, limbs, skin, everything.

Sarah films this, but is caught just as she releases the evidence to the public.

RE-COUP

Meanwhile, Lana is now inside RCR, and after a tearful and emotional meeting with her mother again, decides she wants to stay in RCR forever.

Episode 6 – Retribution

The plan is not going well. While the public are protesting against ReCoup and the damning evidence being held by the US government is putting pressure on the company, Sarah is being kept within the building, accused of sabotage. Antony and Harry try to infiltrate the building in hopes of saving Sarah and Lana. They manage to get into the inner workings of the company, along with Zach and Tiana.

Meanwhile, Lana is spending time with her RCR mother. But she can't help but notice the inconsistencies, the proof that this isn't how life would have been. Harry and Antony are able to give Lana access to an admin mode, where she can see just how RCR works. As Lana does this, she meets a personified version of RCR's AI. She learns that it is programmed to keep people wanting more, so they use manipulation tactics in order to make it near on impossible for vulnerable people to leave. It is not self aware, it's just the algorithm doing its job.

Sarah is taken to the creator of ReCoup, Michael Golding, and he tells her how they are not the problem, society is the problem, always wanting better than what they have, and rather taking the easy way out instead of working on their lives. Golding leaves, knowing that the law will soon be coming for him. He then tells her that ReCoup is too big, too powerful, too depended upon to stop.

The protests quickly turn into riots, and the rioters break into ReCoup building and storm the RCR

simulators. They force the staff to release the people, but then find the areas where the organ farming is taking place. They find people with missing limbs, missing organs, some people just practically heads in jars. Things turn ugly and the rioters set to destroy the building.

Lana is still speaking to the AI, and learns that the building has been compromised. The AI tells her she can be uploaded into the cloud, where she can live with her mother forever. Lana declines, understanding that no one will be able to move on and fix the world's problems when companies like ReCoup are still around for people to rely on.

It is revealed that, earlier on, Tiana stole and modified thousands of nanobots from the company she works at, and that the group injected them into Lana's bloodstream before she entered RCR. Nanobots have been established throughout the whole series, and with Tiana's pirating, are now able to destroy and replace files, or infect computers. The nanobots exit Lana's system and enter ReCoup's, and starts shutting the entire computer down. People are released from the simulation, and everyone escapes the building as it starts burning.

Lana is the last person in the simulation. She spends one last minute with her mother, who tells her that her real mother would be so proud of her. The AI dies, and with it, the last version of her mother. ReCoup's programmers activate the purge program, pushing the nanobots out and stopping the viruses from spreading to the other ReCoup HQs.

The nanobots have now assimilated all the programming inside the supercomputer, and are sent back into Lana's body, where we see they are able to alter Lana's brain.

RE-COUP

In what way? She has no idea. And neither do we.

Lana is pulled out of RCR, and she manages to escape as the building burns to the ground, and Chicago's RCR along with it.

The group manages to find each other and for a brief moment, it seems they are victorious. But it's not long until they are branded as terrorists by Michael Golding and the media. And the very people

they set out to save, are furious. It seems the group had underestimated how vital RCR had become to thousands of addicts; and they'll do anything to go back.

Lana, Zach and the rest of the group are now on the run.

Meanwhile, an unknown man prepares a variety of weapons while he watches Lana, Antony, Harry and Sarah's faces on TV. He plans to find them, and bring them to justice.

Excerpt:

"Lana opens her eyes. Purple lights are flashing sporadically as the AI fights to stay online. Lana pulls at the feeding tube in her throat and coughs as it comes out. She sits up.

Inside the computer system, we see thousands of nanobots. Microscopic, spider-like robots, up close and magnified as they propel themselves through the electronics. Suddenly, as if they were called back, they start to all move in one direction. They speed towards one exit, up a long cable and-

Lana screams. Her eyes roll back into her head and she arches her back as the nanobots move through the cable and inject themselves back directly into her brain stem."

Future Seasons

— *Season 2* —

Episode 1

Davey, the mysterious man from the end of season 1, is a regular Joe. He has a great job, a wife, and they're trying for a baby. This all changes when he starts to see word of terrorists in Chicago. A group that consists of 4 people: Lana Peña, Antony Hawkins, Harry Bell, Sarah Cooper, and Zach King. Some kind of eco-terrorists, that plan to hurt a lot of people.

Davey sees them constantly: in the newspapers, on TV, on his watch. Soon, he suspects that someone wants him to notice them, to do something. Something that others cannot. Slowly, he comes around to the idea. The police aren't doing anything. Maybe he should.

Then it happens. Davey's wife is killed in a blast orchestrated by the terrorists. Davey is inconsolable. He decides to get them himself.

In a hidden lab, Davey, as well as several other "lone gunmen" awake from RCR. They have been brainwashed, indoctrinated. They believe that these "terrorists" have killed their partners. Partners that have been completely fabricated. These widows can now be sent out to kill whoever ReCoup chooses, and be passed off as a crazy vigilante if caught. Disposable assassins.

They are let loose, with weapons, money, and one plan in mind. To kill Lana, Antony, Harry, Sarah and Zach.

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Episode 2

Lana and the group are on the run. The events in season 1 have been twisted and distorted by the mainstream media to make them out as terrorists. ReCoup Corp have gotten away with everything, claiming the organ farming was made up by the terrorists in order to stir up public unrest. And of course, after the building is destroyed, no evidence could be found. Lana can't even contact her siblings in fear that they will be targeted. They have nowhere to go, and no one to turn to.

Lana is racked with migraines. She meets with Dr. Rebuffe, who tells her that her brain is being altered by the nanobots inside her. He agrees to help the group, which hide in his house until they can figure out where to go.

While trying to decide on their next move, they are contacted by a mysterious person, who has information on how ReCoup started, and how they can stop them.

While they speak to this stranger, Davey gets closer to finding them...

Episode 3

The year is 2030.

A young programmer, Michael Golding, becomes good friends with a neuroscientist, Anna Aver. Anna has an idea to make a video game, where they combine behavioural algorithms with augmented and simulated reality, to create the ultimate immersive game-experience. They get to work on it, and it becomes a huge success. But Michael thinks they can go one step further.

Episode 4

Anna is horrified by what Michael has planned for his technology, and attempts to stop him. After a long and difficult court battle, they plan to part ways, with Anna in possession of the RCR technology. But Michael won't stop until he makes his dream a reality, by any means necessary. Michael kills Anna.

It is revealed that these last two episodes were relayed to the group by this mysterious stranger, through pictures and videos.

Episode 5

The group now know what happened when ReCoup was first formed, and, with Dr. Rebuffe's help, they start to plan their next moves. They get in contact with a rebellion group based in New York, and make their way there. But before they arrive, Davey attacks them, and kills Zach while he tries to save Lana. Lana is devastated.

Episode 6

The group makes it to New York, and joins the rebellion that is trying to take down ReCoup. Lana falls into a sort of coma. Dr. Rebuffe tells the group that the trauma of losing Zach has somehow affected the nanobots that are still inside her.

ReCoup comes down hard on the rebellion, and the group barely makes it out alive. They make the top ten most wanted list in the United States. All

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hope seems lost. The mysterious stranger that told the group about the history of ReCoup reveals herself, and it is Anna Aver. She had survived. Again Davey and another other lone gunman attack the group.

Lana awakes just in time to use these new “powers” to break Davey’s programming, so they can escape.

While Lana is sitting alone, wondering what in the world they are going to do, Zach appears.

Season 3

The first 4 episodes also have scenes based around Michael Golding.

Episode 1

This episode follows Harry, while the rebellion work out how they can fight ReCoup. While working on scouting missions, Harry is caught by the police. He is killed. Golding moves his family into safe houses, preparing for an upcoming battle.

Episode 2

This episode focuses on Antony. Reeling from Harry’s death, him and the group work even harder on finding how to break into ReCoup’s building and, if not reveal their evil deeds, then at least destroy them. While inside the building, Antony is also killed. Golding discovers that Anna is still alive, and plans to kill them all, even if he has to do it himself.

Episode 3

This episode focuses on Sarah. Things aren’t looking good: they have no leads on how they can stop ReCoup, and the police are closing in on them all. They make a plan on how to reach the main building. But just as they start to put the plan into motion, Sarah is killed. Golding starts to lose support and funds from his investors.

Episode 4

Lana is captured by ReCoup. She is taken into their building, where she learns more about their master plan, and meets the founder, Micheal Golding.

And just as Lana is about to be killed as well... She wakes up.

Episode 5

Zach reveals to Lana that he is ReCoup’s AI. He reveals that the nanobots in Lana’s system gave her the power to tell the future, with the same accuracy as an RCR simulation. The past four episodes were Lana’s dreams, telling her a possible future where they all die.

Now armed with the power to tell what could happen, the group are able to keep one step ahead of ReCoup, and to successfully start their attack on the company. They find evidence that ReCoup are creating lone gunman to do their bidding, and release it to the mainstream media. As they do this, Davey shows up, and he wants to help.

There is only one thing that can now stop them. Golding deletes his historic records from everything, making him practically invisible in RCR and to Lana. Lana and the group still attack, and the battle begins.

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Episode 6

The breach of the ReCoup building is underway, and hell has broken loose. The rebels are fighting their way to the top of the building, and the public are rioting. Using the riot as cover, Lana and the group sneak into the HQ, with the help of Lana's power to predict other people's actions.

But when they reach Michael Golding, Lana finds herself unable to use her newly-found power. That is when Michael comes face to face with Anna. Anna wants to stop this once and for all, and to regain control of her technology. They have a fight, and Anna manages to kill Michael.

ReCoup's main servers are destroyed, and the fight is over. Lana is able to use her cybernetic

powers to relay their experiences and prove the group's innocence and the crimes that ReCoup committed, and the group is acquitted of all charges. Lana's siblings are returned to her, and the group are allowed to start new lives for themselves.

NanoTech, the company behind the nanobots, start to look into how Lana came to get her powers, and perhaps find a way to splice human with software...

The fight is not over...

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