

AFTERLIFE

by

CYN BERMUDEZ

Based on an outline by Lucas Krost and Cyn Bermudez

"We cannot live only for ourselves. A thousand fibers connect us with our fellow men; and among those fibers, as sympathetic threads, our actions run as causes, and they come back to us as effects." – Herman Melville

CYN BERMUDEZ  
Cynstargazer@gmail.com

EXT. OUTSIDE

Earth from space is a beautiful sight: the blue ocean, the landmasses.

COMPUTER A.I.

(voice only)

You first met Terrin at school, is that correct?

FRIEND 1

(voice only)

Yeah. Math class. I smiled at him, and he gave me a weird look.

(chuckles)

I thought he was dogging me, you know.

Traveling closer and closer the beauty subsides as we see an urbanized Earth: Deforestation, clouds of pollution, over-population, etc.

COMPUTER A.I.

(voice only)

Dogging - a colloquial term meaning a facial expression denoting disapproval while challenging a perceived opponent.

Traveling closer still into an average city,

(FRIEND 1)

(voice only, chuckles)

Uh, yeah. Yeah, so, we met out in The Field at school--

Traveling into a suburban neighborhood,

COMPUTER A.I.

Field, an open area of land typically used for--

CUT TO:

EXT. AN AFTERLIFE SATELLITE/INTERVIEW CENTER

A small building that says AFTERLIFE.

FRIEND 1

No. We called it "The Field". It was a small area behind the gym.

Obscured. Teachers didn't go out there. It was kind of forgotten, you know. Or maybe ignored. So we'd go there to uh...you know, do things.

CUT TO:

INT. AN AFTERLIFE SATELLITE/INTERVIEW CENTER

Inside a small white room, a young man is conversing with a computer screen. The screen is so cleanly flat that it blends into the wall. There's nothing on the screen, only a spherical light that dims and lightens with its own voice.

COMPUTER A.I.

To participate in illegal activities such as solicitation of and/or consumption of unregulated drugs, such as--

FRIEND 1

No. No, nothing like that. I mean, yeah, okay some kids. But we were there to fight. Terrin looked so scrawny and scared. I was surprised he showed up, you know. I'd heard about him, what happened to his mom and everything.

COMPUTER A.I.

I don't understand how this was the beginning of your friendship.

FRIEND 1

I felt bad for him. I hesitated. That's when he blurted out, "Why'd you dog me?" And I was like, "you dogged me." Then we just sort of laughed. He looked relieved. I was relieved.

COMPUTER A.I.

Tell me about Terrin's parents, how you perceived them and their relationship with Terrin.

CUT TO:

EXT. SMALL GREEN HOUSE

On a single street in the same suburban street, is a small

green house. Cacti litter the front yard.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

A father (DANIEL) and a son (TERRIN) are sitting at a dinner table eating sandwiches and drinking sodas. It's awkwardly quiet.

Daniel is wearing his work uniform: dark blue overalls stained with grease. A patch with his name is sewn on the left side chest area. He's a young father but looks aged, a blue collar worker with rough hands and disheveled hair.

Terrin is flipping through screens on his cell phone when it rings.

TERRIN

Hey.

(chuckles)

You didn't get me sent rock climbing or sky jumping, did you?

CUT TO:

EXT. AFTERLIFE SATELLITE/INTERVIEW CENTER

Terrin's friend is walking toward his car, a convertible. The Afterlife Center behind him.

FRIEND 1

Both. Just kidding. I don't know yet. They're sending the agenda piece meal. We know when you know.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE

Daniel quietly and abruptly excuses himself from the table. He's upset. He leaves his sandwich half-eaten on the table and walks to the window in the living room. Terrin is still at the table.

TERRIN

Okay, I'll see you soon.

The house itself is simple and small, the living room connected to the dining area. Half-eaten sandwiches, Daniels and Terrin's, are on the table. No tech is visible,

other than Terrin's cell phone and a television.

Family pictures adorn the walls and tabletops. A picture of Daniel, Terrin, and Terrin's mother sits atop an end table. The photo was taken at the zoo, a lion's exhibit behind them. In the picture, noticeably, Terrin is wearing a pendant on a leather string; it rests around Terrin's neck, on his chest.

The room fills with angry silence as DANIEL stares out of the window. Terrin gets up from the table and walks closer to his father.

DANIEL

Do you hate me that much?

TERRIN

This isn't about you. You always make everything about *you*. Your feelings, your pain. This is *my* choice. *My* life.

DANIEL

(stating "under his  
breath")

Not just your life.

(Louder now )

What *you* choose to do effects everyone around you. The choices *you* make don't just involve *you*.

TERRIN

What you want doesn't matter. When are you going to get that? Besides, this is bigger than me and you.

(sounding optimistic,  
convincing himself more  
than his father)

In my own small way, I'm helping the world.

DANIEL

Quit selling it to me. You're putting your mind into a damned machine! Do you understand that? I'm trying to help you. This isn't just some ordinary mistake you can bounce back from, kid. It's the end of your fucking life.

TERRIN

I'm not trying to sell you anything. The Earth *is* damaged. If

enough people upload, it could help. And it's not the end. It's a different life. Not the end of life.

DANIEL

Can't eat or drink. *Have sex.* See the sun, feel it on your skin. What's wrong with you? It's not natural.

TERRIN

I won't be able to do those things in the traditional sense, but that doesn't mean it won't be better. And evolution is a part of life.

DANIEL

Better? Not in any sense of the word--you won't have a body! And after what happened to your mother, how can you do this?

TERRIN

Here we go.

DANIEL

Do you think she wants this for you? To be cut off from the world, living in a machine.

TERRIN

You don't know what the hell you're talking about. I'll be connected to *everything*, every consciousness that's ever uploaded. And not just that, everything that's ever been uploaded!

DANIEL

Except your mother. But that doesn't matter to you. As long as it satisfies you. To hell with everyone else. Look where this nonsense got her!

Defeat, anger, pain spreads across Terrin's face.

TERRIN

(shaking his head in frustration)  
I'm outta here.

Terrin runs out the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE

Terrin's friends pull up just as Terrin runs out of the house.

FRIEND 1

You okay?

DANIEL

Just go.

Terrin jumps into the car. CLOSE UP of Terrin's face, hurt and anger in his eyes. The pendant he's wearing, the same one from the photo of him on the end table, the one with his mother and father at the zoo, catches the sun and reflects the light.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - BY THE WINDOW

Terrin catches his father's eyes as Daniel watches Terrin from the window. They stare at each other for a moment.

Music plays.

The car peels away, tires screeching. The music wanes.

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

EXT. ROAD

A siren flashes. Yellow tape cordons off a small area of road, a wrecked car behind it. A white sheet covers a body.

CUT TO PRESENT:

INT. CAR

Terrin and his friends are driving down the road. The top is down in the convertible.

FRIEND 2

This is your last night, dude.  
Cheer up.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY

Terrin and three of his friends are driving down the highway in a convertible, their hair and cheeks flap and jiggle with the wind.

They're laughing and listening to music.

CLOSE UP of Terrin. His eyes, they smile but are full of debate, of things said and unsaid.

MEDIUM VIEW of Terrin and his friends in the car as a driver in another car driving next to them nods, indicating his/her desire to race.

Terrin and his friends oblige. They race the car next to them, overtaking the car but then receding. They do this, overtaking and receding, a few times. Finally Terrin and his friends win. They speed off leaving the other car far behind.

LONG VIEW of the convertible with Terrin and his friends. The backdrop is barren. Trees are dead. The ground is dry.

INT. HOUSE

Daniel is sitting on a big upholstered chair in the living room drinking hard liquor from a glass. He's holding a picture of his wife.

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT

A younger Terrin and Daniel are sitting near Daniel's wife, Terrin's mother. Only her lower legs and feet are seen. Terrin and Daniel are crying.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE

Daniel is tearing up Terrin's room looking for something. After a few moments of rifling through drawers and papers, he stops and sits on top of Terrin's bed looking defeated.

Then he sees it, slightly hidden from view but in plain sight. It had always been in plain sight: The AFTERLIFE



folder, a welcome packet filled with info about the "last night". The Afterlife Satellite/Interview center is in the background image of the pamphlet.

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

INT. HOUSE

A younger Terrin is sitting with his mom and dad at the kitchen table.

DANIEL  
He just wants to see that girl,  
what's her name? Anna something?

TERRIN  
Just Ann. And no. Tommy told me  
Mrs. Lo has real strawberries.  
(turning toward his  
mother)  
*Real* strawberries.

CUT TO PRESENT:

INT. HOUSE

Daniel grabs his keys and runs out the door. The door clicks shut behind him. A car starts outside of the house. Headlights are on and seen through sheer curtains as they curve into another direction. The rumbling engine and headlights wane as the car drives away.

EXT. STREET FOOD MARKET

Food stands line a poorly paved a road in the city. Lights hang, draping each stand with a string of tiny light bulbs.

From a distance, a WIDE VIEW, barbecue smoke rises in the air. Smog yellows the city lights. A myriad of cars line the streets.

The food market is bustling with activity, with life, food cooking, people eating. Families and friends of every kind congregate, talking, laughing, and arguing. Street performers and fortunetellers adorn every corner, music and conversation blending.

Moving closer to the signs adorning the food stands, some say REAL MEAT and others say REAL FRUIT. While others say, TASTES LIKE THE REAL THING.

Terrin peers down the street and looks at the market with trepidation. He hasn't been here since his mother died.

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

INT. HOUSE

A younger Terrin is sitting with his mom and dad and the breakfast table.

CUT TO PRESENT:

EXT. STREET FOOD MARKET

Terrin's friend gently pats him on the back, a gesture of comfort, of understanding.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET FOOD MARKET - STRAWBERRY STAND

Terrin is standing with his friends near stand that says REAL FRUIT, and a smaller sign hovering over a few strawberry baskets that says \$25.00 a basket. Another sign says 16 oz WATER \$10.00.

Terrin's friend pays for the fruit with a form of digital money and hands Terrin a single strawberry.

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

EXT. STREET FOOD MARKET - STRAWBERRY STAND

A younger Terrin stands with his mother near the stand. She hands him a strawberry from the basket.

CUT TO PRESENT:

EXT. STREET FOOD MARKET - STRAWBERRY STAND

Terrin bites into the strawberry. He nods his head with enjoyment.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOOD MARKET

Terrin is nudged with his friend's elbow. Terrin's friend nods in the direction of a girl, Ann, a crush Terrin's had for a long time.

Terrin smiles sheepishly.

FRIEND 1  
It's now or never.

FRIEND 2  
No regrets.

Terrin takes in a deep breath. Then he walks up quickly to Ann.

TERRIN  
Hi.

ANN  
Hi.

FADE OUT.

EXT. STREET FOOD MARKET

Daniel exits his car and heads toward the food market.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET FOOD MARKET - STRAWBERRY STAND

He arrives at the fruit stand where Terrin was. He's talking with the lady who runs the stand. Though we can't hear, it's clear he's asking her about Terrin, if she saw him. She nods yes.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET FOOD MARKET

Daniel examines a single strawberry. He takes a bite. As he's chewing, he catches site of the stand where Ann was at earlier.

CUT TO:

EXT. A LARGE BUILDING - DANCE/FIGHT CLUB

Loud music emanates from the large building. The parking lot is filled with cars.

CUT TO:

INT. LARGE BUILDING - DANCE/FIGHT CLUB - GROUND FLOOR

The large building has three levels. The ground floor is the main dance area. Upstairs is where the private areas and rooms are. The place is a common spot selected for "last-nighters" to drink, dance, and have sex, for a night with the one who got away, a night to vent past frustrations.

Inside the dance club, Terrin is there with his friends. Ann is there too. Terrin and Ann make eye contact.

Ann walks up to Terrin and gives him a long kiss. And leads him up the stairwell.

CUT TO:

INT. LARGE BUILDING - DANCE/FIGHT CLUB - THIRD FLOOR

Various couples are kissing or talking, some are walking into and out of private rooms.

Ann leads Terrin into one of the private rooms. The door shuts.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY

Daniel is driving on the same stretch of road Terrin and his friends were on a few hours back.

The window is down, the air combing through his hair.

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

EXT. ROAD

Flares circle a wrecked car on the road. Sirens are flashing in the near background. A police officer is snapping pictures behind yellow tape.

CUT TO PRESENT:

EXT. HIGHWAY

Daniel, thinking of his wife and the night she died, speeds up. He's driving dangerously too fast.

Another car next to him matches his speed. Daniel understands that it's a challenge. He accepts. The two cars race down the highway.

Daniel's speed at times overtakes the other car but then recedes. Like his son, this happens a few times until finally Daniel wins, leaving the other car far behind.

LONG VIEW of the car. The backdrop is barren. Trees are dead. The ground is dry.

INT. DANCE/FIGHT CLUB - BASEMENT

Downstairs in the basement, Terrin and his friends are watching amateur fighting matches.

Egged on by his friends, Terrin is encouraged to fight, to let go and relieve all the aggression and anger he's felt in his life.

Terrin taps in and begins boxing. The punching and swinging is light at first, and then becomes more aggressive. Terrin is beating up a guy in the circle with him, a make-shift ring of people. With each hit, Terrin thinks of his anger towards his dad.

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

INT. HOUSE

DANIEL  
As long as it satisfies you. To  
hell with everyone else.

CUT TO PRESENT:

INT. DANCE/FIGHT CLUB - BASEMENT

Terrin hits the guy in the ring harder.

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

INT. HOUSE

TERRIN  
It's my life

CUT TO PRESENT:

INT. DANCE/FIGHT CLUB - BASEMENT

Terrin hits the guy in the ring again, even harder than the last time.

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

INT. HOUSE

DANIEL  
Look where this nonsense got your mom.

CUT TO PRESENT:

INT. DANCE/FIGHT CLUB - BASEMENT

This time Terrin is hit. The tide of the fight turns. The guy in the rings hits Daniel again and again.

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

INT. HOUSE

A younger Terrin is sitting with his mom and dad and the breakfast table.

DANIEL  
He just wants to see that girl, what's her name? Anna something?

TERRIN  
Just Ann. And no. Tommy told me Mrs. Lo has real strawberries.  
(turning toward his mother)  
Real strawberries.

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

EXT. ROAD

Flares circle a wrecked car on the road. Sirens flash in the near background. A police officer is snapping pictures behind yellow tape.

CUT TO PRESENT:

INT. DANCE/FIGHT CLUB - BASEMENT

Terrin's face is bloody. He's on his feet but wavering. He's getting pummeled, hit again and again: socked and kicked in the face and ribs.

EXT. FLASHBACK - HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT

A younger Terrin and Daniel are sitting near Daniel's wife, Terrin's mother. Only her lower legs and feet are seen. Terrin and Daniel are crying.

DOCTOR

I'm sorry. I can't find your wife's code.

DANIEL

What does that mean?

DOCTOR

It means her upload failed.

CUT TO PRESENT:

INT. DANCE/FIGHT CLUB - BASEMENT

Terrin swerves, ready to collapse. Everything is moving slower. CLOSE UP of a slow moving fist hits Daniel's face. MOVING OUT, Terrin hits the ground. The fighter is still hitting Terrin's face. Terrin is defeated.

Terrin's friends pull him out of the fighting circle.

CUT TO:

INT. DANCE/FIGHT CLUB - BASEMENT

Daniel enters the basement of the building where Terrin just left. Daniel observes the two new people who are in the fighting "ring".

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

INT. DANCE/FIGHT CLUB - BASEMENT

A younger Daniel is fighting in the pit at the fight club. He's beating and being beaten.

CUT TO PRESENT:

INT. DANCE/FIGHT CLUB - BASEMENT

Daniel's eyes catch a glint of shining metal on the floor. It's near his feet. He bends over and notices it's his son's pendant. He picks it up and sees blood on it. He looks up at the pit and realizes his son must have fought. He sees blood all over the pit and rushes out.

INT. HOSPITAL - ER

Terrin is lying on a bed in the emergency room. His face swollen, bruised, bloody. One of his eyes is nearly sealed from the swelling. His friends are with him.

A doctor pulls back the curtain and enters.

DOCTOR

Last night, huh.

(Shakes his head)

Don't understand why some of you do this fighting thing. But then again, I don't know why you want your consciousness in a machine.

(chortles in a "some people" sort of way)

Well, you're lucky. No broken bones, just a lot of bruising.

Terrin smiles.

FRIEND 1

Can we leave now?

DOCTOR

Yes.

(to Terrin)

But you still have to take it easy. You have a concussion. The nurse will bring the discharge papers.



CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - ICU

As Terrin walks down the hospital hall with his friends, sliding doors open, and he catches a glimpse of a man and boy crying over a woman who apparently just passed.

The door closes. He moves closer, entering the unit alone as another hospital worker enters.

There are three or four families in there, pacing, worried, crying. But his attention is called to the man and boy, a father and son, in despair over the dead woman, a wife, a mother.

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT

A younger Terrin and Daniel are sitting near Daniel's wife, Terrin's mother. Only her lower legs and feet are seen. Terrin and Daniel are crying.

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

INT. HOUSE

A younger Terrin is sitting with his mom and dad and the breakfast table.

DANIEL

He just wants to see that girl,  
what's her name? Anna something?

TERRIN

Just Ann. And no. Tommy told me  
Mrs. Lo has real strawberries.  
(turning toward his  
mother)  
Real strawberries.

TERRIN'S MOM

(she winks knowingly and  
smiles)  
Let's go get some strawberries

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

EXT. FOOD MARKET - STRAWBERRY STAND

Terrin is eating a strawberry. His mother is holding the small strawberry basket. Terrin is looking at Anna and smiling. She's looking at him too and smiling.

TERRIN'S MOM  
 (nudging him with her  
 elbow)  
 At least go talk to her.

TERRIN  
 (his face reddens)  
 I can't.

A cell phone rings. Terrin's mom, Daniel's wife, answers it.

TERRIN'S MOM  
 (to Daniel, who is on  
 the other end of the  
 phone)  
 Yeah, we're on our way.  
 (ending the phone call  
 and speaking to Terrin)  
 Let's go. You dad can't make  
 sandwich if his life depended on  
 it.

Terrin pouts.

TERRIN'S MOM  
 (smiling)  
 You snooze, you lose.

CUT TO  
 FLASHBACK:

EXT. ROAD

Terrin and his mother are driving home from the food market. Terrin is in the passenger side holding the strawberry basket and eating a strawberry. His mother is driving.

Instantly, the car is struck. Their bodies fling forward, and the car twists and flips.

CUT TO  
 FLASHBACK:

EXT. ROAD

A wrecked car on the road. Smoke emanates from it. Two people are inside: Terrin and his mother.

Terrin comes to but his mom is still out cold.

TERRIN  
Mom ... mom, mom!

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

INT. HOSPITAL - ICU

Daniel is speaking with the doctor, while Terrin's mother, Daniel's wife is in critical condition. Terrin is sitting near his father listening.

DANIEL  
What are you saying? She's alive?

DOCTOR  
Not really. Your wife is brain dead. I know it's a difficult choice, but we have more options now than we did before. The Afterlife is fast becoming a viable option for--

DANIEL  
That...thing, for sick people?

DOCTOR  
It's not just for the sick and elderly, not anymore. You won't be able to see her in the traditional sense, but you can see her code, know that she's okay, happy, healthy. And you might decide to join her in the future.

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

EXT. FLASHBACK - HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT

A younger Terrin and Daniel are sitting near Daniel's wife, Terrin's mother. Only her lower legs and feet are seen. Terrin and Daniel are crying.

DOCTOR  
I'm sorry. I can't find your  
wife's code.

DANIEL  
What does that mean? You said  
she'd be fine. That she'd live in  
there, in that machine.

DOCTOR  
It doesn't happen often. I'm  
sorry. It means her upload failed.

CUT TO PRESENT:

INT. HOSPITAL - ICU

Terrin walks up to the doctor who is talking to another  
family about uploading.

DOCTOR 2  
You don't have to worry about your  
husband being sick or hurt.

WIFE  
So there's no pain

DOCTOR 2  
No. None. And--

TERRIN  
It can fail too. Did he tell you  
that?

DOCTOR 2  
(motioning to security)  
Not likley.

TERRIN  
They might not find the code. They  
don't tell you that part.  
(to the doctor)  
You said it failed, but do you  
know what that even means? Maybe  
the "failed" uploads are in some  
kind of digital purgatory? Huh?  
(to the woman)  
Bet they didn't tell you the fine  
print.

The security guard approaches Terrin. He sees the guard  
walking toward him. He takes off running.

He bursts through the doors to the main hospital, and then into the main lobby. His friends are there.

FRIEND 1

Terrin?

Terrin continues to run out of the hospital.

TERRIN'S FRIENDS

Terrin?!

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD

Terrin runs faster, pushing himself as if he could burst into flames if he ran fast enough, burning up his life, his pain, his past.

The hospital behind in the distance.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL

Daniel rushes in. He stops at the nurse's desk.

DANIEL

Excuse me.

The nurse is on the phone ignoring Daniel.

DANIEL

Hello. Excuse me.

NURSE

(looking at Daniel)

Can I help you?

DANIEL

I'm looking for my son, Terrin Cadena. I think he might be here?

NURSE

(typing and looking the screen for a few moments)

He was here. Was discharged about twenty minutes ago.

DANIEL

Thanks.

Daniel turns away from the nurse's desk. He pauses, unsure of his next move. The other patients catch his attention: a body wheeled out. A man and boy crying together. Another family surrounding their loved one being uploaded. A wife worrying about her husband.

He clutches Terrin's pendent in his hands. CLOSE UP on Daniel's face, his eyes. He knows where his son went.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. SYNTHETIC ANIMAL ZOO

Terrin is standing near the lion exhibit. A beautiful, synthetic lion and his lioness sit proudly nearby.

RECORDED VOICE EXHIBIT

The lion was the last of the big cats to die off...

Terrin breaks down, crying. He bends over dizzy.

CUT TO  
FLASHBACK:

INT./EXT. SYNTHETIC ANIMAL ZOO

A young boy, Terrin, and his parents are looking at the lions. They're smiling wide, enjoying their time. They look like the picture-perfect family.

CUT TO PRESENT:

INT./EXT. SYNTHETIC ANIMAL ZOO

Terrin is passed out.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. SYNTHETIC ANIMAL ZOO

Daniel arrives at the zoo and goes straight to the lion's exhibit, Terrin's favorite exhibit as a kid. He sees Terrin passed out cold on the floor. Terrin's face is still bruised, and he looks dead.

Daniel freaks out, runs to his son.

DANIEL  
(trying to revive  
Terrin)  
Terrin. Terrin!

Daniel notices Terrin's eyes flutter, his mouth moving slightly. Daniel sighs with relief.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL/OUTPATIENT UPLOADING

Daniel is sitting near his son, who is laid across a procedures table. At first, all we see are Terrin's leg and feet.

Daniel's are red. He's been crying. A doctor approaches.

DOCTOR  
It was a success. Terrin's code  
looks good.

The doctor hands Daniel a tablet. Daniel looks at the code on the screen. He's sad but relieved.

EXT. OUTSIDE

Moving backward, exiting from the small green house, passing the front yard littered with cacti, and moving up and away from the suburban neighborhood, the average city, the over-populations, the clouds of pollution, the deforestation, the urbanized Earth, into space. Further away, the Earth from space is a beautiful sight.