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OTHER EYES

written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. MEADOW - DAY (MEMORY: 10 YEARS AGO)

YOUNG JESS P.O.V.

Pollen reflects off late-afternoon sunbeams.

YOUNG JESS and YOUNG LEXI, both 8, are happily making a daisy chain in the long, dry grass. Young Lexi looks entirely innocent in her beautiful summer dress that's slightly smudged with mud.

The girls delicately pick up their chain and place it on the head of OLA CLARKE, 30s, who is lounging on a blanket. She has a dark Eastern European complexion and melancholy eyes.

Young Jess glimpses MALCOLM CLARKE, 40s, spreadeagled on the blanket behind Ola. His face is sunburnt, and empty beer cans lie all around him.

Young Lexi suddenly stops and becomes very serious; her voice cuts through all other sounds of the memory.

YOUNG LEXI  
Lexi's sharing.

The memory shakes and fades to:

INT. SHED - DAY

ANONYMOUS P.O.V.

Lying on their side, the anonymous person (anon) shakes their head until the wooden planks of the shed wall are visible.

A floating vlog screen appears in their vision.

ON SCREEN:

DRONE P.O.V.

The face of LEXI LOVEDAY, 18, stares back. Her hair's tied up, and she's wearing glamorous make-up.

LEXI (CONT'D)  
Hi, guys! Are you ready for the  
ball tonight? Woo! Woo!

The confident teenager was born to be in front of the camera.

LEXI (CONT'D)  
But first...

The drone gets close to her eyes.

LEXI (CONT'D)  
You need to know that tonight has  
been made possible by Other Eyes.

Close up, Lexi's beautiful blue irises are mechanical.

LEXI (CONT'D)  
Just ask your A.I. if you're  
considering an upgrade.

Lexi winks. Intro MUSIC begins.

OFF SCREEN:

The anon gets up. The screen moves with their vision until they use a gesture to pin it to the wall.

The shed is small, dank. The only furniture is a single bed and an old dresser. A black cat sleeps on the bed.

Pulling on several items of black clothing, we see there are multiple deep cuts on the anon's skinny wrist.

Lexi's vlog shows a montage of her getting ready to go out.

The anon packs their pockets with items including a large black PISTOL.

Heading out the door, the anon catches a glimpse of themselves in a mirror: They're covered head-to-toe in black. They are anonymous. It's barely obvious we're looking at a young woman.

INT. LOVEDAY HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY (MOS)

DRONE P.O.V.

Several drones circle around Lexi, taking in her elegant gown.

Large windows surround the open-plan room. The animated wallpaper of the single-storey cottage blooms.

SAMANTHA LOVEDAY, 40s, hovers behind her only child. She's the spitting image of Lexi in twenty years.

Lexi gives her mother air kisses, then opens the front door.

INT./EXT. LOVEDAY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS (MOS)

The drones rush out the front door and take up positions above the crowd that are waiting at the end of the drive.

The crowd cheer as Lexi exits. She uses the driveway as her private red carpet. She takes her time waving to and greeting the crowd; she's a natural.

Finally, she enters the waiting driverless limousine.

INT./EXT. LIMOUSINE - DAY (MOS)

LEXI P.O.V.

Lexi's clique greet Lexi. FRANKIE, MADISON and ALICE, all 18, look like photoshopped models; Frankie's the only one that smiles.

The girls exchange excited air kisses and pass around little gifts from their handbags, which they pose with as if advertising the products.

Alice passes Lexi a glass of champagne.

INT. SCHOOL - HALL / BALLROOM - NIGHT (MOS)

MULTIPLE CHILD P.O.V.

Digital augments make the hall appear as an opulent ballroom. Mist hugs the floor and chandeliers dangle from the ceiling.

All the children have their eyes on Lexi, it's as if she's standing at the centre of the ball.

LEXI P.O.V.

Digital A.I.s of Albert Einstein and Marie Curie walk past.

Alice shows off a new watch to Lexi's clique. Lexi, not to be upstaged, reveals a diamond ring. Children gather around.

Alice passes Lexi another glass of champagne.

INT. SCHOOL - HALL / BALLROOM - LATER (MOS)

LEXI P.O.V.

The children dance as if everyone's watching.

Lexi stumbles as she makes her way off the dance floor.

INT. SCHOOL - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS (MOS)

The corridor has no augments. Noticeboards and art cover the walls. Lexi notices herself in some class pictures.

She loses interest when she comes across a picture of herself alongside a blurred-out classmate.

She enters the toilet. A message reads, "BE RIGHT BACK".

ANIMATED IMAGE OF LEXI ON A BEACH

EXT. SCHOOL - NIGHT

LEXI P.O.V.

The party's over. Pupils SHOUT drunkenly from driverless cars heading in all directions. A car stops for Lexi.

LEXI (O.S.)  
No, thank you. I need some air.

EXT. HIGHFORD - STREET - CONTINUOUS

The road's quiet. A dark park is opposite a row of identical, modern houses, all with their curtains drawn.

From her handbag, Lexi pulls out a small wide-angle mirror. She holds it up in front of her as she's walking.

LEXI  
Hey, guys. What a night! I can't believe that's the last time I'll step foot in school. I'm going to uni in a month. Woo! Woo!

There's a RINGING and a digital likeness of Lexi's mother, Samantha, appears.

SAMANTHA  
Lexi, I think it's for the best if you turn your eyes off, just until you get home. Okay?

LEXI  
Okay. Thanks, Mum.

Detecting Lexi's tone, Samantha quickly disappears.

LEXI  
See you guys in the morning, ciao.

BACK TO SCENE

Lexi's eyes appear almost entirely white. The night is quiet and still.

She stumbles down the street a few more yards before looking around. Seeing nobody, she proceeds to remove her stilettos.

LEXI  
Bastards...

Relieved, she pulls out the pin holding up her hair and wipes something out of her eye, smudging her make-up.

She takes a moment to stare up at the harvest moon.

INT. PARK - NIGHT

ANON P.O.V.

The anon moves amongst the undergrowth of the dark park, watching Lexi standing by the road.

EXT. HIGHFORD - STREET - NIGHT

Lexi scratches her backside.

ANONYMOUS VOICE (O.S.)  
Lexi...

Lexi freezes.

LEXI  
Huh? Hel-lo?

Lexi panics and tries to pull on her heels.

LEXI (CONT'D)  
Now's not the best time for a selfie!

A silhouetted anon appears down the road between the street lamps. Lexi takes a few steps back from the shadow.

ANONYMOUS VOICE (O.S.)  
Lexi... Come here.

LEXI  
Jess?

Suddenly, from above, a quadcopter drone shines a spotlight down on the anon. The anon pulls out the pistol and FIRES.

Paintballs hit the drone until it falls to the ground,  
SMASHING near Lexi.

As the anon runs into the park, another drone gains altitude  
as it highlights the anon. A white laser strikes the drone  
out of the sky.

Front doors open all along the road.

NEIGHBOUR P.O.V.

Lexi looks a frightened mess as she turns to her neighbours.

SAMANTHA (O.S.)

Lexi!

INT. LOVEDAY HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Samantha BANGS on Lexi's bedroom door.

SAMANTHA

Lexi!

LEXI (O.S.)

O-kay!

Samantha walks through to the kitchen --

INT. LOVEDAY HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

-- and takes a seat at the table, staring at Lexi's door.

A digital newspaper appears in front of her.

Samantha flicks through the pages, which all seem to feature  
negative stories about anons. A headline reads, "ANONS COMMIT  
80% OF ALL CRIME".

A smarmy A.I. digital BUTLER, 50s, appears next to her. His  
only distinction from a real person is that he's slightly  
transparent.

BUTLER

Page nine, ma'am.

Samantha swipes and reveals a picture of Lexi looking  
bedraggled in the street; the headline reads, "WATCH  
INFLUENCER'S ANON ENCOUNTER".

Lexi exits her bedroom. She looks hungover as she makes her  
way over to the kitchen.

Lexi takes a seat next to Samantha.

LEXI  
 (to Butler)  
 Give me all the fried food.

SAMANTHA  
 You've not got time for breakfast.  
 They'll expect you up in an hour.  
 Mimi? Mimi!

MIMI, Lexi's A.I. assistant, appears next to Lexi. She's a carbon copy of Lexi with an uncannily perfect complexion.

SAMANTHA  
 You need to kill the rumours. Have  
 you prepared something to say?

MIMI  
 She can learn her lines in the  
 shower.

Lexi groans as she mopes towards the bathroom.

INT. LOVEDAY HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Samantha's waiting nervously by the front door with Lexi's drones hovering alongside.

The toilet FLUSHES.

Lexi exits the bathroom. She has the 'no make-up' look.

SAMANTHA  
 Your friends are here. It's so nice  
 they showed up.

LEXI  
 They just want the views, Mum.

Lexi reaches for the door handle.

SAMANTHA  
 Are you sure you don't know who the  
 anon was?

Lexi just looks at her.

LEXI  
 Showtime.

EXT. LOVEDAY HOUSE - DAY

MADISON P.O.V.

Alice, Madison and Frankie stand at different angles facing the front door. Several neighbours have joined them.

When the front door opens, several of Lexi's drones rush out. Lexi yawns and rubs her eyes as if she's just woken up.

LEXI

Hey, guys. Did you have a bit too much fun last night too?

Lexi's clique laugh and nod.

LEXI

Let's see who's joining us.

Dozens of teenage SUBSCRIBER likenesses appear, hysterically shouting.

SUBSCRIBER #1

Lexi, are you okay?

SUBSCRIBER #2

What happened?

SUBSCRIBER #3

She looked right at me!

LEXI

Guys, I'm fine! Mute.

The Subscribers are silenced.

LEXI

Let's go one at a time, okay?

Lexi playfully waves to a Young Subscriber on the front row whose hair is clearly modelled on Lexi's.

LEXI

Go ahead.

YOUNG SUBSCRIBER

Were you scared?

LEXI

I was too drunk to be scared! But seriously, of course I was. It could have been anyone... I'm just glad my A.I. thought to send my drones out to see me home.

Lexi points to another Subscriber.

SUBSCRIBER #3  
What do you think they wanted?

LEXI  
No idea, and I don't really want to know --

A crude likeness of Samantha appears.

SAMANTHA  
That's enough questions for Goldie.

The Subscribers nervously laugh and gasp.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
She's tired after meeting her drug dealer last night.

LEXI  
Who made that?

Lexi looks accusingly at her clique and neighbours.

MADISON (O.S.)  
It's just a sad little troll.

FRANKIE  
Ignore them. They'll get bored.

SAMANTHA  
And Goldie's got to spend at least three hours today polishing her golden --

LEXI  
-- Delete!

The likeness of Samantha disappears. Lexi's gone red.

LEXI P.O.V.

Alice can barely contain her smile. She touches Lexi's arm.

ALICE  
Don't feed the trolls, Lex.

Lexi jerks her arm away from Alice and heads inside.

LEXI (O.S.)  
See you guys later. Ciao.

The subscribers disappear.

INT. LOVEDAY HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Once the door has closed, Samantha pounces on her daughter.

SAMANTHA

What was that?

LEXI

I was trolled! I suppose you could have done better?

SAMANTHA

You're pathetic when you get like this. Just grow a thicker skin!

GEORGE LOVEDAY, late 40s, appears from his bedroom wearing his scruffy dressing gown.

GEORGE

Wow, wow, wow! What's the matter, you two?

SAMANTHA

You'd already know if you took an interest in your daughter's life!

Mimi appears.

MIMI

Quiet. They can hear you outside!

Lexi rushes into her bedroom --

EXT. LOVEDAY HOUSE - DAY

FRANKIE P.O.V.

Frankie goes to walk away, but Madison and Alice stay fixed to the spot, staring at the front door. They can hear faint SHOUTS from inside.

Once a door inside SLAMS shut, Alice walks away with a grin on her face.