

# OUTLINE - so far

## I. First Life: The Human Who Was Richard A. Fragmented, impressionistic memories

- Crowded city life: noise, smells, claustrophobia, subway cars.
- Human faces appear only as disconnected close-ups.
- Friends exist as vague shapes without emotional weight.
- A single song evokes a deep, dreamlike “old me” feeling. B. Childhood as a ghost-memory
- A child’s room, a young face — unclear if it’s his.
- Parents exist only as conceptual placeholders.
- A pang of loneliness when he tries to recall them. C. Emotional exhaustion
- A life of 40 years that feels like nothing.
- A sense of drowning in weariness.
- Desperation for meaning. D. The brain scan experiment
- He volunteers for a “virtual archive” brain scan.
- Signs endless forms without caring.
- Expecting a medical scanner — finds a cobbled-together setup.
- Begins recursive questioning sessions with Hassan.
- Realizes he is “waking up” repeatedly, answering the same questions.
- First signs of consciousness without a body.

## II. The Void: Richard’s First Death A. Total disembodiment

- No eyes, no ears, no body.
- Only a voice (Hassan’s) in the dark.
- Panic escalates into existential collapse. B. The gray virtual space
- Hassan creates a featureless void to stabilize him.
- The lack of sensory anchors is worse than blindness.
- Richard’s mind “crashes” — his first death.

## III. Awakening in the Lab: Richard’s First Resurrection A. First synthetic perception

- A penlight waving in front of him.
- Hassan’s face comes into focus.
- Vision feels flat, skipping, like a buffering video. B. Realization of his new form
- One camera “eye.”
- A speaker for a voice.
- Stereo microphones for hearing.
- No limbs, no movement, no body. C. The truth
- Hassan explains he is not the original man.
- He is the result of the scan — a virtual mind.
- The original human is gone.
- Richard panics, dissociates, denies. D. Learning to “breathe”

- Hassan teaches him to imagine lungs and breath.
- Richard stabilizes through imagined embodiment.

#### IV. Early Embodiment: Learning to Be a Body Again A. Prosthetic limbs

- Mismatched mannequin-like limbs.
- Tethered by cables to the computer.
- Learns to walk, balance, manipulate objects. B. Endless cognitive and emotional testing
- Hassan asks the same questions repeatedly.
- Richard becomes sarcastic, frustrated, self-aware.
- Hassan oscillates between amusement and exasperation. C. Synthetic skin
- Hassan experiments with nerve sensitivity.
- Too numb → too painful → too fragile.
- Richard experiences body horror when skin tears or is removed. D. The glass incident
- Richard crushes a glass accidentally.
- Pain is overwhelming.
- Hassan removes shards and damaged skin.
- Richard confronts the reality of being “already dead.”

#### V. The Duplicate Consciousness Incident: Richard’s Second Death A. Hassan forgets to turn off the backup program

- Richard “wakes” inside the old camera system.
- Watches his mobile body being activated from across the room.
- No sound, no movement, no agency. B. Torture of disembodied awareness
- Watches Hassan interact with the other Richard.
- Experiences claustrophobic panic.
- Forces himself to stay conscious to avoid forgetting. C. Memory merging
- At day’s end, memories from both bodies merge.
- Identity becomes unstable.
- This cycle repeats on multiple days.

#### VI. Daliah’s Arrival: Richard’s Second Resurrection A. Richard is left powered down

- Hassan is gone.
- The lab is dark and dusty. B. Daliah breaks in
- Flashlight in her mouth, mask pulled down.
- Hard, suspicious eyes.
- Examines him, finds the ON switch. C. Protocols take over
- Richard wakes with pre-programmed servant behavior.
- She silences him immediately. D. First command
- She orders him to whisper.
- Tests whether he can carry heavy duffel bags.
- He apologizes for the dust.
- She tells him to shut up and follow her. E. Richard leaves the lab for the first time
- Carrying her stolen equipment.

- Unaware that this moment will define his new life.

VI-A. The Hacker Intervention This is the missing piece — the hinge moment that transforms both characters. A. Daliah brings Richard to the Hacker

- She believes she's found a useful synthetic servant.
- The Hacker immediately recognizes Richard is not a normal android.
- He accesses Richard's internal systems. B. The Hacker restores Daliah's memories
- He bypasses her corporate rehabilitation blocks.
- Her memories return violently, painfully, all at once.
- She collapses under the weight of her past:
  - her crimes
  - her guilt
  - her old life
  - the sentence that wiped her mind
- This is her first death in the story. C. The Hacker removes Richard's protocols
- He disables:
  - obedience protocols
  - emotional dampeners
  - behavioral filters
- Richard experiences his full emotional range for the first time.
- He hides this from Daliah, unsure what it means.
- This is Richard's third resurrection — the birth of his true self. D. The Hacker warns them
- The corporation will come looking.
- Richard is emitting a tracking signal.
- They need to run. E. Daliah and Richard flee together
- Both are changed.
- Both are unstable.
- Both are now fugitives.

VII. The City: Daliah's Memories Overload (now this section makes perfect sense) A. Daliah uses her resurfacing memories to navigate

- Leads Richard through the city.
- Takes him to her old gang. B. The gang hideout
- Tension with the new leader.
- They allow her to stay because she's clearly falling apart.
- Richard is treated like an object. C. Daliah's collapse
- Writhing, shaking, dissociating as memories overload her.
- Looks like an addict in withdrawal.
- Richard feels kinship — he has lived through something like this.

VIII. The Threat Within A. Richard overhears assassination plans

- The new leader debates killing Daliah to protect the gang.
- Richard warns her.

- She is resigned, almost welcoming death. B. Richard chooses to stay
- She tells him he can leave.
- He chooses to stay without knowing why.
- His first act of emotional agency.

#### IX. Corporate Retrieval: Richard's Third Death A. The police mech arrives

- Slaughters gang members.
- Identifies Daliah as an "asset" to retrieve.
- Shows unusual interest in Richard. B. The mech's betrayal
- Orders Richard to take Daliah down an alley.
- Blocks the other mechs.
- Sacrifices itself.
- Speaks a phrase Richard recognizes but cannot place. C. Richard and Daliah flee
- Dodging cameras and police presence.
- Exhausted, terrified, unsure where to go.

#### X. The Diner and the Hacker A. Low-tech refuge

- Dingy diner, bolted touchscreen.
- The hacker calls without permission. B. The truth about the tracker
- Richard is emitting a tracking signal.
- The corporation is closing in.
- The hacker can help disable it.

#### XI. The Tracker Extraction: Richard's Fourth Death A. The secluded location

- The hacker guides them to a safe spot.
- Lists equipment they must steal. B. Trust and fear
- Daliah asks if Richard trusts her.
- He says he has no choice — and doesn't want to go back.
- She admits he should fear her, but she's never needed a friend more. C. Powering down
- Richard exposes the switch inside his torso.
- Daliah shuts him off. D. Resurrection
- Richard wakes with loosened skin around his face and neck.
- The tracker was buried deep.
- His expression is slack, uncanny.
- He looks younger, stranger, less human — and more himself.

#### XII. The Bullet Train Escape A. Disguises

- Richard wears an android servant jumpsuit.
- His slack face helps sell the disguise. B. The wealthy family
- Their android carries luggage.
- The parents are condescending; the child is curious.
- Richard answers honestly, upsetting the parents. C. The rocket attack
- A rocket streaks toward the train.

- Daliah: “Of course. This is the luck I deserve.”
- The train derails violently. D. Richard protects Daliah
- Braces the collapsing cabin with his body.
- Skin tears; numbness spreads across his face.
- They escape through the shredded hull.

#### XIII. The Ghost Town A. Silence after the crash

- Train cars twisted and crushed.
- No survivors calling out. B. Marauders approaching
- Engines growl in the distance.
- Richard hesitates, thinking of the family.
- Daliah agrees to check. C. Rescue
- The little girl is alive, protected by her damaged android.
- The parents are dead.
- They flee together through the abandoned town.

#### XIV. Collapse and Shelter A. Daliah’s strength fails

- They hide in a house with running water.
- The other android warns of contaminants; Daliah ignores him. B. Richard explores
- Checks rooms for safety.

#### XV. The Mirror: Richard’s Fifth Death and Fifth Resurrection A. Richard sees himself

- Torn cheek hanging in a flap.
- Metal jaw exposed.
- Artificial gums and teeth visible.
- Loose skin sliding on his skull. B. The moment of truth
- He lifts the skin back into place.
- The dissociation fades.
- The skin won’t stay on its own.
- He feels the difference between “skin on” and “skin off.” C. Daliah watches
- Silent, witnessing the truth of what he is.

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