

LIFE THROUGH DEATH

BLACK SCREEN:

NADIA (V.O.)

We stand on the precipice ... In
this adventure, the precipice on
which ... no ... we stand
together...

INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

NADIA, a woman in her late twenties, stands behind the curtain to a temporary stage in the middle of the room. Her clothes are tattered and worn-out. Beyond the sound of her voice, the room is silent.

Her eyes are closed as she speaks.

NADIA

We stand on the precipice of a
new adventure. One in which we
will find our way together in a
world that is no longer our own.

She breathes out fully. Takes in a new breath. Walks up the stairs to the curtain.

Another breath. She steps out onto the stage. Walks to a podium with a microphone. She speaks into the microphone, but it does not work.

NADIA

We stand upon the precipice of a
new adventure. As long as we stay
together, we will overcome this...
This...

Nadia drops her head. She cries. She sits down on the stage behind the podium and continues crying.

The gymnasium is empty. Uneven rows of chairs silently observe her failure.

MAN (O.S.)

Nadia.

Nadia looks to a man in his thirties, JAKE. He stands at an outside exit from the gym.

JAKE

We need to go.

Nadia nods slowly. Rises to her feet. Looks over the empty audience once more.

JAKE

It wasn't your fault.

NADIA

Wasn't it? Here they came, drawn by empty promises. Here, I filled them with false hope and sent them on a fool's errand. Here I returned as a leader with no followers.

JAKE

You couldn't have known.

NADIA

We've always known. We all needed hope. Me included. I tried.

Tears roll down her face as she hesitates. Jake crosses the room and takes her by the wrist.

JAKE

We need to get out of here. We don't belong here anymore. It isn't our place.

NADIA

Maybe I should die with everyone else then. Maybe I should.

JAKE

I can't let you die. You're all I have left.

Nadia shakes her wrist free of Jake's hand. She follows him toward the door.

NADIA

I'm not someone you ever had or ever wanted to.

JAKE

Times change. People grow.

NADIA

War happens. Lovers die. You're just out of options.

JAKE

Why do you constantly pull away?

NADIA

Why do you ask so many questions?

She pushes past him. Slams the door open.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Smoke billows on the distant horizon. Jets fly by overhead. Gunfire is close.

Nadia walks out the door onto the grassy area between the undamaged school buildings.

NADIA

(screaming)

Here I am! Do you have the balls to come and get me?

Jake grabs Nadia and pulls her against the wall of the building. She does not resist.

They are joined by CHARLIE, a man in his early twenties, and MICHELLE, a woman in her late thirties.

JAKE

Are you insane?

MICHELLE

I thought you were going to control her.

NADIA

It doesn't matter anymore. We're done for.

JAKE

We're not done for until we're dead.

NADIA

Which won't be long.

CHARLIE

What I missed was her cheery disposition.

MICHELLE

She's too far gone. We should leave her.

JAKE

No. Let's go.

Jake drags Nadia along the side of the Gymnasium. Stops at a back corner. He looks both ways. Clear.

He points across a roadway toward a treeline.

JAKE

I think if we can get over there, we can wait them out.

NADIA

There's no waiting them out. How long do you think we have to wait? Do you think they're going to leave when they're done killing everyone they can find? That's never going to happen.

CHARLIE

There's no time like the present.

MICHELLE

If we're going to go, we need to do it.

Charlie runs toward the road. Gunfire ricochets off the bricks near their heads. Charlie is cut down.

JAKE

Damn it!

MICHELLE

This way.

Jake follows Michelle and drags Nadia back the way they came. They cross the open common area of the school campus. In the center of campus is a Student Union. They enter.

INT. STUDENT UNION - DAY

An open room with only columns making up most of the layout besides tables. A kitchen area makes up one end of the building. Jake drags Nadia towards it. Michelle tails closely behind them.

They duck behind a serving counter.

MICHELLE

Poor Charlie. I was supposed to take care of him.

NADIA

You see? There is no hope.

MICHELLE

You shut up. You know what? I didn't even want to come back here for your ass.

JAKE

I'm sorry about Charlie.

MICHELLE

Should have made her go first.

JAKE

We need her.

MICHELLE

No, we don't.

JAKE

Well, I need her.

MICHELLE

I got myself in here for some schoolboy crush. You tell me

there is some leader in here,
and we come in and find the
leader of the teeny bopper
revolution.

JAKE

She made a difference, Michelle.

MICHELLE

She made a mess. Because of her,
They're coming down on everyone.

The main doors open. Jake holds his hand over Nadia's mouth.

Click. Click. Click. Click. The footfalls cease for a moment. A
chair scrapes across the floor.

Click. Click. Click. Click.

JAKE

(nearly inaudible)

I think there's only one of them.

All three entrances suddenly open. The clicking of footfalls
sounds from all over the room. It echoes off the walls.

Chairs move. Other doors open. Jake looks frantically at the
kitchen area.

A back door just around a corner and behind some empty break
racks.

Jake points it out to Michelle. She nods.

Jake makes eyes contact with Nadia. He puts a finger over his
mouth. Points to the back door.

They crawl frantically to the back door. Jake grabs the handle.
Signals with his fingers. 1 ... 2 ... 3.

He slams the door open. They all duck out. Gunfire blasts the
door.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Jake grabs Nadia's wrist again as they all run to the large main building at the front of the campus.

Michelle approaches the closest door.

MICHELLE

Please be unlocked...

It is locked. Jake changes direction to a dead end with another door. He pulls the handle. It opens.

Gunfire rings out. Bullets riddle Michelle as she runs. She hits the ground in a dead heap.

INT. MAIN BUILDING - DAY

Nadia shakes her hand loose. Rubs her wrist.

Jakes runs to the main entry and looks around the corner. He ducks back and signals to Nadia to run the other way.

They run into a side hallway as the doors to the main entry open loudly.

Jake leads Nadia to a corner of the first floor. Tries the classroom door. It is unlocked. He guides her inside.

He locks the door behind them. They move to behind the teacher's desk out of view of the door.

NADIA

Why did you come here? People keep getting killed because of me. She's right, you know. All of this is my fault. I started it.

JAKE

You inspired so many people to follow you. This regime was destroying us, but one little girl from nowhere stood up with a bunch of youngsters and made them take notice. You showed them that we are not so easily overcome. Is it all your fault? Yes, but

in this case, it's a good thing.
You are inspirational.

NADIA

But they gave us a life. They
allowed us to live in peace in
our own part of the country.

JAKE

In slavery. They put us there
to control us. Where is the
Nadia that was tired of being
told what to do?

NADIA

She died. She fell with every
life that fought and died in
her name. She lost a piece of
her soul every time someone
remembered what she had done
and lost their life for it. We
all only have so much. At some
point, the shell becomes empty.
At some point, we find ourselves
in a life that is no longer ours.
In a body we no longer control.
In a world we no longer
understand. I'm not who I was. I
remember you in my group. I
remember Charlie. We fought hard,
but we had to retreat. We lost so
much that day. What do we have
left?

JAKE

We have ourselves. We have a
choice.

NADIA

We have the broadcasting
equipment.

JAKE

We have what?

The door rattles as someone tries to open it. Jake and Nadia
wait. Nothing happens.

LATER

The door for the classroom unlocks. Jake peers out the door. The halls are quiet.

He gestures for Nadia to follow him. They sneak by the classrooms back to the main hall.

The hall is empty and quiet. No footfalls.

They pad softly down the hall to the broadcasting room which looks like a small scale new room with a basic desk and a green screen along with a camera.

JAKE

So this is just a school thing.
Is it tied into any kind of
network?

NADIA

It's connected to the Internet.
You should be able to log into
someone's YouTube account to
live stream it.

JAKE

We won't have long when this
starts.

NADIA

I know. But if I am to die, then
I choose to die in full view of
the world. Nothing brings down a
corrupt regime like a good
martyr.

JAKE

Ready?

NADIA

Yes.

INT. UNKNOWN LOCATION

A YouTube video called "Nadia Windser Speaks" plays.

NADIA

I am Nadia Windser, and I come to you for the last time. At the conclusion of this video, my life will probably be taken from me by our benevolent rulers. They took away everything we have under the guise of taking care of us. We live without worry, but only because they do not give us the freedom to do so. We live in peace provided we follow their commands. If we stray from their desires, we disappear. If we dare to speak against them, we are silenced. If we show the world their sins, they add us to them. They tell us that we do not belong here. They say that they are doing us a favor by allowing us to remain. We will not be strangers in our own country. We will not be unwelcome in our own home. My fellow citizens, we stand at the precipice of life and death, and we cannot allow this decision to be made for us. They are not choosing death for me. I choose it for myself. I know what I am doing, and I accept what is coming.

In the background of the video, there is considerable pounding and noise. Gunfire shatters.

NADIA

Stand where I fall. Choose your own path. Show them that they do not control us. Take back what they have stolen and let them know that they are the invaders. They are the unwelcome. They are the strangers.

Gunfire rings out. Bullet holes riddle Nadia's body. Blood splatters from her wounds. Her head drops onto the desk. Her eyes stare into the camera. The video ends.

The mouse cursor moves to the buttons underneath the video. It clicks Share.

THE END