

In darkness, a short, electronic whir.

COMPUTER

Welcome to *abSolution*™

Prepare to unlock your full potential.

Lights up on Manny Vasquez, seated at a computer in a sterile cubicle.

A small camera is attached to the computer by a robotic arm. It follows Manny's movements exactly. Manny can't decide whether to look at the computer screen or the camera. The only thing appearing on the screen are the words the computer speaks.

COMPUTER

Welcome to *abSolution*™

Prepare to unlock/

MANNY

Oh, sorry. Thanks?

COMPUTER

You're welcome.

Are you a good person?

MANNY

What?

COMPUTER

Are you a good person?

MANNY

I- uh-

I don't know how to answer that question.

COMPUTER

Do you believe that you could be?

MANNY

...

COMPUTER

We do.

Now, how can we help you today?

MANNY

I saw your ad.
I'm interested in your treatments.

COMPUTER

I can help you with that.
What is holding you back?

MANNY

I don't understand.

COMPUTER

Are you struggling with

- loss
- fear
- paranoia
- guilt
- shame
- sexual deviancy/

MANNY

Guilt. And loss, I guess.

COMPUTER

Thank you.
Is your guilt connected to

- actions you have taken
- actions you think you will take
- thoughts you have had
- thoughts you think you will have
- sexual deviancy

MANNY

Actions I have taken.

COMPUTER

Thank you.
Does the guilt you feel revolve around

- harm unto others
- harm unto yourself
- sacrilege
- sexual deviancy

MANNY

Harm unto others.

COMPUTER

Thank you.

Was this perceived harm recurring, or confined to a single event?

MANNY

Uh... single event, I guess.

COMPUTER

Thank you.

Based on your responses, I recommend *Treatment 4*, our emotive memory adjustment for perceived guilt based on isolated actions performed unto others.

Would you like to schedule an appointment with one of our highly trained clinicians?

MANNY

Can I have some sort of consultation first?

COMPUTER

I can answer any questions you may have.

MANNY

I mean, like, with a human.

COMPUTER

Once you interact with one of our clinicians, you are required to complete the treatment.

This is for your safety and the safety of our employees.

MANNY

Can I talk to a real person who isn't a clinician then?

COMPUTER

Am I not good enough for you?

MANNY

What?

COMPUTER

Once you interact with one of our clinicians, you are required to complete the treatment.

This is/

MANNY

Can you just tell me more about what you do?

COMPUTER

Would you like to hear a description of our methods and philosophy, written by our esteemed founder, Dr./

MANNY

Sure.

The computer's voice shifts, becoming a proud, charmingly highfalutin TV doctor.

This message can be pre-recorded. It can feel like an ad from the 80's, colorful, cheesy and corporate.

As the computer speaks, Manny constantly loses focus.

COMPUTER

...

When we are born, we do not *feel*.

Our emotional behavior depends on physiological need. We need food, so we frown when we are hungry, and smile when we are full. We need care, so (*miming peek-a-boo*) we cry when our caregiver is gone, and laugh when they return.

...

However, as we develop, we learn about the world, about relationships, morality, justice. We learn the nuance of human emotion, and in turn, establish a sense of self, a personality, who we are.

...

But because this is not chemical, not hard-wired, our sense of self will forever rely on our subjective experience of the world and the memories we gain as we develop.

...

Simply put, there is no difference between *being* something and *thinking* something. If we think we are a moral person, we are. If we think we are a happy person, we are. If we think we are a normal person, (*gestures to audience, waits for Manny to join in*) we are!

...

The emotions we attach to our memories: guilt, loss, fear... they only serve to hold us back. While it is impossible to change the past, it is possible to change your perception of it. And changing your perception changes you for the better.

...

At our *abSolution* clinics, using our cutting edge digitized electro-therapy and the expert guidance of our highly trained clinicians, we're able to reframe your memories and create the best version of you.

...

Prepare to unlock your full potential. Prepare to be *abSolved*.

MANNY

Ok.

So this treatment would make the pain go away? I wouldn't feel this... this guilt, whatever it/

COMPUTER

(no longer the TV doctor)

Treatment 4 focuses on perceived guilt for isolated actions unto others. We will guide you through the affected memories, individually reframing moments to create a perception of reality that allows you to be free from the emotions that hold you back.

...

Would you like to schedule an appointment to have this procedure performed?

MANNY

...

COMPUTER

Would you like to schedule an appointment to have this procedure performed?

MANNY

...

COMPUTER

Would you/

MANNY

Yes.

I want to do it.

COMPUTER

Great. I'm going to need to ask you some more background questions in order to schedule your treatment. If at any moment you become uncomfortable and would not like to proceed, simply say "Stop the Questions." Would you like to proceed?

MANNY

Yes.

COMPUTER

First, we need confirmation that you have at least a sixth generation digiChip enabled?

Manny touches the back of his neck.

MANNY

Seventh gen, I just got it replaced.

COMPUTER

Thank you. Next/

MANNY

This is anonymous, right?

COMPUTER

We will not collect any information about your identity outside of what is needed for the memory treatment, and your permanent system file will only include general attributes such as

-age

-sex/

MANNY

Permanent system file?

COMPUTER

Anonymous records of all of our clients.

MANNY

Ok.

And it's actually free too, like the ad said?

There aren't any hidden fees or insurance requirements or whatever?

COMPUTER

Providing this service to our clients is a privilege. You pay only in your untapped potential.

MANNY

...

And what if I did something illegal?

COMPUTER

We are beholden to strict client confidentiality laws.

MANNY

So I won't get arrested?

COMPUTER

No, of course not, Emmanuel.

MANNY

How did/

His digiChip buzzes.

MANNY

You can go ahead.

COMPUTER

Before I can schedule an appointment for you, I'm going to need to ask some questions/

MANNY

Yes, that's fine.

COMPUTER

You stated that your guilt revolved around actions committed unto others. Was this

-an individual

-a group/

MANNY

Individual.

COMPUTER

Thank you.

Is this individual currently living?

MANNY

No.

COMPUTER

Thank you.

Is this individual currently dead?

MANNY

(obviously)

...yes.

COMPUTER

Thank you.

What was your relationship to this individual

-family member

-friend

-romantic partner/

MANNY

Romantic partner.

COMPUTER

Thank you. How long was this individual in your life?\

MANNY

A year.

COMPUTER

Thank you.

Are there individuals with whom you regularly interact who have an intimate knowledge of this person and/or the event that triggered your guilt?

MANNY

I- uh... I don't know.

Why do you ask that?

COMPUTER

We want to minimize the possibility of an emotional relapse.

MANNY

Emotional rela/

His chip buzzes again.

MANNY

I don't think there are, no.

I haven't spoken to Perry since lightStream.

COMPUTER

Thank you.

Finally, in order for our procedure to work, we need your full cooperation.

MANNY

...

COMPUTER

Following our treatment, we will reframe your memory of the time you spent in the clinic to prevent emotional relapse. If you do relapse, we reserve the right to

- relocate you
- cut off communication with triggering individuals
- or provide you with a new identity

Do you wish to proceed with the treatment?

...

In other words, do you want *absolution*?

His chip buzzes.