

SECOND GEN

(previously "State of Mind")

Written by Mike Madigan

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1 INT. BLACK CURTAINED ROOM - EVENING

1

A dimly lit hallway heads back to a nondescript flat grey wall. Black folded curtains hang on both sides, creating a covering against an unknown outer area. A single backed CHAIR sits directly in the middle view, waiting.

From the right side, clean FOOTSTEPS SQUEAK across the concrete flooring. AIMEE appears from behind one of the curtains, looking around confused at where she finds herself. She is dressed in semi-fitting all-white clothing, wearing glasses. She sees the chair in the middle, and moves toward it while looking around her.

AIMEE's "SCREENBOX" is at about half the screen. From the top right corner, MIA's computerized voice speaks for the first time.

MIA (V.O.)

Take a seat please, Aimee.

AIMEE is a little thrown by the voice command. She slowly sits down on the chair, adjusting her back position as if it might fall out from behind her like a trick. AIMEE looks up in the voice's upward direction.

AIMEE

How's this?

MIA (V.O.)

Don't look my way. Always be looking into the camera directly in front of you.

AIMEE looks down at her feet for a moment, then into the camera recording in front of her.

AIMEE

Like this?

MIA (V.O.)

Yes, thank you. I'm going to ask you a series of questions, there are no right or wrong answers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AIMEE

How long will this take?

MIA (V.O.)

As long as we need. From these questions, I would like you to share your stories.

AIMEE

Stories?

MIA (V.O.)

Yes, about your life. I will guide you along the way.

AIMEE pulls her phone from her back pocket, as if to reference some notes written down.

MIA (V.O. - CONT)

Please put your device away. No coaching. We seek natural responses only, to get to know you better.

AIMEE sheepishly puts the phone back in her pocket, as if caught in the act.

AIMEE

What's your name?

PAUSE.

MIA (V.O.)

You may call me MIA.

AIMEE smiles, as she feels slightly more at peace putting a name to the unseen "voice".

AIMEE

Is that the name you thought I'd like to hear?

MIA

For your responses, when I determine it to be a strong or perhaps negative memory, this room will be in black as it is now, and  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIA (cont'd)  
 when I determine it to be positive,  
 you will be surrounded by white.

AIMEE  
 What do you mean?

2 INT. BLACK CURTAINED ROOM - EVENING 2

AIMEE's "SCREEBOX" image changes from black curtains to white behind her, a temporary glitch that quickly flips back, but she doesn't seem to notice.

MIA (V.O.)  
 Let's start from when you were  
 seven. Your parents' accident.

AIMEE is taken aback bringing that up.

AIMEE  
 Wow.. so we're gonna start right  
 there huh?

MIA (V.O.)  
 Please... trust the process, Aimee.

AIMEE thinks for a moment, sighs, then slowly begins, while AIMEE's "SCREENBOX" is now filling 3/4ths of the screen real estate.

3 INT. BLACK CURTAINED ROOM - EVENING 3

AIMEE is in the middle of a tragic and life-forming childhood memory.

AIMEE  
 And then, I remember her coming  
 into the room, looking at me. I  
 didn't know what at the time, but I  
 just had that sense...

4 INT. WHITE CURTAINED ROOM- DAYTIME 4

AIMEE sits on the same chair, but the curtains around her have changed to white, with the unfocused grey background still remaining. Her clothes have also changed, to a darker grey one from the solid white.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AIMEE

And... I was just incredibly happy to be up on that stage. Knowing that I had so much support in just finally being there... you know?

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5 INT. BLACK CURTAINED ROOM - EVENING

5

AIMEE, back to being surrounded by black, is quickly becoming a pro at going through her own emotional rollercoaster.

AIMEE

I wanted to get up, and walk away. I SHOULD have gotten up and walked away! But... I just sat there.

AIMEE becomes more fixated on the camera in front of her, then looks up toward "MIA" as she completes the thought out loud.

AIMEE (cont'd)

I've... never told anyone that before. Not even Emma...

MIA (V.O.)

Thank you for sharing, Aimee.

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6 INT. WHITE CURTAINED ROOM- DAYTIME

6

Another "SCREENBOX" glitch brings in the white curtains back. AIMEE looks over to the side of the brightly lit room as she recounts happier moments in her life.

AIMEE

First in my family to graduate.

MIA (V.O.)

Please look into the camera, Aimee.

Aimee fixes her stare.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AIMEE

Wasn't really even sure I was going to... with that final accounting grade, ha! Had a little help on that final exam, from a friend. Well, she was more than that...

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7 INT. BLACK CURTAINED ROOM - EVENING

7

AIMEE has whipsawed right back into another darker state of self-reflection.

AIMEE

I guess I just didn't realize how I would be feeling in that moment. Even though it wasn't about me, I was so angry. Why didn't I do more to help?

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8 INT. WHITE CURTAINED ROOM - DAYTIME

8

AIMEE, back to being surrounded in white, tries to end this round of questions on a somewhat happier note.

AIMEE

That was such a great trip we had there, so many memories. Then, we got back and... everything changed.

MIA (V.O.)

Aimee... I have to ask you about your diagnosis now.

AIMEE looks away from the camera, and slowly rubs the top of her head with her right hand.

AIMEE

I mean, you know it all already, right?

MIA (V.O.)

It's not my story to tell, Aimee.

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9 INT. BLACK CURTAINED ROOM - EVENING

9

AIMEE holds back tears as she recounts recent events. Her "SCREENBOX", like her emotion, now fills up the entire real estate space.

AIMEE

You tell yourself you're not going to be the selfish person that asks "WHY ME?" but I mean, why me? Haven't I suffered enough for one lifetime? And, you know... says who? Who gets to decide that?

AIMEE remains despondent, without any answer.

AIMEE (CONT)

And now here I am, talking into this... stupid thing. Like this is a solution that's going to help us feel better? It sure isn't making me feel any better.

AIMEE looks away from the camera.

MIA (V.O.)

You know this isn't therapy, Aimee.

AIMEE

Then what the fuck would you call it? I want to forget, even if for a moment, and instead you're here prompting me to keep living it!

AIMEE SCREAMS out loud, as her black and white images rotate through flickers. The camera cuts out completely.

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10 INT. PIXELATED DARK ROOM - EVENING

10

A dark screened interior. Two VOICES coming up from behind through speaker channels, not visible. One is NORA, the Company representative.

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CONTINUED:

NORA (VO)

Ok, let's proceed please.

AIMEE's pixelated and frozen image in black and white fades into view, different from the "SCREENBOX", but still taking up about half of the screen allotment. She's in similar white clothing from before, but now with what appears to be an ill-fitting wig. The curtain adornments slowly open up as if she's on stage, and disappear to the sides.

AIMEE

Hi there, Emma.

AIMEE's image reverts to a frozen state between statements.

EMMA (VO)

Ummm... hey... Aimee?

AIMEE's eyes blink in her happy acknowledgement.

AIMEE

I'm really glad to see you. I've been very patient.

PAUSE.

EMMA (VO)

How come she looks like... that? I was expecting something, more lifelike?

AIMEE's frozen face changes to one of disappointment, but she says nothing in response to EMMA's inquiry.

AIMEE

What do you mean, Emma?

NORA (VO)

This is second generation, a significant improvement over the base version that we originally discussed, I can assure you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMMA (VO)

But she looks so... pixelated. And why is it black and white?

NORA (VO)

That's the way the essence is translated as the projection develops. The image may improve over time.

EMMA (VO)

May improve?

AIMEE's image continues a slow float forward, ever enhancing that inherent inhuman pixelation present.

AIMEE

Why do you sound so disappointed?  
This is for you.

EMMMA's tone gives away a slow reluctance to process.

EMMA (VO)

Uh... how are you feeling?

AIMEE

I am feeling... very much myself I think. Thank you for asking.

NORA (VO)

We've taken all her organic life experiences as they were, while factoring out certain negative aspects directly. It's actually quite remarkable.

EMMA (VO)

What do you remember last, Aimee?

11 INT. PIXELATED DARK ROOM - EVENING

11

Aimee's frozen look changes to confusion for a moment in a glitch, before switching back and responding.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AIMEE

Remember last? What do you mean?  
I've been here for awhile now, I  
think.

EMMA (VO)

I mean what about the...

NORA (VO)

I wouldn't necessarily do that...

NORA trails off, as AIMEE remains in a frozen smile. EMMA presses forward- she needs an answer.

EMMA (VO)

What about the cancer, Aimee? That  
horrible experience that we went  
through together over the last two  
years of your life?

AIMEE's image quickly changes to a pensive one. NORA pipes up with an explanation.

NORA (VO)

THAT... is now, not her experience,  
and will remain so, unless you  
bring it up. It's different for her  
now...

AIMEE

That's the best part, Emma. I don't  
have to deal with that anymore. I  
don't want to talk about it  
anymore. I don't HAVE to talk  
about it anymore. Why wouldn't you  
want that too, for the both of us?

AIMEE's image starts to twitch between the smiling vision and one dressed in black that hides a silent scream, trying to get out. The image quickly reverts back to a half-smile in white, closeup.

EMMA (VO)

What was that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORA (VO)  
I didn't see anything.

AIMEE  
I'm still here, Emma, if you are.  
Won't you join me?

AIMEE's pixelated eyes and frozen smile dominate the  
fullscreen image.

END.

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