

The Cost of Living: Log Line

In a dystopian future where lifespans are bought and sold, Jean Allenson - a brilliant but emotionally repressed actuary - is kidnapped by terrorists and forced to confront the brutal 'death economy' she oversees. Jean ultimately joins her captors to crash the system, igniting worldwide revolt and face-off with a ruthless corporate rival who wants her dead.

The Cost of Living: Synopsis

The Cost of Living is a high-voltage blend of cyberpunk thriller, political satire and darkly comic sci-fi dystopia that interrogates the metrics of modern worth, the absurdity of bureaucratic brutality and the seductive pull of AI control and surveillance.

It's 2077. Following a volley of nuclear strikes and resulting ecological collapse, global administration has been outsourced to World Congress Inc., a predatory corporate leviathan. Days of life are now the ultimate high-value asset class, traded like stock on an international Exchange that harvests time from a violent, deliberately under-serviced working class for purchase by the super-rich. Here retirement is no longer a milestone - it's mandatory execution for those who can't afford more years.

And the hottest growth industry? Aspirational euthanasia. The whole world is now one giant 21st Century Jonestown - with a credit card.

Jean Allenson, a brilliant but emotionally repressed actuary, runs the Exchange from Geneva with cool, detached precision. Loyal to her World Congress bosses, she obsessively calibrates life and death for profit. Her constant companion is Bron, an AI assistant.

But when Jean's abducted during a visit to World Congress headquarters in New York City by the Time Liberation Front (T.L.F.) - a radical insurgent network - she encounters Bao Bach, a sardonic Vietnamese hacker with all the swagger of a cyberpunk high priestess. Bao has a bold plan: crash the Exchange and restore randomness to life expectancy as social justice.

Haunted by the recent drive-by shooting of her fiancé, Jean signs on, having been subtly manipulated by Bron (who's been secretly reprogrammed by Bao). Together, Jean and Bao launch a high-stakes digital coup from an underground bunker beneath Manhattan: resetting time credits to zero, erasing retirement quotas, wiping out the time credit accounts of the super-rich, and engineering a global financial meltdown and existential jailbreak for all.

But absolute power doesn't surrender easily. Jean's arch-rival at World Congress, the venomous Christine Laurent, orchestrates a brutal counterstrike. In a savage final showdown on Manhattan's Bowery, Bao is murdered, and Jean must confront Christine and the ethically bankrupt system she once served – not out of rage, but with hard-earned moral clarity and social purpose.

The Cost of Living is bleakly comic and cerebral yet thrilling – a politically loaded dramedy marrying *Dr. Strangelove's* absurdist bite with the stylised corporate malfeasance of *Severance* and the sleek, sci-fi sophistication of *Gattaca*.

With the finger of tech rebellion on the detonator and a deadpan smirk, *The Cost of Living* asks: How does morality survive in a post-MAGA world where life is currency and truth is entirely optional?