

## **The God Machine**

**A widowed bio-engineer faces ethical turmoil when his invention - a revolutionary machine that can print living tissue - is twisted to perverted ends.**

Pages of a magazine turn; images of unattainable beauty whip by at scanning pace.

Midday light crowns the reader's coarse hair, dapples pale, blemished skin and reproachful eyes. KIRSTY HANSUN (30's) slaps the magazine closed and flings it into the backseat.

She yawns; allows shadowed eyelids to close. The driver, a groomed man in wireframe glasses, watches her nestle into troubled comfort. This is WILLIAM HANSUN (40's).

WILLIAM

Kirsty. Is everything okay?

KIRSTY

What?

WILLIAM

You don't seem yourself lately.

KIRSTY

It's fine. I'm just tired.

She settles herself again. William watches her, saddened -- a junction approaches but he's engrossed.

A car hurtles toward them on the passenger side -- too late, there's not a hope of averting it...

CUT TO BLACK:

The screech of rubber -- the sonic crush of steel on steel --

SUPER: 5 YEARS LATER

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

So... It's a new form of meat printer?

Suspended in syrupy amber liquid a dark, fleshy shape fizzles into being from the sparking tips of four mechanised needles.

WILLIAM (O.C.)

This is far from bio-fab meat, Mr. Ellis. This will be a human kidney. Capable of the myriad of processes that support biological function.

The amber fluid, contained in a suspended vat, is fed by a complex network of tubes and cables. A man in a crisp tailored suit watches it work. This is QUENTIN ELLIS (50's).

William sweats in ill-fitting attire, runs a hand through dishevelled hair. He watches Ellis' with bated breath.

ELLIS

So this... this thing is alive?

WILLIAM

Not exactly. To exist outside of the amniotic gel it would need to be connected to a working system. Even then, the capacity for independent consciousness is challenging to manufacture. But with investment...

ELLIS

It's risky, William. Financially. Ethically.

Ellis takes out a cheque book -- leans on a sterile silver slab, clicks a ballpoint pen.

ELLIS (CONT'D)

(writing)

What did you ask for; 30 million?

Ellis tears the cheque -- hands it to a bewildered William.

ELLIS (CONT'D)

Not even close. I need an 85% equity share. And forget about independent consciousness.

INSERT: The cheque. All in order; but the amount is blank.

3

INT. WILLIAM'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

3

INSERT: A save prompt on a tablet computer. A blank file name field.

ELLIS (V.O.)

Will, we need to talk. I'm taking this thing in another direction.

Letters form -- KILLSWITCH.

SUPER: 3 Years Later

William -- haggard now and looking old -- watches a progress bar on screen, knocks back a whisky.

4 EXT. BUTCHER'S SHOP - FRONT - DAY 4

Angry protestors lambaste William as he shoves through toward a butcher's shop front.

WILLIAM (V.O.)  
This can't be legal.

He tries but fails to avert his gaze from their signs: "Life is not Meat"; "Destroy the God Machine"; "Venus is a Slave".

ELLIS (V.O.)  
Legally speaking, it's no different than bio-printed steak. And just look at those potential figures.

William fumbles the door unlocked, scuttles inside before the protestors can swarm him.

5 INT. BUTCHER'S SHOP - RECEPTION - DAY 5

He bustles through the converted shop-floor as the motion detector hits the lights. Screens line the tile walls, fade up onto a logo: "Hansun Bio-Engineering Solutions Ltd."

He shuffles past a pig cuts chart which dominates the wall over reception, swipes in with a card at a thick steel door.

6 INT. BUTCHER'S SHOP - WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS 6

WILLIAM (V.O.)  
Do I have any kind of say in this?

William walks through darkness, fluorescent lights humming on as the computerised room springs to life in welcome.

Computers start up as if by magic; machines whir to power. William looks up at his creation --

ELLIS (V.O.)  
Majority rules, Will. So no. But you do still have a choice.

-- at the machine, so much larger now, that dominates the back wall. A naked woman is suspended, unmoving, in the amber fluid. Human, but with impossibly perfect proportions. Meet VENUS (21).

William logs in at one of the workstations. He takes a small strip of fine glass from his shirt pocket; guides it into the edge of screen.

INSERT: A computer prompt. Upload KILLSWITCH?

A pregnant beat. He looks back at Venus, reproachful.

ELLIS (O.C.)

You really are a talented man.

William jolts. Ellis smiles back at him.

ELLIS (CONT'D)

She's the perfect woman. What's the secret? One of your ribs in there?

WILLIAM

It's not a woman. It's a living photoshop.

ELLIS

Exactly. We've broken world records on pre-orders alone. The sex-toy market is about to explode. Then medical is going to come sniffing. Then military. Then all the rest. Be proud of what you've achieved.

WILLIAM

Do you think my wife would be proud of me, if she could be here?

ELLIS

Bringing Kirsty back is science-fiction, William.

(motioning to Venus)

This is real. She is real.

A painful beat passes -- William touches the screen.

An alarm blares -- warning lights dance. In the machine, the amber fluid bleeds sickly crimson as Venus slowly, painlessly, begins to dissolve and deconstruct.

ELLIS (CONT'D)

What did you do?! Stop it! Stop it!

William wrenches a keyboard from its station -- swings -- Ellis takes it to the temple and spins to the floor -- William pelts through the exit without a backward glance.

His machine contains little more than a soup of genetic material now as sporadic fires sprout across the room.

7 INT. WILLIAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT 7

The front door cracks open onto still night. William doesn't bother to close it -- makes his way down the hall --

8 INT. WILLIAM'S DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 8

And there she is, at the dining table in a place still set for her. Kirsty. Perfectly preserved. Too perfectly.

WILLIAM (O.C.)  
I need you to try and answer  
something for me. Okay?

Her eyes flash a serene blue. William sits.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
That day. In the car. Why were you  
so sad?

Her eyes flash blue again, then solid red, then nothing.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
Please. I need to know.

She places a gentle hand on his. He looks up at her, expectant, his breath catching. She smiles warmly.

KIRSTY  
I'm ready baby. Do whatever you  
want with me.

He bursts into a fit of sobs as approaching police sirens emanate from the distant night.

CUT TO BLACK:

9 SUPER: 2 YEARS LATER 9

TV FOOTAGE: A cartoonishly attractive, semi-dressed woman reclines on a couch. Meet CANDY (21).

CANDY  
Hey boys. I'm Candy. My biggest  
turn on? You tell me.

A stylised montage: she bats her eyes through various lurid poses.

CANDY (V.O.)  
Pre-order me today and I'm yours.  
Forever.