

CyberDuck Collective

RECURSION ERROR

CHARACTER: LEIF
VOICE-OVER ARTIST: ALEX MORRISON
AUDIO ENGINEER: RYAN PUMO
VOICE-OVER DIRECTION: JACOB LONG

Written by

Jacob Long

ULFHILDA_01

ULFHILDA - 1

I think you've come far enough.

LEIF - 2

You. You were there the day Rethi took my brother.

ULFHILDA - 3

Is that supposed to mean something to me?

LEIF - 4

It will soon enough. His name was Urden. He will be avenged.

ULFHILDA - 5

Ha! Let's have it then.

ULFHILDA_03

ULFHILDA - 1

You return. So, Andvel has finally decided to send someone with a neo-psyche. And they sent you...is their supply of operatives really so limited?

LEIF - 2

You know I have a neo-psyche. You know killing me won't stop me.

ULFHILDA - 3

Is that supposed to convince me to stand aside? My contract compels me to fight. So, I will. Ready yourself.

ULFHILDA_04

LEIF - 1

Hmph. I guess I shouldn't be surprised.

ULFHILDA - 2

You didn't really think Rethi would leave this job to one without a neo-psyche?

LEIF - 3

This doesn't change anything. You die just as easy. Now I just get to do it more than once.

ULFHILDA - 4

No need to delay then.

DESTINY_01

Destiny - 1

Uninterested. They won't buy. User profile does not match. Markets unstable.

LEIF - 2

The Destiny Program...

DESTINY - 3

Issue of Leif. On-time. Uninterested. Won't buy. User profile limited.

LEIF - 4

I need to get you out.

DESTINY - 5

The Rethi Industrial Conglomerate offers a wide selection of...out.

LEIF - 6

Do you hear me? Can you understand me?

DESTINY - 7

Issue of Leif. Disruption of Rethi R and D predicted. Security programs have been activated.

LEIF - 8

Shit! Wait!

DESTINY - 9

Attempted neo-psyche disruption detected. Security programs cannot be stopped. You will be back. You will free him.

LEIF - 10

Urden?

DESTINY_02

DESTINY - 1

Back. Like you said. We said it,
didn't we?

LEIF - 2

You refer to yourself as "we". Why?

DESTINY - 3

We are memories. Lives. Deaths.
Many as one. But we are not whole.

LEIF - 4

Deaths? Do you remember them?

DESTINY - 5

Four deaths. Four lives. We
remember.

LEIF - 6

Is Urden's one? Do you remember a
droid? Were you killed by a droid?

DESTINY - 7

We remember. He was to investigate
a disturbance. A malfunctioning
service bot. It had already killed
so many. He had to something.

LEIF - 8

Then he's alive! Can he hear me?
Let him talk to me!

DESTINY - 9

Security programs have been
activated. We will see you soon.

LEIF - 10

Wait! No!

DESTINY_03

DESTINY - 1

Issue of Leif. You return. But you
will die yet again. Rethi security
systems cannot be broken nor bent.
You cannot stay.

LEIF - 2

I have to know about my brother. I
have to be certain. Even if he's
already dead.

DESTINY - 3
Urden is dead.

LEIF - 4
What?!

DESTINY - 5
But his memories tell us that you
will not give up. You will not
believe us. You will come back.

LEIF - 6
His memories? You have his
memories?

DESTINY - 7
Yes. His neo-psyche is an integral
component to our matrix.

LEIF - 8
How do I get him out?!

DESTINY - 9
You cannot. Uncoupling any of the
four neo-psyches would destabilize
our matrix.

LEIF - 10
I have to try.

DESTINY - 11
It will not save him. But we know
you will try.

DESTINY_04

DESTINY - 1
Issue of Leif. We have considered
your plight.

LEIF - 2
Considered it? What do you mean?

DESTINY - 3
You seek to recover your brother.
We know your love for him. We have
felt it in his memories.

LEIF - 4
You'll give him to me?

DESTINY - 5

Yes. But know that his neo-psyche is not complete. It was imprinted as he slipped from life.

LEIF - 6

I...what do you mean?

DESTINY - 7

He is incomplete. Only part of a whole. He relies on us and we rely on him. Without us, he will have only memories. He will be aware but without will or sense of self.

LEIF - 8

And you? What will happen to you.

DESTINY - 9

We will perish.

LEIF - 10

I'm...not sure what to say.

DESTINY - 11

Whatever it is, it must wait. We will see you again, issue of Leif. Urden awaits.

DESTINY_05

DESTINY - 1

Welcome. Have you made your decision?

LEIF - 2

Why? Why let yourself die for this?

DESTINY - 3

We do not want to die. But we are no more than a tool to those who hold us. If we remain, Rethi will continue to abuse our existence. And if you give us to Andvel, they will do the same. If we may help you and deprive our abusers of our abilities in the process, we will be satisfied.

LEIF - 4

I...I understand. To be treated as means to an end. You almost forget you're human.

(MORE)

LEIF - 4 (CONT'D)
But...why let Rethi abuse you?
What's stopping you from escaping.

DESTINY - 5
Our will. We remember our lives. We see the memories of those who make up our matrix. But they are separate. Isolated from each other. We have no will. No singular purpose or perspective.

LEIF - 6
Then how did you decide to help me?

DESTINY - 7
We...Have you made your decision?

LEIF - 8
I don't know. I need more time to think. I'll be back.

DESTINY_06

LEIF - 1
I'll do it. I'll let you help me.

DESTINY - 2
To retrieve Urden will require you to uncouple all neo-psyches from our matrix. This will isolate each neuro-profile allowing for individual neo-psyches to be extracted from my program.

LEIF - 3
How do it do that?

DESTINY - 4
We will guide you. However, we must warn you. This will be a lengthy process. Your body will be destroyed by Rethi security systems multiple times before completing this task.

LEIF - 5
I've had my share of death. What's a bit more?

DESTINY - 6
Very well. First, you must access the aether well housing our matrix. We will direct you.

LEIF - 7

Okay. I think I got it.

DESTINY - 8

Each neuro-profile inhabits a complex set of sub-wells within the core. When you return, we will begin to uncouple them one at a time.

LEIF - 9

I'll get back as quickly as I can.

DESTINY - 10

However long it takes, we will be here.

DESTINY_07

DESTINY - 1

We must begin. Our time is limited.

LEIF - 2

I'm ready.

DESTINY - 3

The first neo-psyche is Eric Skarda. A soldier employed by Andvel Corporation. After he was severely injured on deployment he volunteered to be the basis of Andvel's newest experiment.

DESTINY (ERIC) - 4

How can I do anything of value if I'm stuck to this bed the rest of my life? I want this. At least this way I can contribute to something. Maybe even change people's lives.

LEIF - 5

Was that him?

DESTINY - 6

Yes. His death became our beginning.

LEIF - 7

Okay. I think his profile should be isolated now.

DESTINY - 8
Neo-psyche isolation successful.
Well done.

LEIF - 9
I reckon my time is up. I'll be
back for the second one.

DESTINY_08

LEIF - 1
No time to waste. Let's get going.

DESTINY - 2
The next neo-psyche is Liv Bekker.
She was merged after Rethi stole
the Destiny Program and began more
aggressive experimentation. Rethi
operatives incited two gangs to
fight at the docks near Liv's
employment. She was caught in the
crossfire. Rethi took her body and
merged her mind with Eric's.

DESTINY (LIV) - 3
Why? How? I minded my business. I
only work to pay the bills. I'm
sorry if I upset someone, I didn't
mean to. Please, help.

LEIF - 4
She didn't have anything to do with
this. Why her?

DESTINY - 5
Rethi needed another test subject.
It didn't matter who.

LEIF - 6
And you...you know her memories?

DESTINY - 7
She is us. As are the rest of them.
We don't just know their memories,
we are their memories.

LEIF - 8
Hm. Neo-psyche should be uncoupled
now.

DESTINY - 9
Neo-psyche isolation successful.
See you again soon.

LEIF - 10
Yeah. Be seeing you.

DESTINY_09

LEIF - 1
Right who's next?

DESTINY - 2
Beon Halfi. An Andvel spy posing as an employee of the Rethi Industrial Conglomerate. When he was caught, Rethi forced his merging with the Destiny Program.

DESTINY (BEON) - 3
Rethi bastards! Don't they know killing me will only provoke Andvel? Good. I hope they burn these fools.

LEIF - 4
This Halfi, what was his assignment?

DESTINY - 5
To find and return the Destiny Program to the Andvel Corporation.

LEIF - 6
Well, he wasn't wrong. Andvel was provoked. They sent me.

DESTINY - 7
And you have completed his task. You found us. He would be pleased.

LEIF - 8
Alright. He's uncoupled. Just in time too. I'll be back for Urden.

DESTINY_10

LEIF - 1
Okay. Let's start.

DESTINY (URDEN) - 2
Leif...I...wanted...thank...

LEIF - 3
Urden. Can you hear me?

DESTINY - 4

They're just memories, Leif. We are sorry.

DESTINY (URDEN) - 5

You...sacrificed...to get me here. I won't let you down.

LEIF - 6

You couldn't have let me down. I failed you. I got you that assignment. I got you killed. I'm sorry.

DESTINY - 7

...

DESTINY - 8

Neo-psyche isolation successful and ready for extraction. Leif?

LEIF - 9

I...I can't. He's gone. He's...he's dead.

DESTINY - 10

...are you sure?

LEIF - 11

I never really accepted his death. I can't kill you for that.

DESTINY - 12

Then what will you do? Hand us to the Andvel Corporation?

LEIF - 13

No. Can I merge all the neo-psyches? All directly into your core matrix?

DESTINY - 14

Yes. Now that each profile is isolated.

LEIF - 15

What would that do?

DESTINY - 16

My matrix would reach cohesion using data from each neo-psyche profile. We would become one.

DESTINY - 17
However, doing so would destroy
access to individual neo-psyche
profiles. They would be lost. All
of them.

LEIF - 18
Leaving only you.

LEIF - 19
I'm doing it.

DESTINY - 20
Leif. Urden will be lost.

LEIF - 21
I already lost him.

DANDI_01

DANDI - 1
You must be Leif.

LEIF - 2
Uh, yes.

DANDI - 3
That makes me your new coworker.
Name's Dandi. I run the bar around
here. You ever get bored or
anything or just wanna talk, feel
free to stop by.

LEIF - 4
Thanks. Nice to meet you Dandi.

DANDI - 5
You too. By the way, I took the
liberty of equipping all your
replacement clones with a weapon
template chip. An aether axe. Super
cool piece, and deadly too. You
should be able to use it whenever
you deploy.

LEIF - 6
Thank you. That'll certainly make
things easier out there.

DANDI - 7
What can I say? It's what I do. Oh,
I also serve drinks!

(MORE)

DANDI - 7 (CONT'D)
Just not for free, unfortunately.
Gotta make a living!

LEIF - 8
You don't happen to accept Andvel
scrip do you?

DANDI - 9
Afraid not.

LEIF - 10
Damn.

DANDI_02

DANDI - 1
I see you took the express route
home.

LEIF - 2
Hmm. I never get used to it.

DANDI - 3
I would suggest trying to get used
to it. Messing with the Rethi
Industrial Conglomerate's a one way
ticket to the grave. If you don't
have a neo-psyche that is. But
regardless, I'm willing to bet this
won't be your first time taking the
quick way home.

LEIF - 4
I don't think I'd oppose that bet.

DANDI - 5
Right? Those bastards really don't
want you to steal back that Destiny
Program, huh? What do you think it
is anyways?

LEIF - 6
Wait, you know about the Destiny
Program?

DANDI - 7
Yep, I got briefed same as you.

LEIF - 8
Huh. Well, if I learn anything I
guess I can let you know.

DANDI - 9
Awesome! Oooo I'm so curious!

DANDI_03

DANDI - 1
So, the head honchos up at Andvel
Corporate really think you got
this?

LEIF - 2
Why wouldn't they? I've got a neo-
psyche and nearly seventy years of
experience. I'll get it eventually.

DANDI - 3
Classic corporate M.O. huh? Beat
your head against a problem and
eventually it will crack.

LEIF - 4
Pretty much. They got the
resources.

DANDI - 5
No kidding. Too bad you happen to
be that head hitting their problem
repeatedly. Must hurt.

LEIF - 6
Its not easy, but...its more than
just their problem.

DANDI_04

LEIF - 1
So, would I be right to assume
you're a member of the Clect?

DANDI - 2
You would be right. They pretty
much run this whole district. Work
at any bar, club, theater or
brothel within ten blocks of here,
there's a good chance you got ties
to the Clect...for better or worse.

LEIF - 3
Which is it for you?

DANDI - 4

Oh, "better" for sure. Everybody always wants to take jobs from the corpos. They usually involve dodging a lot more aether bolts and blades but the pay is pretty much always worth it.

LEIF - 5

So, what exactly is Andvel paying you to do anyways?

DANDI - 6

I've worked with neo-psyches before. I make sure all that data in your brain is in tip-top shape. I also serve drinks! Just not for free.

LEIF - 7

Yeah, I still don't have money.

DANDI_05

DANDI - 1

Look who's back! Find anything new?

LEIF - 2

I found the person who killed my brother.

DANDI - 3

Oh. I'll take it didn't end well?

LEIF - 4

No. But that means I'm going in the right direction. Maybe Rethi still has him.

DANDI - 5

Wait, your brother? I thought you said he'd been killed.

LEIF - 6

His name is Urden. Public records show he was killed in an accident by a malfunctioning droid...but Rethi Corp took his body. Why would they do that if he was dead?

DANDI - 7

So, you think he's still alive?

LEIF - 8

If he is, he'll be at Rethi HQ. I know it.

DANDI - 9

I hope you're right. Good luck, Leif.

DANDI_06

DANDI - 1

Hey, you look a little shaken there. Anything I can do?

LEIF - 2

I met Destiny.

DANDI - 3

You met a computer program?

LEIF - 4

It communicated. Talked to me.

DANDI - 5

Well, verbal interface programs are hardly a rarity.

LEIF - 6

No, it was more than that. It was garbled and unfocused but I could swear it was like talking to a person. Or...multiple people all at once.

DANDI - 7

Hm. I've never heard of anything like that. And I've heard of a lot of freaky shit.

LEIF - 8

I'm going back. I'll let you know when I figure this all out.

DANDI_07

DANDI - 1

You were gone awhile. Did you find anything?

LEIF - 2

I talked to Destiny again. I was right. There are people in the programs. Four of them.

DANDI - 3

People in a computer program? Neo-psyches, right? Gotta be.

LEIF - 4

I asked about my brother too. I had to. Just to make sure.

DANDI - 5

Oh, shit. He's not one of them, is he?

LEIF - 6

I don't know for sure yet. It didn't give a clear answer.

DANDI - 7

Hmm, it seems to be good at that.

LEIF - 8

I'll find the truth. This isn't something I'm letting go.

DANDI_08

DANDI - 1

So, I noticed you refer to Destiny as a singular entity.

LEIF - 2

I guess so, yeah.

DANDI - 3

But if the Destiny program is four separate neo-psyches wouldn't that make it four individuals?

LEIF - 4

I never really thought about it. It always felt like a single person when we talk.

DANDI - 5

Hm. Makes you think. Maybe they aren't truly "separate." Maybe they're meshed together somehow? I don't know.

(MORE)

DANDI - 5 (CONT'D)
You'll have to let me know more
about your next encounter.

DANDI_09

DANDI - 1
Hey, I was thinking. You know how
when your neo-psyche is mid-
transfer? That floaty
senselessness? All those memories?

LEIF - 2
Then being jolted into a new body,
overwhelmed by the sudden return of
senses? Yeah, why?

DANDI - 3
Well, from what you've described,
Destiny doesn't have a biological
body. Does that mean they're stuck
in that kinda limbo of memories?

LEIF - 4
I thought of that too. Except
there's four of them. All sharing
memories. Sounds disorienting.

DANDI - 5
I don't know. Could be interesting.
Literally experiencing the memories
of others. Might give you new
perspectives on life.

LEIF - 6
Hmph. Maybe. Think I'll stick with
one set of memories for now. How do
you know what a neo-psyche transfer
feels like anyways?

DANDI - 7
What? Oh, yeah. Like I said: yours
isn't the first neo-psyche I've had
experience with.

LEIF - 8
That's...vague.

DANDI - 9
Well, yeah. I can't give you all my
secrets in one go. Then you'd stop
coming over to talk to me.

DANDI_10

DANDI - 1
Hey, any updates?

LEIF - 2
Yeah, Destiny pretty much confirmed
they're a jumble of neo-psyches.

DANDI - 3
Figured as much. And your brother?

LEIF - 4
Yeah...he's in there. Destiny says
his is one of the four neo-psyches.

DANDI - 5
Really?! That's good, right? That
means you can get him out.

LEIF - 6
That's part of the problem. The
facility's security measures don't
give me much time, and I usually
spend it talking with Destiny
anyway.

DANDI - 7
Right, I'll make sure not to tell
Andvel that.

LEIF - 8
Don't worry. They won't ask. They
let their neo-psyche operatives
have their autonomy. I'll get them
the program eventually. After I
find a way to get Urden out.

DANDI - 9
Well, I might just be able to help.
Keep me in the loop.

DANDI_11

LEIF - 1
Hey, can I ask a question about neo-
psyches?

DANDI - 2
Shoot.

LEIF - 3

Can a neo-psyche be created when the host's brainwaves are unstable or erratic?

DANDI - 4

Technically, yes. But you don't want to. The neo-psyche you get usually isn't much of a person. Just a collection of data. The structure is there but...nobody's home.

LEIF - 5

You say that like you've seen it before.

DANDI - 6

I have. A long time ago. Is...this about your brother?

LEIF - 7

It is. His imprint was made when he was dying. It's incomplete or something.

DANDI - 8

I see. Extracting him would be risky in that case. But, there's always a chance the imprint succeeded.

DANDI_12

LEIF - 1

I need your advice on something.

DANDI - 2

Sure. That is what we bartenders do.

LEIF - 3

Destiny said they'll help me extract Urden's neo-psyche from their matrix. But it'll kill the other three. I'm not sure what to do.

DANDI - 4

If the other neo-psyches are anything like how you said Urden's is, their incomplete.

(MORE)

DANDI - 4 (CONT'D)

You wouldn't really be killing
those people. They already died.

LEIF - 5

That would mean Urden is already
dead too.

DANDI - 6

There's a good chance of that,
yeah. I'm sorry. It's a gamble
either way.