

401 EXT. OUTSIDE COLLEGE UNION - DAY

401

Orion stands with notepad in hand, scanning students walking by, chatting, flirting, playing sports.

Orion glances down at what is written in the notebook.

"a + b = c (approach + befriend = confidant)"

Looking for a target, Orion's eyes settle on two people chatting on a bench and approaches.

ORION

Greetings. Let's be friends and share everything about each other.

The two on the bench share a look, then get up and leave.

ORION (CONT'D)

Did I get the formula wrong?

They don't look back.

FARTHER DOWN THE SIDEWALK

TAYLOR, flashy in a 'begs for attention' way, sets up a tripod and camera. Nearby students notice, grab their stuff, and walk away in a hurry. Taylor watches them, frustrated. Orion, head in her notebook, is walking past.

TAYLOR

Hey! You!

ORION stops, looks at Taylor.

ORION

Do you need my assistance?

TAYLOR

Do I ever! Name's Taylor. I'm interviewing students for social media. What do you like to do?

ORION

Study others and learn their habits.

TAYLOR

Me too! Where's your outfit from?

ORION
Well, actually--

Taylor starts rapid-firing questions.

TAYLOR
Do you like Lefulr?

ORION
Lefulr? I don't beli-

TAYLOR
So, you don't care that the brand
was
sexualizing children in their ads?

ORION
I fail to see how you made that
concul-

TAYLOR
You're saying you like seeing
children being shown that way?

ORION
From what I've observed it's
appropriate for humans to express
themselves, especially at a young
age.

TAYLOR
What a hot take. What do you think
in the comments? Let me know!

Orion looks at TAYLOR, confused at what just happened.
Before she can say anything, Taylor starts grabbing her
things in a hurry.

TAYLOR
Thank you so much...

ORION
Orion.

TAYLOR
Check my TikTok, Ask TayTay when
you get a chance. Chao!

Orion watches Taylor hurry off then starts writing in her
notebook: "To investigate: what is social media?"

Orion sits with head in notebook. DILAN, the confident type with a distinct style, sits on top of a laid-out jacket. They fiddle with a handheld camera pointing it at various girls sitting about until it lands on Orion.

A pair of legs fill the frame of their camcorder and they look up. Meeting eyes with Orion, Dilan smiles.

ORION

I can feel you staring at my presence.

(eyes the camera)

Do you too want to ask me questions?

DILAN

Woah now, Bessie. You walked into my shot...and besides it's a public space.

(looks her up and down)

Aren't you the girl that Taylor interviewed today?

ORION

My name is Orion. And how do you know about this interview?

DILAN

It's hard not to, it's all over my feed. TikTok, Twitter, even the shared snap story. You should do social media.

ORION

So you've heard about this "social media" as well. I've been trying to decipher it.

DILAN

There's nothing to decipher, it's in the name. Just use some form of media and try being social with it.

Dilan hands the camera to Orion. Orion finds and presses the record button before pointing it at Dilan. Dilan smiles and waves at the camera before pulling a series of faces much to Orion's amusement. Giggling, Orion ends the recording to look at what was just filmed. Just as Orion is about to press the button on the monitor, Dilan quickly retrieves the camera.

DILAN

So, what ya studying?

ORION

Humans. How they think,
what makes them feel, their way
of life.

DILAN

Either you really are an influencer
or just a psych major... I've been
warned either way.

ORION

Why is that?

DILAN

Never mind. It's honestly all just
typical preconceptions. Though they
say people around here can be a bit
"unhinged".

ORION

Unhinged in what ways?

DILAN

Maybe people don't like everything
about themselves, so they hide it.
Have multiple faces.

ORION

So, humans are not always what they
appear to be?

(writing in notebook)

What purpose would a human have to
change their face?

Dilan checks the time and begins to pack their belongings
back into their tote.

DILAN

Same reason you switch camera
lenses. Create the image you want
to get the results you desire.
Later, shutterbug.

Orion takes in Dilan's words and writes down a new
simplified equation in their notepad "c = confident.
confidence (+ smile) = unlimited information".

Orion takes a last long look at Dilan walking away.

ORION is lying in bed going over her notes and stops on the page of her interaction with TAYLOR. We see she's looking at her last note and Taylor's TikTok page. Orion shrugs and pulls out her phone and searches for her TikTok.

ORION
I wonder if 10,000 followers are
impressive to the average student.

We can hear the different TikToks playing from Orion's phone then she starts watching...

ON THE PHONE - ORION'S INTERVIEW WITH TAYLOR

TAYLOR
And you're saying you like seeing
children being shown that way?

ORION
From what I've observed it's good
for humans to express themselves,
especially at a young age.

TAYLOR
What a hot take. What do you think
in the comments? Let me know!

BACK TO ORION

Looking confused.

ORION
Social media is bizarre.

Orion looks at the sign-up screen.

BEAT.

Orion starts to make herself an account.

404 EXT. OUTSIDE CLASSROOM - DAY

404

Orion is walking out of class and immediately Taylor who was waiting for Orion grabs her arm and drags her aside.

TAYLOR
What game are you playing at?

ORION
Game?

TAYLOR

How do you explain you gaining over
10,000 followers overnight?

Taylor shows her phone to Orion.

ORION

That is what I'm observing to find
out. While you are here how do you
explain what you did yesterday?
(Orion starting to get
out her notebook)

TAYLOR

You little-

ORION

I've done nothing wrong. I'm only
collecting data on social media and
why you humans love it so much.

TAYLOR

Humans?

ORION

I mean students.

TAYLOR

You freak, you knew I was recording
and were planning this all along.

ORION

I-

TAYLOR

And I'm getting the backlash for it
after your last post calling me
out.

Dilan notices Orion and walks up from behind. Taylor sees
and says one last remark before she turns to leave.

TAYLOR

This isn't over.

DILAN

Interviewer one day, interrogator
the next, huh?

ORION

It seems so. Everyone has been
acting strange around me lately.

Orion notices who she is talking to.

ORION (CONT'D)
Wait, what are you doing here?

DILAN
What any college student is doing
on campus. . . Nothing they're
supposed to.

Dilan playfully taps Orion on the head.

DILAN
See you around.

ORION
Where are you going?

DILAN
It's the perfect time of day to go
shoot, and I'm a bit behind on my
photography...project.

ORION
Wait. I can assist you with your
photography as a thank you.
Assess the sun's position.

Orion points in the near distance. An area farther away
from students.

DILAN
Didn't picture you as the
location scout type but I'll
take your word for it. Let's
go. (shrugs)

405 EXT. QUAD - DAY

405

Dilan scans the area looking for a subject. Nothing seems
of interest until their eyes land on Orion. Taylor who
followed them but is not noticed is watching.

DILAN
I see you took my advice.

ORION
My interest was peaked.

DILAN
I could say the same.

ORION
Are you curious about social media
as well?

DILAN
I'm into keeping my media more. . .
intimate.

Dilan takes a couple steps closer and takes a long look
over Orion.

DILAN (CONT'D)
If you really want to help out, why
not pose for me?

Dilan backs her into a wall.

ORION
Oh. . . This is not what I had in
mind.

DILAN
Try to open it. Think of it as
practice for when you make it big.

Dilan cups the side of Orion's face, positioning it to take
a photo, Orion tries to refuse. Seeing Dilan is dismissing
her rejection, Orion tries a different tactic.

ORION
Only if you let me take yours
first.

Dilan smiles and takes a step back giving Orion the camera.
Orion cups the side of Dilan's face.

ORION (CONT'D)
Say cheese!

Orion starts to mind-suck Dilan. Dilan falls down
unconscious. Disoriented, Orion stumbles to the ground.
Orion squeezes their eyes shut...

406 ORION'S VISION

406

Similar to the flash of a camera, fluttering white light,
flashes that punctuate faint, brief images. Neck. Lips.
Legs. Waist. One after another, small fragments of the
human figure cloud Orion's mind, appearing and disappearing
within the blink of an eye.

407 BACK TO SCENE - EXT. QUAD - DAY**407**

Orion stumbles away, head still spinning, and trying not to puke as they take a deep breath. Taylor appears phone in her hand, recording.

TAYLOR

What the fuck was that?

Orion looks at Taylor but has no answer.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

It's over for you... freak. Your popularity! Everything!

Orion grabs her notepad and starts running before Taylor can get any closer. Taylor stops to check on Dilan

408 EXT. SECLUDED AREA - DAY**408**

Catching her breath, Orion leans against the wall then slides to the ground, arms holding her knees. She pulls out her notebook and phone as if choosing between them. She sets down her notebook and starts to record a video.

ORION

After engaging in social media, I've concluded that humans love to hide behind masks. I will not be a part of such nonsense anymore. This is farewell. Thank you for the lessons you have given me.

Orion takes a deep breath and deletes the TikTok app off her phone. She stands, looks to see that she is indeed alone, then performs the hand motion that transforms her into a DIFFERENT ORION.

409 EXT. A SIDEWALK - DAY**409**

EMILEE, 20s, is set up on the sidewalk with a wagon full of cookies. A handmade poster is taped to its front. It reads: "C is for Cookie." except cookie is scratched out and another word is written above it. "Consent." Orion is walking by blankly looking at her notes. Emily locks eyes with Orion and smiles.

EMILEE

Free cookie?

ORION

A cookie might be the right
antidote to cure my current
state.

EMILEE

Been hearing that all day. If
you want, scan the QR code for
helpful resources, case you're
ever in an uncomfortable or
unsafe situation.

ORION

Unsafe, because of two-faced
humans?

EMILEE

Let's just say a lot of
extracurricular activities are
not all that academic.

Emilee smiles and hands Orion a cookie. Orion smiles back
and takes a bite. Flash. A short flash appears once more
and a name pops up in Orion's head. It feels both familiar
and new.

ORION

Thank you... shutterbug?

Emilee blinks, processing what Orion just said. Both jump
as they hear a loud CLICK. Emilee and Orion turn to see a
student with a phone camera pointed at them. They notice
each other's reactions with knowing expressions.

EMILEE

Looks like you can use a friend.

Emilee holds out her hand. Orion looks at her, unsure.
Peers into her eyes. Emilee smiles. Orion takes her hand.

ORION (VOICE-OVER)

C equals consent. Consent
equals information one is
willing to give... or accept.

MUSIC rises, drowning out their voices as the women chat.