

The Machine

Madeline Stanger

INSERT: "THE MACHINE"

CUT TO BLACK:

MONTAGE:

At night, a towering city of three tiers with equal stacks of train tracks shooting out from the center like a spiderweb; the middle building -much taller than everything else in its presence- gleams in all its glory with flags representing the district hanging off each corner.

The profile of a heavily armed patrolman with a gas mask on and his gargantuan shadow looming against a wall saluting before marching off; a large clock reads 9:00 sharp; harsh, bright lights line empty streets; a single piece of paper with a picture of an unidentified woman on it floats off.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Between the silence of the empty streets, a rhythmic banging is distantly heard over an alarm. A large broken-in storefront stands out among the monotonous structures. Its windows are broken, and bits of glass are sprinkled over the immediate area.

INT. STORE - NIGHT

The store is spacious and dark. Shelves and displays are lined with endless rows of computing devices and AI.

BOY, 19, in raggedy hooded robes, destroys electronic gadgets and robotic assistants on display with sledgehammers.

Boy stops and anxiously looks around the store for the source of the wailing alarm. Seeing nothing, he attempts to shut it off by destroying the computers at the front desk of the building. The alarm continues, and he panics.

EVER, 30's, dressed in the same robes, comes down the stairs from the upper level of the building. BOY looks at her, waiting for her to speak. She shakes her head grimly.

The sound of heavy footsteps coming closer interrupts them. They immediately stop and turn to find PATROLMAN 1 and PATROLMAN 2, armed to the teeth, outside the store, guns with flashlights mounted on top and aimed at them.

PATROLMAN 1  
Stop right there!

The light surrounds Ever and Boy. Ever wears a weary expression on her face while Boy is terrified.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE:

Dials jumping up and down erratically on a console; buttons lighting up on the same console; a yellow light flashing above it; a gloved hand reaching for a lever in the background.

INT. STORE - NIGHT

Ever grabs at Boy's robes to get him to move, and they run towards a broken window at the side of the building. Patrolman 1 and Patrolman 2 shoot at them. Ever and Boy duck under the window where they are shielded between a fallen desk and a counter.

MONTAGE:

A dead man, hand clenched over his heart in the empty streets; the gloved hand hovering over the lever from before; the man's hand over his heart.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Patrolman 1 pulls out a remote and types in a code. The alarm system shuts off.

He motions for Patrolman 2 to go around to the side of the building and approach Ever and Boy. Patrolman 1 stands put, concentrating his gun at the area they are hiding in. He attempts to shine light on them, but the beam is stopped by the desk and counter. Patrolman 2 walks over to the side of the building.

INT. STORE - NIGHT

Ever nudges Boy. He looks at her and she reveals a rifle hidden in the folds of her robes.

EXT. ALTERNATE STREET - NIGHT

The dead man's eyes are wide open in fear.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Patrolman 2 approaches the window. He stands next to it and peers down into the store.

INT. CONSOLE ROOM - NIGHT

The gloved hand from before, finally pulls the lever down.

CUT TO:

EST. CITY - NIGHT

An array of brightly lit greenhouses in ABAB pattern outline a single path jutting out from the city. Each pair on the path shuts its lights off, ending at the wall of the city.

All lights in the city power down from bottom to top except for one sole floor at the very top of the tallest building.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The streets turn dark and LED lights turn on, outlining the road. A clock somewhere in the distance loudly chimes out ten times. Patrolman 2 is startled by this and hesitates. Ever springs up from hiding and shoots him in the chest before jumping out the window and running into the street.

Boy pauses before following her out. Patrolman 1 shoots at Ever and misses. He then shoots at Boy, and he falls dead.

Ever looks back and sees this, but keeps running without stopping. She runs off down a dark alley.

