

PROXY

written by

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INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The screen is black, credits slowly play over the darkness as the sound of an outgoing phone call plays. The rings are interrupted by the click of the call being answered but there's no response, just static. PATRICK calls out to the empty sound.

PATRICK
Hello? Is anyone there?

The screen cuts to a laptop, its browser set to a website with a sterile design. Small slogans and advertisements are displayed on the laptop referring to a Proxy. Patrick continues to call out over the phone as he is shown nervously tapping his foot on the floor as he sits on his couch.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Hello? Hel-

Patrick is interrupted by the cold and calculating voice of a woman. THE REPRESENTATIVE is on the other line of the phone and answers.

THE REPRESENTATIVE
How can I help you?

Patrick pauses and nervously stutters through his inquiry.

PATRICK
Hi, I um, I was looking through
your website, and I wanted to ask
to take part in your trial pro-

THE REPRESENTATIVE
Name?

PATRICK
Oh. Right. Patrick Thompson.

THE REPRESENTATIVE
Please check your email Mr.
Thompson, is this the correct
address?

The laptop lets out a faint sound as Patrick leans towards it and opens a new tab displaying his email. He's received an email from the company with his full name and address.

PATRICK
How did you get my email?

THE REPRESENTATIVE
Is that the correct address sir?

PATRICK
(reluctantly)
Yes... That's correct.

The Representative goes silent. Just as Patrick is about to end the silence with more questions she

THE REPRESENTATIVE
Your trial will begin in the coming days. The PROXY will be personally delivered to your address.

PATRICK
Is that really all you need? Just my name and you already have the rest?

The Representative hangs up. Patrick brings his phone down from his ear and sets it next to his laptop before sitting back into the couch. He takes one last look at the sterile website in front of him before shutting the laptop.

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - MORNING

Patrick is asleep, the sunshine bleeds through the blinds in front of his window. Three loud knocks send Patrick's body straight out of bed. He groggily walks to the window and sees two men with a dolly wheeling a large box through his driveway. More knocks continue on his front door, Patrick looks away from the box and comes towards his front door.

INT. APARTMENT ENTRY WAY - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Patrick reaches the door at first hesitating before reaching for the handle and turning it. On the other side of the door is The Representative, dressed in a business suit and holding a large binder. Her eyes stare directly into Patrick's soul as he looks through the half-opened door.

THE REPRESENTATIVE
Are you Patrick Thompson?

PATRICK
Yes. That's me.

THE REPRESENTATIVE
May I step inside for a moment, there are a few things for you to sign before we can leave.

PATRICK
Um, yeah sure. Here, go ahead.

Patrick fully opens the door into his apartment and gestures inside. The Representative nods her head.

THE REPRESENTATIVE

Thank you.

She enters the apartment and Patrick looks past at the box placed at the bottom of the stairs leading to his door.

INT. APARTMENT DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Patrick sits across from The Representative at the dining room table. He reads through sheets of paperwork.

THE REPRESENTATIVE

Could you tell me why you decided to participate in this trial Mr. Thompson?

Patrick looks up from the paperwork, reluctant to share.

PATRICK

I guess I've been falling behind in just about everything. Then I found your website and this- I felt like it could help.

The Representative simply nods her head and takes notes. Patrick completes his final signature and looks back up.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

So where do I go from here?

THE REPRESENTATIVE

It's simple. We have already crafted the Proxy to be a perfect match of yourself. You will give the Proxy its primary objective and it will complete it.

PATRICK

And what happens if the objective isn't reached?

THE REPRESENTATIVE

Our Proxies have yet to fail in the 6 months of trials we have run thus far Mr Thompson. I doubt this will be any different.

Patrick is slightly insulted by The Representative's comment, belittling his issues.

PATRICK

Okay so give the objective, and the Proxy completes it, just as I would right? No one will know the difference?

THE REPRESENTATIVE

Your own friends and family won't be able to tell the difference. You use it as you wish. And after one week you'll be given the option to continue the trial or end it.

PATRICK

Alright.

Patrick gets up from the end of the table and brings the paperwork to The Representative. She looks it over for a moment before rising out of her chair.

THE REPRESENTATIVE

I'll have the PROXY brought up for you Mr. Thompson.

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The PROXY is sat on the couch and Patrick sits across from it on the coffee table. He holds a small note that simply reads "State Name and Objective."

PATRICK

Patrick Thompson... Um.

Patrick hasn't truly thought out what he's going to say yet. He looks down for a moment and comes up with an idea.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Let's just go with, uh, help make my life easier.

The PROXY does not respond right away but then suddenly the eyes of the PROXY open and it speaks to Patrick. Its voice is extremely human like, rather than robotic.

PROXY

Hello.

The PROXY's voice, identical to Patrick's, shocks Patrick a moment as he leans away quickly. He takes a beat then leans back towards the PROXY.

PATRICK

Hi? Did I do that right?

PROXY

Yes. My objective is to help make your life easier. Is that correct?

PATRICK

Yes. So how do we get started?

PROXY

What can I assist you with Patrick?

Patrick is unsure how to answer that question. All he has thought of is the fact he needs help, but he's yet to think of what specifically he needs.

PATRICK

I just need some help catching up. There's been a lot going on lately and I just can't keep up.

The PROXY quickly rises from the couch, Patrick follows.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Woah, what are you doing?

PROXY

I'm ready to get started. I can help you get caught up.

PATRICK

Wait. Not right now. Let's just chill for a second. We can get started tomorrow.

The PROXY looks confused, an unfamiliar "feeling". Then it nods to Patrick and sits back down.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Okay. Is there something else you need?

PROXY

No. I can wait until you are ready to start.

PATRICK

Alright do you need to sleep or something? The card didn't say anything about what you'd do without an objective.

PROXY

I'll be alright Patrick.

Patrick stares at the PROXY simply confused. He was not expecting it to act so human like or so much like himself.

PATRICK

Okay I'm going to bed then and
we'll just see how tomorrow goes.

The PROXY nods and looks away from Patrick. Patrick leaves the PROXY alone and enters his bedroom for the night.

INT. APARTMENT KITCHEN - THE NEXT MORNING - MONDAY

Patrick stands in the middle of his kitchen, the counters are cleared and shining. A note is stuck on the fridge reading neat handwriting from the PROXY. It states, "I've taken the time to find your schedule. I'll be back this evening."

PATRICK

(to himself)

Alright, so it's going to my
classes, that's a good start I
guess.

Patrick turns his head and finds his laptop set up on the kitchen island. He unlocks the laptop and finds his class schedule and school email already opened.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

What the hell? How did it get my
password?

Patrick shakes off his question and shuts the laptop. He goes back towards the kitchen to find himself breakfast.

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - DAY - TUESDAY

Patrick lays across his couch watching television while scrolling on his phone. He's bored, with the stress from of life taken by the PROXY, he feels simply bored. He scrolls through his phone's contacts and lands on a name: JASON. He clicks on the name and his phone starts to ring. After a moment the call is answered.

JASON

Hello?

PATRICK

Jason! Hey what's going on?

JASON

Nothing? Are you really calling me?

PATRICK

What are you doing right now?

JASON

I'm heading to my 12:00pm class
right now? Shouldn't you be t-

PATRICK

Don't worry about it? Do you wanna
get together? I finally got some
free time and I was thinking we
could try to hang out?

JASON

Patrick you haven't asked me to
hang out in months.

PATRICK

Yeah, but I just had a lot on my
plate. I'm all good now. Would you
be free today?

JASON

I can't. I have an exam on Thursday
so I'll be cramming until then. But
we could try to get together that
night? That okay?

PATRICK

Yes! Let's do it.

JASON

Alright sounds good. Listen, I
gotta get to this class so I'll let
you go.
It's good hearing from you again
Patrick. I'll talk to you soon. Bye

PATRICK

Bye.

Patrick hangs up the phone. For the first time in a while he
has a genuine smile on his face. He sets the phone down and
goes back to watching TV, clearly uplifted.

INT. APARTMENT GARAGE - DAY - WEDNESDAY

Patrick enters his garage and opens the door, as he gets
ready to enter his car he finds the PROXY already sitting in
the driver's seat. It shocks him a little and he asks the
PROXY to roll down the window.

PROXY

Can I help you with something
Patrick?

PATRICK

Yeah I just thought I could take
care of class today. I only have
one so I'm sure I can handle it.

PROXY

I thought you wanted me to help
make life easier Patrick? Does
going to class for you not do that?

PATRICK

(unsure)

It does, it's just... I figured I
could handle some of the load.

The PROXY just stares at Patrick, appearing unwilling to
compromise.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

You know what? Nevermind. You go
ahead and I'll stay back.

PROXY

Great! Have a good rest of your day
Patrick!

The car's window is brought up and The PROXY backs the car
out of the garage and into the street before driving off.
Patrick stands alone and follows the car with his eyes before
the PROXY remotely shuts the garage door in front of him.

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT - THURSDAY

Patrick lays alone in his bed scrolling on his phone. The
lights are shut off. He scrolls through Instagram until he
finds a post from Jason, it's a photo of Jason and the PROXY.

PATRICK

What?

He quickly realizes he had forgotten about his conversation
with Jason about seeing each other that night. Patrick sits
up in bed and looks closer at the image.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I never told it I had plans
tonight. Did I?

Patrick stares at the post. He doesn't know exactly how to feel. He's mostly scared, he had assumed the trial may be invasive but it's gone well beyond what he expected. Patrick goes to his messages on his phone and finds recent texts from Jason that had been replied to already. Patrick's eyes open wide.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I didn't... I didn't say that?

Patrick tosses his phone across his bed and holds his head in his hands. He doesn't know what to say or do.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

What is going on?

Patrick looks at his reflection in the glass of his phone.

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - FRIDAY

Patrick stands across the room from the PROXY. The PROXY sits on the couch staring at nothing, unaware of the anxious looks from Patrick. He walks slightly closer causing the PROXY to turn it's head towards him.

PROXY

Can I help you with something
Patrick?

PATRICK

No. I'm alright for now.

(beat)

Where were you last night?

The PROXY does not answer right away. Instead it just stares at Patrick.

PROXY

Where I needed to be. You told me
to help make your life easier
Patrick. So that's what I did.

PATRICK

How did you know I was supposed to
go out?

PROXY

I was made to solve your problems
Patrick. I had to know.

Patrick takes a step back. He comes closer to his room, he needs to separate himself from the reflection in front of him.

PROXY (CONT'D)
Is something wrong?

PATRICK
No. Just relax for the night. We
can talk more tomorrow.

Patrick leaves the living room. Slightly rushing towards his bedroom.

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT MOMENTS LATER

Patrick shuts the door to his bedroom and grabs his laptop before sitting on the bed. He types away and finds the original YOURPROXY website and calls the phone number.

PATRICK
I can't. I can't do this anymore.

He holds the phone up to his ear and hears it ring, twice as long as it did a week before. Once again, the call is answered, the phone clicks but no voice comes through, just static.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Hello? Please I know you're there.
Just answer me!

The Representative's voice comes through the phone in the same sharp tone as before.

THE REPRESENTATIVE
How can I help you Mr. Thompson?

PATRICK
It's been a week.

THE REPRESENTATIVE
The trial has to continue for 7
full days Mr. Thompson. It's been
5.

PATRICK
I want it to stop. It's going... It
has gone too far now.

The Representative goes silent. Patrick breaths heavily, eager for a response.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Please. It has to stop.

THE REPRESENTATIVE

Would you say the trial has been negative for you Mr Thompson?

PATRICK

Yes. Of course! It's started to become more me than I am. It keeps going farther than I have asked it to. Going beyond it's objective.

THE REPRESENTATIVE

The PROXY is built to adapt and learn. It will continue to develop as it attempts to complete the objective.

PATRICK

I just need it to stop. I can't keep doing it.

THE REPRESENTATIVE

Are you sure you want to stop the trial Mr. Thompson? If you stop now the PROXY will be terminated and you will have to resume your life just as it was before.

Patrick breaths heavily, he thinks of hundreds of scenarios in his head. He wants to stop, but he doesn't feel like he can handle himself without help.

PATRICK

I... I don't know. I just wanted it to help.

THE REPRESENTATIVE

If you want to stop the trial I will need verbal confirmation from you Mr. Thompson. Tell me you want to terminate the trial and we will have the PROXY picked up tomorrow morning.

Patrick is frozen, heavy breathing. He doesn't have an answer.

THE REPRESENTATIVE (CONT'D)

Sir. I need an answer.

He sets the phone down a moment before taking a final deep breath and he prepares to give out his answer. He exhales and opens his mouth.

CUT TO: BLACK