

INT. WIS UNDERGROUND CENTRE - COMPUTER ROOM - DAY

A large room is illuminated by the soft glow of LCD screens which line its walls. On big monitors there are some financial programs running and a big map of the world with the different time zones illuminated in colours. Some people are seated, typing on the computers, while others are moving around holding documents and laptops. Absolutely all of them have a security card clipped on their shirt pocket with three letters printed on it: WIS.

FOUR YOUNG PROGRAMMERS are deeply focused on their work, typing quickly and checking the results of their typing on the screens. The four of them don't seem to be very happy with the results they are seeing. Behind them there is MISS EVANS (40), an elegantly dressed woman seriously looking at them.

MISS EVANS

Any news?

PROGRAMMER #1

The four-digit code changes every ninety seconds. It takes one minute to get only one number right. It's simply impossible to break.

Miss Evans approaches another programmer.

MISS EVANS

Any luck?

PROGRAMMER #2

(frustrated)

You need more than luck to break this security program. You need the guy who wrote it.

MISS EVANS

(to programmers #3 and #4)

What about you?

PROGRAMMER #3

This is a piece of modern art: impossible to understand but beautiful to contemplate.

PROGRAMMER #4

Never seen anything like this before.

MISS EVANS

I thought you were the best code breakers in the country.

PROGRAMMER #1

You bet we are. But you're definitely missing someone on this team.

INT. WIS OPERATIONS CENTRE - PROGRAMMING DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

The programming department room has five big desks with four PC's on each table. JAMES (33) is at his desk typing some programming codes on his computer. The room is in complete darkness, only broken by the flashing codes appearing on James's monitor. He is the only person working on the whole floor.

INT. JAMES AND NORA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

NORA (31) is sleeping in a completely quiet room. All of a sudden, a red light above the door starts flashing and a BEEPING alarm breaks the silence. Nora gets up and runs out of the bedroom.

NORA

Billy!

INT. JAMES AND NORA'S HOUSE - BILLY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

BILLY (5) is lying on the floor in his pyjamas, his eyelids drooping and his mouth distorted. His limbs dangle from his body as if not belonging to him and all his movements seem to be in slow motion. He struggles to breathe while trying to reach the door.

When Nora gets there, she switches the light on, approaches Billy and takes him in her arms.

NORA

Mum is here, sweet heart. Mum is here.

INT. NORA'S CAR - NIGHT

Nora is driving at a high speed. She is constantly looking at Billy sitting by her and struggling to breath. Nora is about to panic.

NORA

Keep breathing, please. We're almost there.

EXT. STREETS OF NEW YORK - NIGHT

The streets are very quiet and there is little traffic. Nora's car speeds through the streets, passing all cars ahead of her.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

The emergency room doors open and a DOCTOR and TWO ATTENDANTS enter, running with a gurney. Billy is lying on the gurney with an oxygen mask on his face. Nora follows the hospital staff as they push the gurney into the intensive care room.

Nora looks desperate and has to run in order to keep close to Billy.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE ROOM - NIGHT

The two attendants and the doctor enter into the room pushing the gurney in a hurry. TWO YOUNG NURSES are prepared for the emergency, holding some medical equipment.

When Nora enters the room one of the nurses approaches her.

NURSE

I'm sorry but you can't be here.

NORA

Billy! He's my son!

NURSE

You'll have to wait outside.

NORA

My little Billy.

INT. WIS UNDERGROUND CENTRE - MANAGERS ROOM - NIGHT

Miss Evans is sitting at an oval mahogany table. The fluorescent lighting is white and intense. Miss Evans takes the phone and dials a number.

MISS EVANS

Hi, Richard. We had no luck.  
(pause) Yes, everything as we  
planned.

INT. WIS OPERATIONS CENTRE - PROGRAMMING DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

James is focused on his typing when the phone RINGS. He picks it up.

JAMES

Yes?

James's face quickly changes to a worried expression.

INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Nora is sat on a corner of the waiting room. There are two more families with her and everybody seems to pray for hope.

James comes running from the end of the corridor and approaches Nora. They both hug strongly.

JAMES

How is he?

NORA

We got here on time. (beat) Where have you been?

JAMES

I was...

NORA

(interrupting)

I know where you were. You are always working. I'm sick of that!

James doesn't say anything and sits down by his wife. He looks around, knowing that he is the centre of attention in that room. Nora starts to cry.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

It is dawn in New York. The streets are full of activity and some people are going in and out of the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE ROOM - DAY

The feeble body of Billy lies on a bed. He is sound asleep and beside him there is a nurse taking an assisted breathing machine out of the bedroom.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - DAY

Some attendants and nurses walk to and fro with samples and papers. Looking through the window of a door are James, Nora and DR. KAPLAN (40). They back off as the door opens and a nurse comes out of the room with an assisted breathing machine.

DR. KLAPAN

He's out of any danger, but we should keep him under observation for a few hours.

NORA

It's the second time this week.

DR. KLAPAN

These attacks happen unexpectedly.

NORA

Would you suggest anything?

DR. KLAPAN

I'm afraid you'll have to keep up with the medication. I'll make sure Doctor Levinson visits him before you go home. If you'll excuse me.

JAMES

Thank you, doctor.

Dr. Kaplan walks away. James and Nora remain alone. Nora starts to sob.

NORA

I won't be able to take this forever, James.

JAMES

Billy is very strong. He will be okay, believe me.

There is a pause and both hug softly.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I have to go to the office now. I'll be home early, okay?

James walks away.

EXT. STREETS OF NEW YORK - DAY

It's peak hour and the streets are crowded with people going to work. Pedestrians and drivers look like robots, as if they were doing something they've been doing for ages.

EXT. JAMES'S CAR - DAY

James, now dressed in a dark suit, is driving through congested traffic. He is like another automaton rushing to work in the jungle of the city.

EXT. STREETS OF NEW YORK - DAY

At a zebra crossing, James stops his car and lets a group of five-year old students walk in pairs to cross the street. The TEACHER looks at James and nods in thanks.

INT. JAMES'S CAR - DAY

The students cross the street. When they are all at the other side of the street, James starts accelerating but realises that a FIVE-YEAR OLD STUDENT is still in the middle of the road. The child is staring at him with a steady, serious glaze, broken seconds later by an affectionate smile. Then he rushes off to the group of students whilst James follows him with his eyes, hypnotised by the appearance of the little child and his sincere smile.

But the spell that the child held on James suddenly breaks when the sound of impatient HORNS take James back to reality.

EXT. WIS OPERATIONS CENTRE - MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY

Three silver letters, WIS (Worldwide Integrated Systems), stand proudly on the outside of a medium size building. People go into the building like ants into a hole.

James passes by in his car and drives to the parking lot ramp, at the far end of the main entrance.

EXT. WIS OPERATIONS CENTRE - PARKING LOT ENTRANCE - DAY

James drives halfway down the ramp and stops in front of a scanner. He takes his security card out of his pocket and waves it slowly in front of a digital screen. The parking lot gate opens.

INT. WIS OPERATIONS CENTRE - RECEPTION - DAY

The reception desk is a half-moon-shaped wooden table which takes up a large part of the entrance. At the far end of the reception desk there are three elevators with their doors constantly opening and taking people to the different floors.

The parking lot elevator doors open and James comes out holding a tattered briefcase. There are some people waiting for the elevator, all of them wearing elegant suits.

GRAHAM (40), the receptionist, is walking slowly in front of his desk.

GRAHAM

Hi, James. How was the weekend?

JAMES

Morning, Graham. Busy.

GRAHAM

Did you come to work again?

JAMES

I had to finish some stuff.

GRAHAM

One of these days your wife won't let you in in your house. She'll think you're a stranger.

JAMES

Don't give her ideas, please.

In a group of people waiting for the elevator, RODNEY, a guy in his early thirties dressed in a tasteless dark suit and holding a laptop briefcase, stands out.

RODNEY

Another day in paradise, eh?

JAMES

What's up, Rodney?

The elevator doors open and all the people waiting, including James and Rodney, get in it.

RODNEY

Did you see the Yanks?

INT. WIS OPERATIONS CENTRE - IT DEPARTMENT - DAY

A big floor is divided by numerous low-walled cubicles. On both sides of the main corridor people talk to each other and type on the computers.

The doors of the elevator open and James and Rodney get out at the same time.

RODNEY  
All men like sports.

JAMES  
I don't.

MIKE (25), dressed in jeans and a T-shirt, approaches them. He holds a backpack and looks full of energy.

MIKE  
Hi, guys.

JAMES  
Hi, Mike.

RODNEY  
I can't believe it.

MIKE  
What?

RODNEY  
James doesn't like sports.

MIKE  
(to James)  
Well, you like chess, don't you?

RODNEY  
Come on, Mike! I mean real sports,  
sports that involve physical  
movement, contact, team spirit.  
(beat) Who's your kid gonna play  
baseball with?

But James doesn't answer. Instead, he tilts his face down and picks up his pace towards the end of the corridor.

Rodney, under the inquisitive look of Mike, realises that he shouldn't have opened his big mouth.

RODNEY  
Sorry, James. I didn't mean to...

INT. WIS OPERATIONS CENTRE - PROGRAMMING DEPARTMENT - DAY

JILL (25) is seated at her desk leaning her head on the table and not moving at all. The four PC's on her desk are running different programmes.

The door opens and James enters, followed by Rodney and Mike.

RODNEY

I'm so sorry, James. I didn't...

JAMES

(interrupting)

Forget it, Rodney. (to Jill) Good morning, Jill.

MIKE

Hi, Jill.

But Jill doesn't move a muscle.

JAMES

Jill?

But Jill remains completely still. James, Mike and Rodney look at each other and approach Jill.

JAMES

Jill? Are you okay?

As there is no response, James touches her shoulder and Jill instantly shakes her head and the rest of her body. She turns around and realises that her colleagues are there. She removes two thin headphones from her ears.

JILL

Hi, guys.

MIKE

Have you slept here?

James, Rodney and Mike get settled at their desks.

JILL

I came in earlier to sort this out. There's a problem with this script but I can't find it.

JAMES

What script?

James drops his briefcase on his desk, moves closer to Jill and looks at her screen.

JILL  
I've looked everywhere.

JAMES  
It's corrupted. Look, it has too many digits. There's a backup on the K drive.

JILL  
Can you give me access to it?

JAMES  
Sure. Let me see something.

James takes Jill's keyboard and starts typing. Then the door opens and DAMIAN (35) enters. He is wearing a suit without a tie and is holding a laptop briefcase. He goes straight to his desk and starts to work on his PC without saying anything to anybody.

Mike and Rodney look at each other.

RODNEY  
(whispering to Mike)  
Mister Happiness is here.

JAMES  
It's definitely corrupted.

JILL  
I've spent three hours with this and you've just solved it in less than a minute.

RODNEY  
You are dealing with Mister Chess:  
all brains.

The door opens wide and MRS. FISHBURNE, a 60 year-old lady wearing a dark dress, walks in.

MRS. FISHBURNE  
Good morning. James Monaghan?

JAMES  
Yes?

MRS. FISHBURNE  
Mister McIntosh is waiting for you in his office.

JAMES  
Richard? What for?

But Mrs. Fishburne doesn't answer and leaves the room  
silently.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Who is she?

JILL  
Richard's new secretary.

RODNEY  
New? She looks a bit worn out to  
me.

JAMES  
What happened to Tracey?

JILL  
I'm not sure. I think she resigned.

JAMES  
Really? She seemed so happy with  
her job.

The whole room goes silent while James stands up and  
approaches Damian.