

NFT

By

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FADE IN ON:

INT. - DORM ROOM - EVENING

Obsessively clean. Freakishly neat. A shelf of alphabetically ordered BOOKS hangs over a perfectly made bed. No pop culture poster besmirch these walls.

Just a framed PICTURE OF MARY. And a CROSS.

SKIP O'FARRELL (16) types like a demon. Based on his hunched position, he's been at this for hours. Despite his meticulously ironed, wrinkle-free shirt.

A flurry of impatient KNOCKS at the door.

Intense eyes glued to his screen, Skip doesn't look up. Why bother, when yelling works?

SKIP

Come on in, Doofus. The door's unlocked!

Hesitation on the other side. Then the door creaks open.

CULLIN DAVIS (16, earrings, 'bad boy' hair) sticks his head in, looks around.

CULLIN

You're *still* working? OCD much?

SKIP

If you wanna call it that, sure.

CULLIN

Homework at this hour?

SKIP

Cut me some slack, Cullin. I finished the paper two hours ago. This is... extracurricular stuff.

CULLIN

(grins)

Oh. Porn. You know, it's customary to watch. Not type.

Cullin's eyes flit to the recyclable trash basket under Skip's desk. Aluminum cans fill it to the brim.

CULLIN

Dude. How many Diet Pepsis have you consumed today. So far?

SKIP

Five? Seven? Somewhere in that range,
give or take.

CULLIN

And you don't even get up to pee? We
gotta get Father Dolan on the phone.
That's a genuine miracle, you ask me!

SKIP

(snaps)

If you're just here to bust my balls, I'm
busy. You can leave right now.

Cullin slips in the door. Revealing his "Black Sabbath" t-shirt, jeans. A match to the rest of his "rebel" vibe.

CULLIN

I'm gonna. But first an invitation:
There's a party over at Hallen dorm.
Wanna go?

SKIP

That's a rhetorical question, right? What
for?

CULLIN

(sing-song)

There's gonna be music. Girrrrls.

SKIP

You know debauchery's not my style.

CULLIN

You *do* dig hard cherry seltzer. That's on
tap, so c'mon.

(beat)

Skip, you gotta stop with the "diligent
student" gig and have fun every once in a
while! Maybe you don't wanna admit it,
but you're human too.

Cullin points at the Pepsi glass on Skip's desk. Grins.

CULLIN

You're so tired, you're getting sloppy.
You forget there's such a thing as
coasters, dude?

Skip tears his eyes away from the laptop, grabs the
glass. Angrily sets it down on a nearby coaster - CLICK.

SKIP

Thanks for the temptation, but I'll pass.
This is important. The party's not.

Now hovering over Skip's shoulder, Cullin stares
curiously at the screen.

CULLIN

Not pornhub. What's "CloseSea"?

Skip sighs. Leaning back in his chair, he smooths his
shirt. Nitpicks imagined microscopic lint balls off.

SKIP

What's with the Spanish inquisition? If I
told you, you wouldn't understand.

CULLIN

Appearances are deceiving. We've been
friends-

SKIP

Correction: we KNOW each other.

CULLIN

For ten really long, really *something*
frikkin' years. Maybe I don't meet your
"moral" standards anymore, but that's
just a difference of opinion. I
"understand" lots of stuff just fine.

SKIP

OK, Einstein - pop quiz. Closesea's an
NFT marketplace. A super secret one, on
the dark web.

Skip studies Cullin's face for a response.

SKIP

You even know what NFT stands for?

CULLIN

"Noob fucking transaction" comes to mind.

Skip facepalms, groans.

SKIP

Great. Just terrific. I gotta explain
this from Ground Zero? Cullin, sometimes
you're no better than a child.

CULLIN

(chuckles)

Just yanking your chain, Bud.

And you fell for it. Hook, line, and joke. NFT means "Non Fungible Token" - duh.

SKIP

Yes, it's a -

CULLIN

One of a kind digital "collectible."
That's all hot now, like cryptocurrency.
Unless you're in a cave, or a Boomer, who
wouldn't know what it is?

Skip gapes, honestly surprised.

SKIP

You get it?

CULLIN

Absolutely. It's a Ponzi scheme. Case closed.

Skip's astonishment morphs to anger.

SKIP

NFT's are NOT a "Ponzi scheme"!

CULLIN

Yeah they are. Just like Beanie Babies.
Worth absolutely nothing, unless you can
get another clueless mark to buy them for
more. And *this* stuff kicks the scam up a
notch. All you get is an electronic
receipt, empty bits and bytes. At least
with Beanie Babies, you could cuddle with
a cute ass toy.

SKIP

That's a lousy analogy! And what brain
dead idiot do you know who took their
Beanie Baby out of its protective box?

CULLIN

My mom did. It was the unicorn, don't
judge. So, what NFT's are YOU buying
today, sucker?

Skip thrusts an annoyed finger at the screen.

SKIP

Not buying. Selling. And my idea's
genius, thank you very much!

Bemused, Cullin leans into the screen - reads.

ONSCREEN: The kitschy picture of an ANGEL surrounded by swirling lights. The posting's title:

"Skip's Soul Shares - Buy Yours Before They Run Out!"

CULLIN

You're selling your SOUL? Get the fuck out!

SKIP

No. YOU get out. Or read between the lines, for once. Selling a full soul's for chumps. I'm selling fractional *shares*, like a corporation going IPO. Brilliant out of the box concept, no?

CULLIN

I... I gotta admit. That's unique.

Skip beams proudly.

SKIP

Innovating is what winners do! I'm the first in the NFT-Soul Space. So it's a cinch I'll clean up!

CULLIN

(beat)

And you think people are gonna value your "soul" so much they buy a piece? I mean, with real money and all?

SKIP

Or Bitcoin. That works, too. 'Cause my soul has specific, demonstrated value. I pray every morning. Honor the commandments assiduously.

CULLIN

You *did* steal that Power Rangers figure back in elementary school...

SKIP

We were seven years old. The statute of limitation's ran out on that long ago!

(beat)

Even more important, I respect girls.

CULLIN

Yeah, point. You're still a bona fide virgin. Which is why you gotta come to this party. Becky's gonna be there, dude!

Cullin grabs Skip's arm. Skip stays seated, recoils.

SKIP

No! I gotta monitor this sale, see how initial trading goes. Go on without me.

CULLIN

As usual.

Cullin droops, heads towards the exit. He lingers at the door, confused.

CULLIN

Skip, I've known you since First Grade. You're smart.

SKIP

We established that ages ago. So?

CULLIN

So... what's with all this flim flam now?

Skip waves scrawny arms around the room.

SKIP

You see this place? Boring, right?

CULLIN

That's putting in mildly.

SKIP

This room is tech-poor! I asked, but Dad won't buy me an Oculus Rift for Christmas. He says it's the Devil's work.

CULLIN

(beat)

Well, if you think shooting up Space Monsters is sinful, sure...

SKIP

But God helps those who help themselves. So I'm gonna market my most valuable asset - my purity!

Cullin rolls his eyes. Pulls the door shut on Skip.

CULLIN

Uh, yeah. Go to town with your selling... career. I'll tell Becky you said hi.

MONTAGE

INT. - DIFFERENT DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Way more lived-in. Booze and GIRLS.

Cullin hangs out with BECKY (16). The two toast Hard Seltzers as the CROWD roars around them.

CULLIN

Here's to Skip O'Farrell! For all his flaws, a faithful friend and role model since First Grade!

BECKY

(snorts)

"Role Model"? Seriously?

CULLIN

Well, I mean, a model of how toxic too much stick up one's ass can be!

INT. - DORM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Skip's still hunched over his desk.

For efficiency's sake, the Pepsi glass has been replaced with a two liter plastic jug. He swigs from it.

The laptop CHIMES. Skip's face lights up!

Onscreen: Auction bids pour in. One share of "soul" flashes "purchased". Then another. Sales snowball.

INT. - DORM ROOM - EVENING

SUPER: One week later....

The dimly lit room looks uncharacteristically cluttered. Torn open AMAZON BOXES litter the bed and floor.

Skip fumbles with wires, connects an OCULUS RIFT headset to a PLAYSTATION DECK.

A flurry of impatient KNOCKS on the door. As before, Skip doesn't deign to look up.

SKIP

Doofus, do you ever learn? The door's STILL unlocked!

The door creaks open. No surprise. It's Cullin.

Now he wears a "Disturbed" t-shirt. A fresh HICKEY blooms on his neck. Lending him an edgier vibe.

Skip waves him in, grunts.

SKIP

Just in time for the unboxing. Don't stand there. Check this out!

Cullin wanders through a sea of styrofoam packing.

CULLIN

Wow. Spending spree much?

SKIP

I earned every penny. Why not?

Skip flips a switch, slips the Oculus headset on. It looks comically bulky above his skinny neck. The Playstation WHINES as gear powers up.

Cullin approaches, reluctant.

CULLIN

I guess all that supernatural NFT-BS paid off?

SKIP

Paid off? It was epic! My offering completely sold out!

CULLIN

Exactly how many soul-shares did you... uh, pawn?

SKIP

(shrugs)

Three hundred and sixty five. I know it's hard to quantify how a soul can be divided...

CULLIN

No shit, Sherlock.

SKIP

But I figured, make it one for each day of the year. That went viral, quick!

Skip taps the visor. His head bobbles.

SKIP

Guess what I've got loaded now?

CULLIN
Plants vs. Zombies?

SKIP
Way better. "Among Us Imposter." Even the
splash screen rulez!

Visored, he pivots towards Cullin.

SKIP
Wanna give it a test run, too?

CULLIN
Uh, no. Listen, pal. We gotta talk.

Blind to the expression on Cullin's face, Skip happily
flails VR controllers around.

SKIP
(muffled)
About what? Don't know if you noticed,
but kinda busy here.

CULLIN
It's about Becky.

SKIP
Becky again? Give it a rest. It's no
secret I like her. But these things take
time.

CULLIN
About that: at the party -

SKIP
That den of iniquity? A week ago? Old
news.

CULLIN
She and I kinda... hooked up.

Skip freezes.

SKIP
Excuse me, what?

CULLIN
She's coming over now. We figured it'd be
best if we all talked it out. Together.

Skip stomps his feet, fumes. Even with the visor on, it's
easy to read his mood.

SKIP

How could you betray me? We've been BFFs forever for Christ... I mean, Gosh Sake!

CULLIN

Skip, no-one wanted it to happen, but-

A knock on the door interrupts.

BOTH friends swing towards it.

CULLIN

Becky?

SKIP

Come in, dammit. The door's unlocked!

The door CREAAAAKS open. Revealing - NOT Becky.

This unexpected visitor's a PALE MAN (30s), dressed in a 1940s business suit. He carries an UMBRELLA. A FEDORA half-hides his oddly smooth skin.

Thanks to the visor, Skip can't see him.

But Cullin can. He blinks, confused.

CULLIN

I think you've got the wrong dorm room.

The man cocks his head to the side at an odd angle.

PALE MAN

No, this residence is surely correct.

(points)

Behold, "His" name on the door.

The man glides in. So graceful, it's *almost* like his feet don't touch the floor.

Cullin recoils. Like his t-shirt, he's Disturbed.

Clueless, Sky swings his head towards the man's voice.

SKIP

You don't sound like Becky.

PALE MAN

But you are Skip O'Farrell. Is that correct?

The man stops between the boys. Angles slightly away from the cross and picture of Mary on Skip's wall.

Cullin bristles.

CULLIN

And you are?

PALE MAN

A good-faith, as it were, purchaser of
Mr. O'Farrell's goods. I bring receipts.

The man holds up a CELL, displaying an NFT Token labeled:
"Skip's Soul Shares: 121.6".

PALE MAN

A valuable commodity, even with
fractional shares. I have come to
collect.

Cullin kicks Skip's foot, hisses.

CULLIN

Dude, no more games. Take that thing off.
You gotta see this guy - he's a nut-job.
Playing Imposter's gotta wait!

Skip struggles with the helmet, but it's stuck.

He trips. Falls.

The Pale Man extends a long nailed, manicured hand. Helps
the teen up.

As he rises, the man leans forward - sniffs Skip's neck.

PALE MAN

Mmmm. As advertised. Good.

CULLIN

Get the fuck away from my friend, Weirdo!

He SHOVES the Pale Man, who glides back. The cell phone
tumbles from his hand...

But the ELECTRONIC receipt continues to glow - now
directly projected from the man's palm!

Without warning, the Pale Man's umbrella slashes forward.

Cullin instinctively ducks. But it wasn't aimed at him.

The umbrella's tip sweeps the cross and Mary's portrait
off the wall. CRASH. Glass shatters.

PALE MAN

Oops.

CULLIN

Dude, whatever - I mean, whoever - the fuck you are, the creep routine won't work. Maybe you pick on kids like Skip 'cause they're easy pushovers. But I've seen crazy stuff before. You picked the wrong victims this time!

Cullin bends down, desperately fishes through the Amazon boxes for something to use as a weapon.

Finding nothing, he holds his hands up like a boxer, makes fists.

CULLIN

I'm gonna beat your freaky ass. Skip, run!

Skip can't: he's still struggling to get the headset off.

The Pale Man smiles at Cullin, his mouth unsettlingly, unnaturally wide.

PALE MAN

Amusing mortal. Impure goods like you are no use to us.

CULLIN

"Us"? You schizophrenic, too?

The Pale Man FLICKERS - and DIVIDES. Into three: a bizarre trinity. Each iteration extends a palm - displays a receipt for 121.6 shares of Skip's Soul.

The beams cross - morph into 365 shares. The three Pale Men talk in perfect chorus:

PALE MAN #1

A 100% legal, confirmed purchase.

PALE MAN #2

I believe your kind calls it: "A hostile takeover"?

PALE MAN #3

The collectible's mine.

"365" reforms to "666". Steam hisses as the numbers dissolve.

The three Pale Men surround a bewildered Skip. LUNGE.

Cullin's thrown back into a wall.

He shivers as the sound of RIPPED FLESH and Skip's SCREAMS fill the air. Blood splatters his terrified face.

Back on Skip's laptop screen, the Closesea website glows:

"Congratulations on your successful venture. Would you like to sell some more?"

FINAL FADEOUT: