REFRESH

Reel Start 2020 Short Film
Shooting Draft
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CU on NAYAR (15, Ghanian), curly hair, no make-up, a natural beauty. Her room is a cluttered mess. She wakes with a smile on her face. She gets up and looks in the mirror and is disappointed with what she sees, then looks out the window. Rainstorm. It's a gloomy day.

She immediately picks up her CELL and opens an Instagram-ish app. She starts scrolling through her feed and we see that she looks completely different. Straight hair, tons of makeup, clothes that show she's trying really hard. She puts down the cell and we see quick cuts of hair being straightened, brushes painting skin to be lighter and less blemished, until she has transformed into her social media self.

She poses for a selfie. We see that from this specific angle, unlike the rest of her room, the background is a carefully curated series of pictures and posters that are organized and arranged perfectly to give the illusion of a highly organized and fashionable person. She picks up an old coffee from Starbucks and angles it so it looks new and puts it in front of her, then starts working through several different arrangements of facial expressions until she finds the one she finds most flattering. She snaps a picture and writes a comment: "Just rolled out of bed and can't wait for the day!" She adds the tag @Nayar, but then quickly deletes and replaces it with @Summer. She immediately gets a few comments.

@MAKEUP4U: Looking good, Summer! I see you're using the base powder trick from my last tutorial.

Nayar smiles.

@SUMMER: I learned from the best.

@MAKEUP4U: Love that hair too. Looks just like Kendal. So on point.

Nayar smiles again, basking in @MAKEUP4U's approval. Then she sees a comment from CHRIS.

@CHRIS: Whoa! I barely recognized you, Nayar! It must have taken you like six hours to straighten all those curls. Haha.

Chris posts a picture of him and Nayar from a few years ago.

Nayar rolls her eyes, annoyed. She receives an incoming text:

@MAKEUP4U: Oh my god Chris is so creepy and lame.

@SUMMER: I know! I honestly don't know what to do about it!

@MAKEUP4U: You wipe him from your account and block his dumb ass. When is that loser going to realize you aren't the same loser you were in elementary school. He's dead weight.

@SUMMER: You're totally right. He's such a loser! #blessed to have such good advice.

KWAME (O.S.)
Nayar. Nayar!
(beat)
Can I get your eyes up here?

Nayar looks up from her phone to see her father KWAME (40) standing in the doorway still wearing his work overalls. She is instantly annoyed and barely looks up from her phone.

NAYAR
Dad! Please, call me Summer.

Nayar/SUMMER dramatically places her phone down and looks at her father. The phone begins to buzz with notifications. She so desperately wants to look at them.

KWAME
Okay, Summer. Just saying I'm about to get started on some Jollof Rice. Tell Chris it will be on the table in 45.

Summer's phone begins to buzz against her desk. The notifications come with increasing frequency and volume.

SUMMER
Eww, I'm not really talking to him anymore

KWAME
What!?! What's wrong with my man Chris?

Summer can't resist any longer picks up her phone.

@MAKEUP4U: Summer you there?

@MAKEUP4U: You gotta get rid of this freak!

SUMMER
You wouldn't get it.

KWAME
(dad mode)
You're right, Nayar. I'm only 40. I haven't' lived life yet. What would I know!

SUMMER
Dad, can I just please have some privacy?

Kwame's face falls, stung by his daughter's disrespect. He takes in the room, a wistful pause on an old photo of him and Summer celebrating his birthday. He then looks at Summer, who is already engrossed in her phone.

KWAME
You know that stuff isn't real?

She doesn't even look up. Kwame decides not to push the issue further. He leaves.

In her direct messages, Summer is getting steamrolled. The mix of notification pings and thunder is overwhelming

@MAKEUP4U: What are you thinking?

Nayar thinks for a moment, debates, then responds.

@SUMMER: How can I put this? Chris is SOOO gross.

@MAKEUP4U: He's worse than gross. He's a perv.

@MAKEUP4U: Everyone needs to know.

Summer flashes a cruel smile and sets to some quick MEME-ing.

@*SUMMER*: How about this?

TIGHT ON:

A variation of the Daily Struggle meme. A finger hovering over two choices "Stalk Summer like a perv" and "Message Summer and look like an ugly failure" Chris' head has been poorly shopped onto the man struggling to make the choice.

@MAKEUP4U: Do it!

Summer's finger hovers over the post button.

TIGHT ON: SUMMER'S PHONE

Summer finger dramatically lowers until finally connecting with the POST button. Which causes her to acciendatelly KNOCK over the old cup of coffee that hits her still-plugged-in hair straightener and a bottle of nail polish. They all sludge together and splash onto her phone. FASHOOOM!

A BURST of electrcity SURGES through her hand and up her body, and then the electricty draws back into the phone, and PULLS HER IN WITH IT!!! Nayar vanishes, and the phone drops to the floor.

2 EXT. A BLACK VOID - CONTINUOUS 2

Everything is endless blackness with two exceptions a blinding sun and a rotating refresh icon. Summer comes to on the ground, but she's reverted back to Nayar.

She looks up at the sun, squinting. As her eyes adjust, she realizes this sun is not round or yellow. It's rectangular and it's looking out into her room.

NAYAR
Is that my room?

Behind her the refresh wheel has finished its spin and something begins barreling towards her, her FEED. The window frames whoosh by her, nearly knocking her off her feet. The frames finally come to a rest with her latest post, the meme.

NAYAR (CONT'D)
Oh my god, I'm stuck in the 'gram.

Nayar is still standing in the blackness but looking through the frame she sees MEME-CHRIS. His hand hovers over the buttons, he turns to Nayar.

MEME-CHRIS
Please. Delete me.

Behind Nayar a small tributary begins to flow. From the tributary we can hear cruel whispers directed at Chris.

Meme-Chris lumbers towards Nayar.

MEME-CHRIS (CONT'D)
Nayar, friend? Why friend hurt?

Nayar looks up to the rectangular sun. Through it she sees the real Chris in his bedroom, visibly upset. He reads a post out loud.

CHRIS
A loser like me should just kill myself... ?

Chris starts to cry. She looks back to meme-Chris as he approaches. Behind her the tributary has grown in intensity, becoming a literal sea of comments.

We can hear a cacophony of voices trashing Chris, which makes meme-Chris increasingly angry.

NAYAR
Stay back! I had to. I just... I didn't want to look like a loser, I-

Meme-Chris is enraged and lets out a tragic roar. The force of which knocks Nayar into the Sea.

INT. SEA OF COMMENTS - CONTINUOUS

She is tossed around by the comments, which increase in numbers and volume as she struggles to stay afloat. Various feeds start zooming by like a subway system designed by Escher. She hears a familiar voice and swims towards it until she sees the face of @MAKEUP4U.

NAYAR
I know that cat eye tutorial!

Positioning herself like a skydiver she begins to steer through the sea of comments towards @MAKEUP4U feed.

INT. @MAKEUP4U'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

@MAKEUP4U
Remember for cat eye you want to give yourself plenty of time and have a good make-up remover on hand...

SMASH! Nayar grabs onto the edge of @Makeup4u's frame.

@MAKEUP4U (CONT'D)
O-M-G! SUMMER!!!

Nayar can't be bothered.

NAYAR
How do I get out of here?

@MAKEUP4U
You want to log out?

NAYAR
Exactly!

@MAKEUP4U
Why would you want to do that? Especially when there's so much opportunity for a make over.
(MORE)

@MAKEUP4U (CONT'D)
For starters your hairs getting all gross. You need to maintain, girl. And your eyes need SOOO much work. Come here. Let me help you.

@MAKEUP4U advances on Nayar, sprouting numerous arms, each one holding a different make-up tool or product like a weapon.

@MAKEUP4U (CONT'D)
You'll love it. Then maybe we can talk about a make up that won't look so... dark.

Nayar backs away.

NAYAR
I'm fine.

@MAKEUP4U
Are you though? Or are you like in desperate need of reinvention.

Nayar's back is against the sea. She has no choice...

Nayar leaps into the void and falls past a series of typical social media archetypes and posts. The wind blows her hair, causing it to return to it's curly nature.

@VAPEQUEEN, a hip young Indian girl in all black clothes pulling on a vape pen.

@VAPEQUEEN
(holding in vape)
...and this... is why... I'm called...

She exhales a huge cloud of vapes and spins them until they turn into a large wheel of vape smoke that she spins around herself.

@VAPEQUEEN (CONT'D)
The Vape queen of Toronto!!!

Nayar falls THROUGH the giant ring of vape smoke, which causes her make-up to start running off her face.

(ALT ideas - "behold... the ART of VAPE!!!!" And the name is VAPE_MASTER or VAPE_LORD)

@RACIST_JOKESTER

Nayar lands near a fram featuring a very Pepe looking Frog. The frog turn turns to her, but before it can even speak she leaps away.

NAYAR
Nope.

The frog's tongue pulls off Nayar's jacket and try-hard jeans, revealing a more confident and casual attire, like what she use to look like, below.

@Triangular_Marketing, is a cut bro standing on yacht. He holds a stack of money

@TRIANGULAR_MARKETING
Five years ago I was where you're at, but now I own a boat.

Nayar lands on the this frame.

NAYAR
This will do.

@TRIANGULAR_MARKETING
Can I help you...
(pause)
Make $5,000 a day?

She reaches into the frame, shacking the bro off his yacht and pulling the boat into the void. Commandeering it for herself, flooring the throttle and sets sail on the sea of comments.

EXT. SUMMER'S PROFILE

Things look very different then when we started. Nayar looks like she did when she first woke up (as in not like Summer). But in her profile area gone is any of the indicators of Nayar, instead we see the Summer's influence all over the profile.

As the yacht moves closer the toxicity in the sea of comments begins to eat away at the boat. Nayar barely makes it to shore before the yacht sinks beneath the waves.

Nayar makes her way up a long and winding stairwell. She finally reaches the top. A throne room shaped like a profile page. The walls are etched with an obnoxious quote from Justin Bieber. The throne looks like the round profile frame, and sitting on that throne is SUMMER. Behind her a bunch of icons indicating followers, likes, settings, etc...

SUMMER
Too late, lame me.

NAYAR
What do you mean too late?

SUMMER
I'm by far your most popular post ever.

NAYAR
So?

SUMMER
So I AM you now. How can you not be me when I'm the most popular YOU there's *ever* been? You aren't needed anymore. You're dead already. You can't beat me. You're only choice left is to BE me.

Summer starts to breathe in like the Nintendo Character KIRBY, and starts to suck Nayar into her, breaking her down into 16bit chunks that start flying off of Nayar and into Summer's mouth. Nayar is frightened as her essence starts to disassociate... but then she hears something.

KWAME
Nayar?

She looks up and sees, through the rectangle in the sky, her father looking for. With a concerned look he leaves to find her.

NAYAR
This isn't real life.

Nayar concentrates and reconstructs her body.

NAYAR (CONT'D)
And I am not my profile.

She waves a hand and dries up the sea of comments, silencing them.

SUMMER
But... how will I know what's on trend?

NAYAR
You won't need to.

SUMMER
But-

NAYAR
Shhh.

The “shhhh” gently turns Summer into dust and she floats away. The profile around her melts to the ground like a Dali painting. Nayar starts to hover and then floats towards the “sun”. She speeds upwards.

POV: Nayar, confident, closes her eyes and SMASHES through the glass.

INT. NAYAR’S BEDROOM

Nayar opens her eyes again. She looks at her phone. It’s cracked, and there’s no sign of the ‘Gram.

NAYAR
Dad!!!!! I need a ride.

EXT. CHRIS' HOUSE - SOON

Kwame’s HVAC van pulls up to the house, Nayar hops out and runs to the front door.

She knocks. After a moment Chris answers.

CHRIS
What are you doing here?

NAYAR
I came to say I’m sorry.

CHRIS
For real?

She reaches out and hugs him.

NAYAR
Yeah, this is real.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END